

Job Posting

Winter Shelter Counselor

Employer: St. Mary's Center
Salary: Flexible up to 35hrs/wk; salary dependent on experience
Reports to: Shelter Coordinator

Background: St. Mary's Center (SMC) has served multi-racial, multi-ethnic poverty-level seniors and young children in West Oakland since 1973. Started as an outreach effort of St. Mary's Church, the Center was separately incorporated as a 501(c)3 in 1992. Our mission is to be a community of hope, justice, and healing that serves at-risk seniors and preschoolers in Oakland. We strive to improve quality of life through counseling, shelter, nutrition, advocacy and social support. SMC is the primary agency providing outreach and direct support services to homeless, homebound and otherwise isolated seniors in downtown and West Oakland. For more information, please visit www.stmaryscenter.org.

St. Mary's Center is a smoke-free and tobacco-free facility, and it is tobacco-free for staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers and visitors. Use of tobacco products inside buildings, program vehicles or on SMC premises is prohibited for all. For staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers and visitors there is to be no visible display of tobacco products and no evidence of tobacco use during work hours, including the smell of tobacco.

Winter Shelter Services: St. Mary's Center provides the only winter shelter exclusively for seniors in the Bay Area. Seniors, feeling acutely vulnerable, often avoid shelters that are full of younger people, and opt to sleep out on the street. The streets do not offer much safety, however, and the rain and cold can exacerbate health problems. Our winter shelter offers a congenial environment, supportive staff, case management, and on-site services such as health assessments, mental health services, recovery programs, and healthy meals.

Our shelter is open from the beginning of December through the end of April. The 30 shelter guests receive a home-cooked dinner courtesy of volunteers, and breakfast each morning. Seniors who stay more than one or two nights are asked to meet with one of our social workers to start the process of case management and finding permanent housing. Senior residents also participate in a housing savings program and attend wellness meetings five days a week at 4 pm.

Position Summary: Reporting to Shelter Coordinator, the Shelter Counselor is responsible to consistently report to all shifts as scheduled and on time. Provide verbal and written communication on shift details during transition to next Shelter Counselor. Prepare breakfast & coffee for shelter residents. Monitor and assist if necessary in the completion of daily chores. Promote respect and hospitality within the shelter. Work to ensure that a safe and healthy environment is maintained for shelter residents and volunteers. When necessary, facilitate conflict resolution among any persons involved with the shelters mood and overall wellbeing. Accurately complete intake and record keeping documentation. Implement all shelter policies and procedures in a fair and just manner.

Shelter Counselor Skills:

- Willingness & ability to work with a wide range of clients of varying cultures & backgrounds
- Must have patience, flexibility, and sense of humor
- Knowledge and experience relevant to shelter standards and operation
- Comfortable working with seniors who has co-occurring issues (MH & Substance Abuse)
- Experience with older adult population
- Skills in conflict resolution and crisis intervention
- Ability to complete necessary paperwork accurately and in timely manner

Shelter Counselor Primary Duties:

- Maintain shelter records (logs & documents etc...) in an accurate, complete and legible manner
- Attending and participate in daily shift change meetings
- Responding to all resident requests and questions in a professional and courteous manner
- Assist shelter and client volunteers
- Applying Shelter rules and regulations in a fair and equitable manner to all residents
- Helping to orient all residents to shelter rules and responsibilities
- Ensure new residents obtains linen, cots, hygiene products, plastic bags & tape to label items upon arrival
- Ensure breakfast & coffee is made available to shelter residents each morning
- Ensure that all chores are completed and facility is left clean at end of each shift
- At the end of every shift, ensuring paperwork is complete and workspace is clean & organized
- Performing all other duties as assigned and required

Required Qualifications:

- High School diploma or GED equivalent
- Minimum 6 months experience working with homeless and/or at-risk populations
- A comprehension of ethics in social services, general counseling & active listening skills
- Direct experience implementing problem solving and crisis resolution skills
- Minimum 6 months experience working with populations that has mental health & substance abuse background

**To apply for this position, please submit your cover letter and resume via email to:
hr@stmaryscenter.org**

