

PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCACY PROGRAM
A PROGRAM OF THE
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF ALAMEDA COUNTY
954 60th Street, Ste. 10
Oakland, CA 94608
(510) 835-5010

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Applicants

FROM: Francesca Tenenbaum, Director of Patients' Rights Advocates

SUBJECT: APPLICATION PROCESS FOR POSITIONS OF PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCATES (100% FTE)

Enclosed is a copy of the application form and a detailed job description for the position of **PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCATE in Alameda County**.

Mental Health Association of Alameda County
954 60th Street, Ste. 10
Oakland, CA 94608

ATTN: TITLE 9 APPLICATION

A. APPLICATION **DEADLINE**

Applications must be received in the MHAAC office by 5:00 pm on **Monday, 09/11/2017**. Please submit in person by email at ptadvocatejob@mhaac.org or by postal mail. Faxed applications will not be reviewed.

B. SELECTION PROCESS

Applications are screened. Finalist applicants are selected and invited to an individual interview(s). Applicants not selected to be interviewed and applicants interviewed and not hired will be notified by mail as soon as feasible after the close of the interview process.

Our office is open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday-Friday.

Mental Health Association of Alameda County

954 60th Street, Suite. 10
Oakland, California 94608

POSITION AVAILABLE-FULL-TIME

PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCATE/PATIENT REPRESENTATIVE SERVING PERSONS IN ALAMEDA COUNTY

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

The Mental Health Association of Alameda County (MHAAC) is an independent, nonprofit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. MHAAC assists and advocates on behalf of persons who have a mental illness and their families.

PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCACY/PATIENT REPRESENTATION PROGRAM

The Patients' Rights Advocacy/Patient Representation program deploys staff members to investigate complaints by mental health patients and residents that their rights have been violated. This program also provides patient representation at certification review hearings (where the issue is whether there is probable cause to certify a patient for up to 14 days of intensive, involuntary mental health treatment) and at capacity hearings (where the issue is whether the patient has the capacity to give informed consent to treatment with antipsychotic medications).

THE POSITION

The occupant of this position will be based out of our Alameda County office and carry out the duties of County Patients' Rights Advocate including hearing representation in ALAMEDA COUNTY. The position also includes occasionally providing coverage in San Mateo County. Patients' Rights Advocacy includes: investigating and attempting to resolve complaints; monitoring facilities for compliance with patients' rights; and, training mental health staff members and informing patients about patient's rights. Patient representation involves 1) meeting with patients who have been certified for up to 14 days of intensive involuntary treatment or who are alleged to be incapable of giving informed consent for antipsychotic medication, 2) providing appropriate assistance, 3) providing representation at Certification Review Hearings and Capacity Hearings.

TYPICAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- * Ensure that notices which set forth the rights of mental health patients/residents are posted in mental health facilities and residential programs.
- * Respond to inquiries regarding patients' rights and laws and procedures on voluntary and involuntary mental health treatment.
- * Investigate complaints of patients' rights violations in a timely manner.
- * Monitor mental health facilities, services, and programs for compliance with statutory and regulatory patients' rights provisions.
- * Provide training and education about mental health laws regarding patients' rights to mental health providers.
- * Act as an advocate on behalf of patients/residents who are unable to register a complaint because of their own mental and/or physical conditions.

- * Conduct interviews with involuntary patients who have been certified to: help each patient understand the certification review process and the reasons given as to why he/she has been certified; assist the patient in obtaining the presence of any other person(s) he/she may wish to have at his/her hearing; explore with the patient any feasible alternatives to his/her continued involuntary hospitalization; and, ascertain whether the patient wishes the patients' rights advocate to assist or to represent him/her at the Hearing. Also, arrange for an interpreter, if needed.
- * Provide assistance to and representation for involuntary patients whose treating psychiatrist has petitioned the Superior Court for a ruling on the capacity of the patient to give informed consent to anti-psychotic medication. This entails: interviewing the patient to assist him/her in understanding informed consent and the capacity hearing process, and to determine what other assistance the patient wants or needs in preparation for the hearing; carefully examining the patient's medical record to monitor for compliance with the law regarding informed consent, and interviewing facility staff when the record is incomplete; and, consulting with psychiatrists or other treating staff prior to hearings when appropriate.
- * Perform any other pre-hearing investigation which appears warranted, including review of the patient's charts and other relevant documents.
- * Attend Certification review and/or capacity hearings, providing whatever level of assistance or representation each patient has requested.
- * Maintain accurate and organized case records for patients who have Certification review or capacity hearings or whose complaints regarding patients' rights violations have been investigated.
- * Prepare periodic reports and summaries regarding Hearing and investigation cases and the outcomes.
- * Work efficiently and effectively with patients, Hearing Officers, and mental health facility staff members to provide high-quality advocacy for patients under certification.
- * Other duties as assigned by the Program Director.

QUALIFICATIONS

(Note: relevant experience gained working in a volunteer capacity will be considered in assessing an applicant's qualifications.)

- One year of experience in mental health or related social services or 6 months of experience delivering advocacy services to people with mental illness.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively and responsibly away from the Program's main office and with minimal direct supervision.
- Ability to work effectively and appropriately within the mental health and other service systems.
- Must demonstrate respect and compassion for patients and act to support patient's ability to be self-determining.
- Personal stability and an ability to work well under pressure.
- Ability to work professionally and effectively with people with mental illness.

- Ability to assist persons in presenting their cases in an administrative law hearing or similar type of hearing.
- Ability to quickly ascertain what are relevant facts in a given situation and to efficiently conduct informal investigations.
- Must have a motor vehicle available for daily use, possess a valid California Drivers License, carry auto liability insurance as required by law, and have an acceptable motor vehicle report, as determined by our insurance broker. (Position requires extensive local travel up to 600 miles per month).

ADDITIONAL DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

- Prior work as a Patients' Rights Advocate and/or Certification Review Hearing Representative.
- Knowledge of California mental health law and especially of provisions governing involuntary treatment.
- Experience in representing clients at non-judicial hearings (e.g. Social Security Disability Appeals hearings).
- Certificate of Training; Patients' Rights Advocacy, by State Department of Mental Health.
- Familiarity with the mental health service system in Alameda County or Alameda County.

HOURS OF WORK: 40 hours per week, full-time, including paid lunch break. Hours to be worked are usually Monday through Friday, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. However, occupants of this position will sometimes be expected to begin work before 9:00 A.M. or to work after 5 P.M. and, occasionally, on legal holidays. The occupant of this position will be based in the MHAAC office in Alameda County. Rarely, travel to San Mateo County may be required.

SUPERVISOR: The occupant of this position reports to the MHAAC Director of Patients' Rights Advocacy Services.

SALARY: \$\$2,751.25 /mo 100% FTE per month. (Required local travel is reimbursed at **53.5 cents per mile**.) (Employee benefits include generous vacation, sick leave and health/dental insurance-Details available.)

TO APPLY: To obtain an application contact Mental Health Association of Alameda County, 954 - 60th Street, Suite 10, Oakland, CA 94608. Telephone: 510-835-5010, 9 am to 5 pm or go to the MHAAC website at www.mhaac.org and click on "Jobs".

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The MHAAC Is An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Women, Members Of Minority Groups, Veterans, And Persons With Disabilities Are Specifically Encouraged To Apply For Employment.