



Title: Engagement Specialist

Department: Homeless and Housing Services

Program: Resource & Outreach

Reports To: Program Manager

Valley Oasis provides comprehensive services designed to address the root causes of poverty and homelessness within the Antelope Valley. Participants may present with complex needs, including mental health conditions, substance use, chronic medical concerns, domestic violence histories, and experiences of homelessness.

The Engagement Specialist is responsible for providing front-end engagement, assessment, system navigation, and resource coordination services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness or housing instability. This role supports participants accessing services through the Resource & Outreach services and other front-door service pathways.

The Engagement Specialist assists participants through screening, triage, referrals, problem-solving, and connection to housing and supportive services using a participant-centered, trauma-informed, and housing-focused approach. This role supports walk-in participants, community referrals, and service coordination while ensuring participants receive timely linkage to appropriate interventions and resources.

This position works collaboratively with internal programs, County partners, schools, co-located providers, and community organizations to support coordinated service delivery and reduce barriers to housing, stabilization, and community resources.

Essential Job Functions:

- Process and respond to referrals, walk-ins, self-referrals, and community partner connections for participants seeking services through the Resource & Outreach services, and other front-door service pathways
- Conduct participant screening, intake, triage, and assessment activities to determine service needs and appropriate referrals or interventions
- Develop and implement triage or service plans based on participant needs and identified barriers
- Obtain required consents, releases of information, and enrollment documentation in alignment with program and County requirements
- Support participant enrollment activities, including collection of demographic, household, and eligibility information
- Provide participant-centered engagement utilizing Housing First, Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care, and motivational interviewing practices
- Provide support and problem-solving-focused conversations to participants seeking immediate housing stabilization or connection to resources
- Provide system navigation and warm hand-offs to interim housing, permanent housing, prevention services, CES programs, and other homeless service resources
- Connect participants to mainstream resources and supportive services, including public benefits, healthcare, mental health services, substance use services, employment resources, childcare, educational services, and other community-based supports

- Support participants in accessing Coordinated Entry System (CES) assessments, referrals, and housing-related resources
- Coordinate with internal and external partners to reduce duplication of services and support continuity of care
- Assist participants in resolving immediate barriers to safety, housing, and stabilization through problem-solving and resource coordination approaches
- Provide referrals to emergency services and crisis resources when appropriate, including domestic violence, human trafficking, and behavioral health resources
- Support participants with obtaining documentation and completing forms required for housing, benefits, and supportive services
- Assist with maintaining cleanliness, organization, preparation, and functionality of front-door service areas, participant spaces, resource areas, and shared environments to support safe and effective daily operations
- Maintain accurate participant records, case notes, and documentation in HMIS and other designated systems within required timelines
- Ensure participant files, consent forms, and documentation are complete, organized, and compliant with agency and County requirements
- Assist with tracking participant activity, referrals, service connections, and program outcomes
- Complete required reports, logs, surveys, and supporting documentation in accordance with program, agency, and funder requirements
- Maintain confidentiality and safeguard participant information in compliance with agency standards and applicable laws
- Support front desk, reception, or front-door operations as needed to ensure continuity of participant services and program operations
- Collaborate with internal staff, County partners, co-located providers, schools, and community organizations to support coordinated service delivery
- Participate in meetings, trainings, case conferencing, and collaborative planning efforts as required
- Build and maintain professional relationships with community providers and partner agencies
- Communicate effectively with participants, staff, and partners to ensure continuity of services and participant support
- Support Engagement services, outreach efforts, mobile services, and community engagement activities as assigned
- Respond appropriately to crisis situations and participant concerns utilizing de-escalation and safety-focused approaches
- Maintain professional boundaries and uphold agency policies, procedures, and ethical standards
- Support program operations and service coverage needs as assigned
- Attend required meetings, trainings, and community events
- Perform additional duties, projects, and responsibilities as assigned by Supervisor in support of agency goals, program operations, and program outcomes, including responsibilities not specifically outlined in this job description

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- Strong understanding of Housing First, Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, and the Coordinated Entry System
- Knowledge of homeless services systems, public benefits, and community resources available to individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- Understanding of barriers impacting participants experiencing homelessness, including domestic violence, behavioral health, substance use, and economic instability
- Knowledge of HMIS, CHAMP, and similar housing assistance or case management systems

