

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title: Advocacy Specialist

Summary of Functions:

Provide advocacy for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to ensure their rights are protected, their needs met, and their wants heard. Interface and collaborate with area school districts and community agencies that work on behalf of special needs populations to ensure that individuals who require specialized support, accommodations, or modifications receive fair and just treatment and equal representation as identified under IDEA and ADA. Must maintain confidentiality for participants and families and possess the skills and abilities to advocate for the civil rights of individuals with confidence and professionalism. Must have a strong working knowledge and/or experience working with public education systems and IDEA and be competent at navigating conflict while demonstrating a willingness to work towards mutually beneficial outcomes.

Reports to: Advocacy Coordinator

Essential Job Duties:

Advocacy:

- Identify the needs and resources required for children and/or adults referred by themselves, parents/guardians, community member, case managers, social workers or school personnel and determine the need for an advocacy specialist.
- Assist (I/DD) participants, and when appropriate their family/guardian/friends, in developing individualized support for advocacy and/or self advocacy.
- Assist (I/DD) participants by representing their interests in a variety of settings (i.e., the judicial, DD services sector, education systems and the community at large).
- Refer (I/DD) participants or their representative(s) who are requesting assistance to resources that are most appropriate for their needs.

Participants and Community Education:

- Provide information and education to others in the service sector and the community about the individual rights of people with intellectual and developmental and related disabilities.
- Serve as a role model to others in the community around the issue of respecting those with I/DD disabilities.
- Provide information and education about The Arc of the Pikes Peak Region, our mission, our programs to support families, and what supports are available and how we might be able to help them.

Reporting:

- Maintain all client information and records according to agency policies and procedures.
- Record all documentation needed to demonstrate the results of activities as they relate to desired outcomes.
- Provide any other documentation or information as requested accurately and in a timely fashion.

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- Communicate to the Advocacy Coordinator any staff, volunteer and/or third party problems that are not being resolved and which could be or have the potential to be damaging, embarrassing or derogatory in any manner to The Arc.
- Provide status reports to the Advocacy Coordinator.

Community Relations:

- Represent the interests of The Arc- PPR and its constituents as needed at community meetings, organizations, etc.
- Represent The Arc's values and beliefs in a fair and effective manner at all times and during all community interactions.
- As assigned, participate actively in community efforts and events, task forces or on specific committees.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to assess human service needs and appropriate interventions.
- Ability to merge groups of individuals and assist with problem solving.
- Ability to present issues in a manner that is fair, forthright, and assertive, while ensuring collaboration with others.
- Ability to maintain accurate, complete records that others can easily interpret.
- Ability to work independently, take initiative, and act with judgment and maturity.
- Ability to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and succinctly both verbally and in writing and communicate with people from diverse backgrounds with diverse opinions.
- Knowledge of the I/DD disability service system is desirable.
- Knowledge of educational laws and related acts is highly desirable.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in Special Education or related field and/or experience working with special populations in a school district preferred.
- Associates Degree with 5years experience in a related I/DD field.
- A current, valid driver's license and valid automobile insurance required.
- Pass background check and pre-employment drug test

FLSA Status:

Full-Time

Non-Exempt