



DC JAIL AND PRISON ADVOCACY PROJECT
VICTIM SERVICES REENTRY ADVOCATE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services (DRDC), a nonprofit protection and advocacy agency that advances the rights of DC residents with disabilities, seeks a Victim Services (VS) Reentry Advocate for its Jail and Prison Advocacy Project. The Reentry Advocate is responsible for providing reentry services to incarcerated DC residents with mental illness and intellectual disabilities who have been the victims of crime. Our goal is to promote the successful integration of DC residents with mental illness and intellectual disabilities into the community.

As a member of the DC Jail and Prison Advocacy Project, the VS Reentry Advocate will provide assessment, secondary case management, crisis counseling, and advocacy support to incarcerated DC residents with mental illness and intellectual disabilities who have been the victim of a crime as they prepare for their reentry and for a defined period after they transition back into the community. The VS Reentry Advocate's objective is to ensure our clients' needs are at the center of reentry planning and to advocate for community services that meet those needs. Responsibilities include:

- ❑ Develop and coordinate client-centered reentry plans for adults with mental illness at the DC Jail, Bureau of Prisons (BOP), and halfway houses 4-6 months prior to release and provide hands-on assistance applying for benefits and connecting people with mental health agencies, identification, housing, and other reentry resources.
- ❑ Negotiate and facilitate relationships between our clients and their mental health providers, probation and parole, victim services agencies, and other community-based agencies. Model interpersonal communication skills and promote empowerment, independence, and self-advocacy.
- ❑ Maintain regular contact with individuals and use assertive engagement strategies such as street outreach, transportation assistance, and family or peer involvement, when appropriate and permitted by the persons we serve.
- ❑ Supervise and coordinate with the VS Peer Navigator, an individual with lived experience in the criminal legal and/or public behavioral health system.
- ❑ Ensure current knowledge of local and national mental health standards of care, best practices, and the availability of local resources, including, for e.g., evidence-based practices such as motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care and trauma-specific services, and SOAR.
- ❑ Maintain case data in multiple data management systems as directed to track every intervention as well as specified outcomes.

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- ❑ Perform outreach and education activities to identify potential clients and disseminate information to justice-involved individuals, providers, and decision makers regarding evidence-based practices, systemic issues, community resources and service gaps and other topics.

Compensation: The VS Reentry Advocate will work full-time for a competitive salary, based on experience, plus benefits, which include full medical insurance, vacation, sick leave and other benefits.

QUALIFICATIONS

- ❑ Required: A Master's Degree in social work, counseling, nursing, or related field, with a current license if required for this position by your field's licensing body.
- ❑ Required: Ability to communicate and build rapport with individuals who have extensive trauma histories, serious and persistent mental illness or intellectual disabilities, and criminal legal involvement, and who are predominantly low-income people of color.
- ❑ Required: Ability to communicate and work effectively as a proactive member of an interdisciplinary team and to supervise staff and volunteers. Demonstrated competence in verbal, written, organizational and prioritization skills. Strong problem-solving skills and ability to troubleshoot challenging situations and creatively advance civil rights protections.
- ❑ Required: Ability to pass criminal background check required by the BOP and DOC.
- ❑ Preferred: Experience working within a social service organization, victim services organization, or mental health agency, particularly one that serves homeless, incarcerated, or formerly incarcerated individuals.
- ❑ Preferred: Familiarity and/or experience advocating for people who are victims of crime.

HOW TO APPLY

All applicants must *briefly* respond to the following three questions within a cover letter or in a separate essay (maximum 2 pages total):

- 1) What are your personal or professional motivations behind working in the criminal legal/disability rights field?
- 2) What do you believe is one problem in the criminal legal system that could benefit from more advocacy reform?
- 3) What do you believe is one problem in the behavioral health system which could benefit from more advocacy reform?

Please send your responses together with a resume and list of references electronically **no later than January 18, 2021** to:

Tammy Seltzer
DC Jail & Prison Advocacy Project
University Legal Services
tseltzer@uls-dc.org
No calls please

Applications will be considered as soon as they are received.

Uls values diversity of culture, disability, and other life experiences, and is an equal opportunity employer by choice. People with personal experience in the criminal justice system and/or behavioral health system are welcome and encouraged to apply.