

HOPE HOUSE OF SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN, INC.
Staff Attorney Job Description

POSITION: **Staff Attorney**

STATUS **Full-time, Benefits Eligible**

REPORTS TO: **Director of Victim Services**

POSITION SUMMARY: The Staff Attorney provides information, referral, advocacy, court accompaniment and other direct representation to clients of Hope House of South Central Wisconsin. Hope House serves victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, child abuse and human trafficking. Services will primarily include direct representation for restraining orders and Title IX, but may also include rental or eviction assistance and other civil legal matters. This position will refer clients to other resources for immigration support, long-term family law work, Shiffra-Green motions, and other requests from clients which we are unable to provide.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Client Services and Program Development:

- Conduct individual intakes and interviews with clients seeking legal support from Hope House.
- Provide information about restraining orders, divorce, criminal court proceedings, immigration law, and other legal procedures.
- Always maintain safety as the primary focus for clients and staff.
- Ensure that services are survivor-centered, strengths-based, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive and empowerment focused.
- Work collaboratively with the agency's Advocates, as well as other community partners.
- Provide information about other legal resources and referrals to other community resources, as appropriate.
- Assist clients in obtaining appropriate legal forms and provide guidance and assistance in drafting and filing court documents.
- Always maintain client confidentiality.
- Represent clients at injunction hearings and other court-related proceedings.
- Assist clients in safety planning, identifying options, problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- Provide presentations for the purpose of generating referrals and providing more informed community support for survivors of violence.
- Possess a knowledge of Crime Victims' Rights.
- Have an understanding of the cycle of violence, power and control dynamics, and common/recurring patterns relating to issues surrounding domestic violence and sexual violence, and survivors.
- Regularly inform and update the Co-Directors on needs for clients and the larger community to enhance victim support and Hope House programming.
- Negotiate and/or mediate settlement agreements.
- Be informed and competent in providing services or referring in the following areas:
 - a. Title IX – assisting with academic accommodations and ensuring access to education free from discrimination and harassment.
 - b. Restraining orders – filing and representation.

- c. Housing – early lease terminations, housing protections from eviction or liability for unpaid rent, etc.
- d. Consumer debt – small claims, debt settlement, financial assistance, bankruptcy, foreclosure defense/mitigation, credit repair.
- e. Family law – as related to: property/asset division, debt settlement, spousal support and/or maintenance, visitation schedules, navigating the policies of guardian ad litem, etc.
- f. Employment law – wrongful termination, denial of accruals in benefits,
- g. Immigration law – in collaboration with RISE legal clinic, assistance in obtaining the required documentation to initiate a naturalization application.
- h. Providing information and referral for Shiffra-Green motions.
- Provide back-up crisis line coverage as needed or assigned.
- Other responsibilities as assigned.

Strategic/Community Partnerships:

- Actively participate in Coordinated Community Response Teams, Sauk County Firearm Surrender Committee, Sauk County Courthouse Security Committee and other community groups as needed or assigned.
- Serve as a liaison between agency, victim/survivors and the community.
- Increase community awareness on victim needs and agency services
- Provide training, and consultation for staff and volunteers on legal issues.
- Attend trainings and continuing education activities as assigned/approved.
- Adhere to agency policies and work rules, including confidentiality and disclosure. Maintain professional boundaries with agency consumers.

Administrative and Agency Responsibilities:

- Regularly inform the Co-Directors of legal issues and client and community challenges, needs and changes.
- Attend agency staff meetings as required.
- Responsible for file retention, document management and data entry.
- Complete all required service documentation in a thorough and timely manner.
- Engage in behaviors and activities that promote a clean, productive, positive work environment.
- Take appropriate first steps in case of emergency situation.
- Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be a licensed attorney in the state of Wisconsin.
- Must possess strong communication skills.
- Must be organized, self-motivated, and committed to serving victims of crime.
- Two or more years experience providing victim services and/or legal support to victims of crime is preferred.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to stand, sit, talk, hear, walk; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; and stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl. The employee is occasionally required to smell.
- The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 lbs.
- Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, color vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.

WORK CONDITIONS:

The work conditions for this job description are:

- This position is based at the Resource Center in Baraboo. Travel throughout the 5 county service area and Dane county is required occasionally.
- Access to reliable transportation and travel are required to perform essential duties. Must maintain valid Wisconsin driver's license. Obtains and maintains the required motor vehicle liability insurance requirements and an acceptable motor vehicle record.
- Must pass criminal background check.
- Flexible work hours are required to accommodate for after-hours/weekend on call response, client services, meetings and community events.

This information indicates the general nature of work and level of responsibility for this position. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of duties and responsibilities. Hope House strives for a fully inclusive work environment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, familial or marital status, and/or with regard to public assistance or any other characteristic. Hope House is an Equal Opportunity Employer.