

YOUTH PEER ADVOCATE

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This position is responsible for assisting youth who are navigating the foster care or justice systems in developing skills for empowerment and successful community living. The incumbent serves as mentor, role model and system navigator to youth (ages 16-21) who have been in, or are aging out of, the foster care system. The incumbent assists youth by providing guidance and their personal experience of having been through the foster care or justice system as well as serving as a support system for the youth. The work is performed under the direct supervision of a higher-level staff member. Supervision over the work of others is not a responsibility of this position. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Provides youth with guidance to help them effectively deal with daily problems;
Suggests remedial or corrective actions to help the individual make better adjustments and in planning intelligent life goals;
Attends meetings as a peer advocate for child welfare and Juvenile Justice involved youth;
Develops positive relationships with youth and connects them with resources and services necessary to support their individual growth and success;
Participates in public speaking engagements and various training sessions;
Acts as a liaison between the Department of Social Services, caseworkers, contract agencies and various other service providers to engage and support youth in reaching their service plan goals.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Working knowledge of the foster care program and justice system; working knowledge of community resource agencies, educational services and programs available; working knowledge of self-help techniques; ability to secure confidence and cooperation of youth; ability to understand and follow instructions; ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with youth and staff.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and a former participant in the foster care or juvenile justice system.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Possession of a valid New York State driver's license.