- Ability to promote cooperation, teamwork, and commitment toward program goals
- Ability to exercise sound judgment and appropriately escalate concerns when needed
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to communicate professionally and effectively with participants, staff, leadership, community partners, and funders
- Ability to maintain professional boundaries and confidentiality
- Ability to work collaboratively with internal staff, County partners, community providers, volunteers, and diverse populations
- Ability to demonstrate professionalism and maintain composure in sensitive or high-stress situations
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Strong problem-solving, critical-thinking, and decision-making skills
- Ability to manage multiple projects, meet deadlines, and adapt to changing circumstances
- Strong time management and multitasking abilities in a fast-paced environment
- Ability to effectively engage participants experiencing crisis or high levels of stress
- Ability to respond appropriately to crisis situations and potentially hostile environments
- Ability to support staff and participants dealing with behavioral health, substance use, homelessness, and related challenges
- Ability to provide culturally responsive and participant-centered services
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, Google Workspace, HMIS, and ability to learn new systems quickly
- Ability to operate standard office equipment
- Ability to maintain accurate records, documentation, and reporting requirements
- Ability to work a flexible schedule, including evenings, weekends, and emergency response services as needed
- Ability to travel throughout Antelope Valley and Los Angeles County; use of a personal vehicle may be required
- Ability to read and write in English; bilingual abilities preferred but not required
- Demonstrated accountability, reliability, punctuality, and attendance consistency

Role Clarification

The Engagement Specialist does not have supervisory authority and is not responsible for staff performance management, scheduling, or disciplinary actions.

This role is responsible for participant engagement, system navigation, referrals, and support services within front-door and Engagement service models. The Specialist is expected to exercise independent judgment in day-to-day participant interactions while maintaining alignment with established procedures and program expectations.

This role may assist with routine operational needs, participant concerns, and front-door coverage during assigned shifts; however, escalation to the Manager of Resource & Outreach Services is required for complex, high-risk, or non-routine concerns involving safety, compliance, grievances, or program-level decision-making.

This role does not function in a supervisory or managerial capacity.

Qualifications & Experience:

- High School Diploma or equivalent required; Associate's or Bachelor's Degree in Social/Human Services or related field preferred
- Minimum one (1) year of experience in homeless services, social services, case management, outreach, or related direct service work

- Experience working with vulnerable populations or participants experiencing homelessness strongly preferred
- Experience with HMIS or comparable database systems preferred
- Knowledge of community resources, public benefits, and homeless services systems preferred
- Relevant experience may be substituted for education.

Agency Requirements:

- Valid California Driver's License required
- Reliable transportation required
- Current auto insurance required
- Clean driving record required

Physical Demands & Work Conditions

To successfully perform the essential functions of this position, an employee must be able to meet the following physical demands and work conditions:

- May interact with individuals experiencing crisis, illness, substance use, or challenges related to personal hygiene and safety awareness
- May encounter unpleasant environmental or sensory demands associated with substance use, mental health symptoms, or lack of personal care
- May experience crisis situations and potentially hostile situations, must be ready to respond quickly and effectively.

An employee is required to:

- Walk and climb stairs
- Handle, grasp and manipulate objects and equipment
- Reach above shoulder level and below waist
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing
- Move quickly and safely between locations
- Perform repetitive hand, wrist, and finger motions
- Climb stools, steps, or ladders as needed
- Work outdoors in varying weather conditions
- Lift and carry up to 20 lbs.

Benefits

Health	Employee Assistance Plan	Paid Sick
Dental	Cafeteria 125 Plan	Paid Vacation
Vision	Retirement Plan	Personal Days
Life Insurance	14 Observed Holidays	

Schedule

Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; however, evenings, weekends, holidays and on call responsibilities may be required based on program or agency needs

Compensation

Salary Range: \$23.00 - \$25.00 per hour, depending on qualifications and experience

This is a full-time, non-exempt position.

An Equal Opportunity Employer: Selection will be based solely on merit and will be without discrimination because of age, race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability.