

Harrison County Child Advocacy Center

REPORTS TO:

The Executive Director

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Family Advocate is responsible for providing comprehensive and coordinated victim support and advocacy services from the initial disclosure of abuse until a case is designated as closed by the MDIT or until the final disposition of any criminal justice or civil proceedings.

The Family Advocate must be able to recognize the specific needs of each victim and, with MDIT involvement, formulate an appropriate response which routinely includes referrals for trauma-focused therapy and specialized medical examination and treatment.

In addition, the Family Advocate acts as the primary liaison between a child victim of abuse and his or her protecting caregivers with members of the multidisciplinary investigative team (MDIT). The Family Advocate provides ongoing assistance to child victims and their protecting caregivers in navigating the multiple systems involved in the HCCAC response.

Family Advocate I Job Description

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Welcome children and their protecting caregivers to the HCCAC and foster a sense of physical and psychological safety.
- Remain available during the forensic interview to support protecting caregivers and inform them about the interview process and the coordinated, multidisciplinary response facilitated by the HCCAC.
- Provide education and access to victim's rights by law and assist in filing crime victim's compensation applications.
- Participate in information sharing with attending members of the MDIT.
- Assess individual needs and cultural considerations for the child victim and his or her protecting caregivers to ensure that those needs are addressed throughout the investigation and criminal justice response.
- Monitor children in waiting areas of the HCCAC to ensure their safety and comfort.
- Provide school absence excuses for the child victim (and work excuses for the protecting caregiver, when requested).
- Request "Handle with Care" notices be provided to the school of the child victim to ensure school personnel are aware that the child may have experienced a traumatic event.
- Provide referrals for trauma-focused mental health therapy and specialized medical treatment.
- Maintain awareness of available community resources.
- Become familiar with agency policies and procedures as outlined in the HCCAC Employee Handbook and MDIT Protocol.

HOURS:

This is a full-time position: 40 hours per week. Agency hours are 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. Hours for the position may vary according to job demands. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required.

SALARY RANGE:

\$30,000 - \$38,000

BENEFITS:

- Fully funded health insurance benefits*
- Retirement Benefits – 2% - 3% of Base Salary*
- Life Insurance Policy - \$35,000*
- Paid holidays in accordance with the State of WV Holiday Calendar
- Paid vacation time:
 - 1 – 3 Years – 12 days
 - 4 – 7 Years – 18 days
 - 7 + Years – 24 days
- Paid sick time:
 - 1 day per month – not to exceed accumulation of more than 30 days

**Funding of health insurance, life insurance, and retirement benefits are dependent upon continued grant funding.*

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Facilitate access to other services as needed, including, but not limited to: protective orders, domestic violence intervention, housing, food, clothing, transportation, financial assistance, and interpreters.
- Schedule and conduct follow-up contact with protecting caregivers.
- Document and track follow-up contacts, services, and case disposition updates utilizing NCAtrak and the VOCA reporting spreadsheet.
- Maintain confidential client files with signed intake documentation, copies of all court orders and requests, relevant news articles, and postal delivery confirmation.
- Participate in MDIT meetings in order to discuss the distinct needs of the child and their protecting caregivers, plan associated support services to ensure the seamless coordination of services, and ensure concerns of the child and protecting caregivers are shared with the team.
- Engage the child (when appropriate) and protective caregivers in participation in the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases.
- Provide updates to the protecting caregivers on case status, continuances, dispositions, sentencing, and inmate status notification (including offender release from custody).
- Maintain detailed documentation for use in MDIT case review meetings.
- Provide court education including, but not limited to, courthouse/courtroom tours, support, and accompaniment to criminal justice proceedings.
- Participate in ongoing education in the field of victim advocacy and child maltreatment consisting of a minimum of 8 contact hours every 2 years with a focus on the dynamics of abuse, trauma-informed services, professional ethics and boundaries, and understanding the multidisciplinary response.

BACKGROUND CHECKS:

The selected candidate will be required to pass a Child Abuse Registry and criminal history background check.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participate in all family advocacy meetings facilitated by WVCAN.
- Participate in advocacy service provider meetings in Harrison, Taylor, Barbour, and Doddridge counties.
- Answer the phone as assigned and accept referrals for forensic interviews allowable by agency protocol.
- Schedule forensic interviews as requested by MDIT members utilizing the shared on-line HCCAC calendar.
- Perform other related duties and provide services as assigned by the Executive Director.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- High school diploma or equivalent.
- Training in or the capability to use computer software that generates databases and reports.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

The physical requirements described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the position of Family Advocate. While performing the duties of this position, the Family Advocate is regularly required to talk and hear and is frequently required to use his or her hands or fingers to operate general office equipment. The employee is required to stand, walk, sit, and reach with hands and arms. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this position include close vision, distance vision, and the ability to adjust focus. The noise level in the work environment is usually low to moderate. Individual must be available for travel for service provision and training purposes. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these functions.

SUCCESS PROFILE:

The Family Advocate must be approachable, non-judgmental, demonstrate respect for children and families with diverse values and cultures, and have an empathetic nature. A positive attitude, flexibility, and complex problem-solving skills are necessary to succeed. Research demonstrates that caregiver support is essential to reducing trauma and improving outcomes for children. The Family Advocate's professional commitment to work with clients to achieve best outcomes will have a profound impact on the child's ability to move through traumatic experiences and thrive.