

Independent Living Counselor/WORK and STEPS

TIME: Full-time
BENEFITS: Health, Dental, Cafeteria Plan
WAGE: Based on Experience
STATUS: Non-exempt
REPORTS TO: Independent Living Counselor Manager



Independence, Inc.
2001 Haskell Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66046

GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION

The Independent Living Counselor works with people eligible for the Working Healthy/WORK Program and STEPs. This position is responsible for evaluating eligibility, plus developing and maintaining individualized budgets with consumers between the ages of 16-64 to direct their own care needs under the guidelines regulating these services. The position requires sensitivity to the needs of people with disabilities and knowledge of independent living philosophy. The Independent Living Counselor Manager supervises this position.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Provide consumer services per KDHE and MCO requirements/guidelines on an ongoing basis. See WORK Program and STEPs Manual on the KDHE website.
- Serve as point of access for WORK and STEPs participants.
- Assess the consumers' service needs and ensure understanding of the WORK and STEPs program policies.
- Complete necessary evaluation for eligibility and service needs, including transition to HCBS waivers or wait lists if needed.
- Develop with the consumers their Individualized Budget to accurately reflect services approved via the WORK Assessment and assist the consumer in obtaining approval of their Budget.
- Develop with the consumers an Emergency Backup Plan for service delivery.
- Assist consumers to locate, negotiate rates, begin, train, supervise and terminate cost-effective providers or personal assistance services and alternative services.
- Assist consumers to accurately and thoroughly complete, verify and submit required paperwork to service providers, including assistive services and funding applications.
- Assist consumers to complete and submit Working Healthy annual eligibility and six-month review documentation.
- Communicate consumer changes in status, needs, problems, health, and safety concerns to the MCO Care Coordinator and/or WORK Program Manager and submit all documentation in a timely fashion.
- Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation to the MCO Care Coordinator and the Adult Protective Services.
- Ensure that consumers have full and unbiased access to services.
- Ensure that the Individualized Budgets are cost effective and do not exceed monthly allocations.
- Provide individualized assistance to consumers as necessary to access services.
- Provide service, billing, and other agency reports in a timely manner, including database and time tracking entries.
- Work with the Business Manager on service billing and other reports as necessary.
- Maintain appropriate interpersonal relationships with staff, peers, and consumers.
- Participate in state-mandated, technical trainings.

OTHER JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide systems advocacy as opportunities arise or are requested by supervisor.
- Other duties as assigned.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- An associate degree in a related field.
- A minimum of six months personal experience with a disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act; or a minimum one year experience working with or providing services to people with a variety of disabilities.
- Complete at least twelve hours of standardized training annually.
- Complete a two-hour WORK orientation
- Complete and pass the KDHE web-based WORK Independent Living Counseling exam on KS Train.
- Participate in all mandated WORK and Independent Living Counseling training to ensure proficiency of program knowledge, service rules, regulations, policies, and procedures set forth by KDHE.
- A demonstrated understanding of the Independent Living philosophy. IL philosophy training is required.
- Documented outstanding verbal and written communication skills.
- Documented organizational skills.
- Documented problems solving skills.
- Reliable transportation for making home visits.
- Some flexible hours and regional travel required.
- Knowledge and experience working with computers.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Qualified person with a disability.
- Demonstrated commitment to independent living.
- Demonstrated knowledge of a range of disabilities.
- Bachelor's degree and/or related job experience.

- Counseling experience or peer counseling training.

All programs and employment positions of Independence, Inc. are open to all members of the community, without regard to race, color, creed religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, economic status, or disability.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 protects the rights of people with disabilities to equal employment opportunities.

Arrangements will be made if you have a disability that requires an accommodation in completing any part of the employment process.

A request for an accommodation will not affect your opportunities for employment. It is your responsibility to make your needs known.

Call 785/841-0333.

