



Jewish Family Service of San Diego

Jewish Family Service (JFS) is a premier social service agency with a wide range of services that Empower Individuals & Families to Move Toward Self-Sufficiency, Support Aging With Dignity, and Foster Community Connection & Engagement across San Diego. Together with dedicated volunteers, we serve thousands of individuals and families each year.

Title/Position: Volunteer Mental Health Justice Representative

Program:

Would you like to be part of a dynamic and dedicated team of advocates who travel the county representing mental health individuals and ensuring that their rights are upheld? The Patient Advocacy Department at JFS fights for human welfare and justice within the community. The department serves individuals with mental illness who are receiving services in psychiatric hospitals, crisis centers, and long-term care facilities. The Mental Health Justice Representative volunteer position is a unique opportunity to fearlessly advocate for patient rights, provide representation in due process hearings for individuals in acute psychiatric facilities, and strengthen department services through administrative support.

Goal of Position: Everyone has the right to be represented during any state of mind. The goal of this position is to develop a dynamic group of volunteers who demonstrate great compassion and accountability in their desire for supporting their fellow man and woman. Equipped with the necessary tools and training, volunteers will be able to represent patients in due process court hearings, as well as be administrative supports for the growing department. Currently, Patient Advocacy calendars thousands of hearings per year, which occur in approximately twenty psychiatric facilities throughout San Diego County. Volunteers who can give their time and support will be an invaluable asset in the fight against injustice.

Benefits:

- Ability to help advocate and provide a voice to a vulnerable population
- Learn about legal processes, social justice and the rights of people receiving mental health services
- Direct and flexible hands-on training and shadowing
- Be a part of an award-winning, esteemed program and organization
- Mileage Reimbursement of \$0 .51/per mile

Tasks/responsibilities:

- Complete approximately 10 hours of job training with available Patient Advocacy staff
- *In relation to the hearing(s):*
- Volunteer will be contacted on Fridays with hearing information for the upcoming Monday morning hearings.

- They will be contacted by the department office manager and will be assigned from a set list of volunteers, on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Must be able to respond to hearing requests by phone within two hours
- If accepted, volunteer will meet with each client for thirty minutes prior to hearing
- Volunteer will ascertain from client whether they wish to remain in the facility for further mental health treatment
- Volunteer will attend thirty minute due process hearings and represent clients at hearings (specifically between 8am-11am, Mondays). No more than three hearings would be assigned to a volunteer on any given Monday.
- After the hearing, Volunteer has a responsibility to answer basic questions about hearing outcome, explain writ of habeas process (if applicable), and provide contact information for Patient Advocacy Program
- Confidently navigate health facilities throughout San Diego County
- When available, attend weekly staff meetings and do representation de-briefs with Patient Advocacy staff
- Assist in program development and department operations

Qualifications:

- Passion for fighting social injustice with sensitivity and professionalism
- Challenge seeker who gets satisfaction in helping a vulnerable population
- Ability to work independently with good judgment and discretion
- Sensitive and patient in difficult situations
- Desire to collaborate and be a positive ambassador of the team and organization
- Possesses strong critical thinking and communication skills
- Must be flexible; easily adaptable
- Legal or mental health experience preferred, but not required

Requirements:

- Must have own vehicle to be able to travel to facilities throughout San Diego county
- Valid license and proof of insurance
- Must be at least 21 years of age
- College degree or currently pursuing higher education
- English speaking (bilingual a plus)
- Complete a volunteer application at www.jfssd.org/volapp
- Complete volunteer interview and orientation with JFS Volunteer Engagement

Time Commitment:

- 10 Hr. training session (flexible hours)
- Once trained, must be available 8am-11am, Mondays
- Minimum six month commitment

Worksite/Department:

Training to be completed at Jewish Family Service, 8804 Balboa Avenue, San Diego. Hearings will take place at facilities throughout San Diego County

Immediate Supervisor: Patient Advocate