Domestic Violence Advocate

Background: The Second Step (TSS) is a community of survivors, advocates, and volunteers who foster the safety, stability, and well-being of those who have experienced domestic violence. We provide comprehensive services, including safety planning, legal advocacy, counseling, peer support, transitional housing, and other essential services to adults, youth, and children in Greater Boston and MetroWest.

Job Title: Domestic Violence Advocate (Bilingual English/Spanish preferred)

Primary Objective: Providing comprehensive case management, housing search, housing advocacy, and emotional support to survivors of domestic violence, within an agency framework that is trauma-informed, strength-based, relational, and empowering. The advocate can expect to serve a bilingual caseload, including English/Spanish group and workshop facilitation, advocacy, and interpretation in response to client needs. As a Residential Programs team member, the advocate should expect the bulk of their work and focus to be on helping program participants to with goal planning, emotional support, and securing permanent housing.

The Domestic Violence Advocate works closely with the Director of Residential Programs to support survivors of domestic violence (DV) living in our two houses in Newton, MA. The advocate collaborates with the Director and other advocates across all TSS program areas, including Community, Legal, Housing, and Youth Programs. All direct service employees of The Second Step are provide supportive services from a trauma-informed perspective.

Hours: 40 hours a week. Typically 10-6, but including some evenings. Flexibility is important.

Primary duties include but are not limited to:

- Providing bilingual case management and housing advocacy, safety planning, psycho-educational programming, referrals, and support services between six and eight families within TSS's Residential Programs;
- Developing service plans with program participants to address a range of needs, including housing, medical, legal, educational, employment-related, and emotional needs;
- Liaising and advocating with community service providers to secure resources for children, including daycare, summer camp, after-school, or other resources;
- Advocating on behalf of survivors with healthcare providers, landlords & utility companies, school systems, and a range of other systems or agencies;
- Utilizing agency and community resources to ensure families' successful transition to permanent housing within two years of beginning the program;

- Working with program participants to secure financial resources and plan for permanent housing; and
- Community-building, including co-facilitating regular community meetings for program participants, collaborating with other staff to maintain a safe and respectful environment, and working with transformative justice and other healthy conflict resolution strategies.

Additional responsibilities include:

- Attend team and individual supervision as determined with Director of Residential Programs;
- Attend and actively participate in weekly team meetings and agency-wide staff meetings;
- Represent TSS at community events and forums;
- Assist other advocates and directors in coordinating client-centered events, including holiday celebrations for program participants, the IMAGINE retreat, summer retreats and cookouts, the annual backpack drive, the holiday gift drive, etc.;
- Participation in on-call rotation (additional compensation provided);
- Supervision of volunteers, interns and/or support staff as identified by Director of Residential Programs;
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

Candidates should have at least 2 years of experience working with survivors of domestic violence and/or homeless families and individuals in residential and/or community-based programs. Knowledge of issues related to domestic violence, trauma, mental health, and addiction – with a particular emphasis on how these issues impact families – is essential. Knowledge of issues related to child development and parenting is also valuable. While a Master's degree is preferred, we also consider relevant life experience and employment background to be valuable assets.

Additional qualifications include:

- Master's degree preferred. Bachelor's degree and demonstrated experience in the field of Domestic Violence/Trauma required.
- Strong clinical skills desired.
- Strong crisis management, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills.
- Demonstrated ability to learn and master new skills and materials.
- Ability to manage competing priorities simultaneously and precisely.
- Knowledge/experience with public housing and appeals process.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong organizational skills, including the ability to work calmly under pressure.
- Cultural competence and/or willingness to learn.
- Collaborative team player.
- Strong communication skills and proficiency with computers and technology.
- Bi-lingual (English/Spanish) required.
- Enthusiasm about working collaboratively and effectively in an environment that is linguistically and culturally diverse.

Hours: Full-time (40 hours/week), with a combination of days & evenings to be determined together with the Director of Residential Programs. This is an exempt position, and flexibility in scheduling is important. On-site clinical supervision will be provided.

Salary and benefits: TSS offers a competitive salary and benefits package to full-time employees. Salary for this position begins in the mid-$40,000 range, with additional compensation commensurate with experience, language skills, or other qualifications.

Job Type: Full-time

Equal opportunity: The Second Step actively seeks cultural and linguistic diversity in all of its programs. Minorities, bilingual/bicultural candidates, survivors of domestic & sexual violence, and LGBQ/T candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. The Second Step, Inc. is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer.

Please submit cover letter and resume to Meghan Buckley at mbuckley@thesecondstep.org.