



Job Description

Job Title: Higher Education Navigator
Reports To: Quality Service Manager
Department: CORE

Summary: This position is primarily responsible for recruiting and connecting incumbent early childhood care and education workforce members with appropriate Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs at 2- and 4-year institutions to obtain additional degrees, licenses, and credentials and to connect them with ECE Scholarship Opportunities.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities: (80%)

Navigators will conduct outreach and follow-up activities; will stay abreast of ECE programs offered by 2- and 4-year institutions within their designated SDA; will support incumbent ECE workforce members in identifying programs that meet their needs; will provide technical assistance on completing the FAFSA, accessing state scholarships and applying to the relevant institution and program.

1. Plan, publicize, and facilitate a minimum of two (2) general informational/educational sessions on higher education and scholarship and financial aid processes/opportunities for incumbent ECE workforce.
2. Download and follow-up on surveys of interest in higher education opportunities received by INCCRRA in assigned SDA.
 - a. Provide follow up contact (e.g., email, phone call, ground mail) to 100% of completed surveys.
3. Provide support to incumbent workforce on assessing needs, sharing information, and connecting them to higher education opportunities through phone calls, email, in-person/virtual meetings).
4. Build relationships with key staff at ECE programs at 2- and 4-year institutions to understand programs and help identify appropriate candidates from incumbent workforce.
5. Collect information on barriers to higher education experienced by incumbent workforce members.
6. Participate in required training programs.

General Duties: (20%)

1. Maintain required job knowledge, skills and core professional competencies by attending and participating in required educational programs, staff meetings, trainings, workshops and other community events to increase public awareness of, and help in the delivery of, CCCC programs and services among parents, providers and others.
2. Achieve a minimum of fifteen (15) hours of continued education each year relevant to the position.
3. Assist in the completion of referral, updates and referral follow ups, as needed.
4. Enter and maintain accurate data in appropriate databases, as needed.
5. Facilitate and participate in team-oriented work environment while valuing individual team members' contributions, appreciation for diversity and confidentiality of standards of the agency.
6. Facilitate trainings periodically as assigned.
7. Perform other duties as assigned.

Performance Measures:

1. Inquiries are handled promptly and accurately, with courtesy and respect shown to all callers and in-person visits.
2. Deliverables are met as set in place by the Illinois Department of Human Services guidelines and goals of assigned programs are achieved within designated timeframes; creative solutions and ideas are sought to achieve these goals.
 - Number of general informational/educational sessions held on Higher Education Opportunities and number of participants at each session
 - Number of surveys of interest submitted to INCCRRA in assigned SDA

- Number of TA activities conducted (e.g., phone calls, email, in-person meetings) by type of activity (e.g., review Higher Ed options, assist with applications, etc.)
 - Number of meetings with ECE programs at 2- and 4-year institutions phone, in-person, email
 - Summary of barriers to higher education reported by incumbent workforce
3. Data is entered with a high degree of accuracy within established timeframes, into appropriate databases.
 4. Employee understands and demonstrates a high level of professionalism. This includes respecting the confidentiality of agency clients/providers, emphasizing quality customer service, maintaining knowledge of early child and care programs, and all information pertaining to Community Child Care Connection, Inc.
 5. Fifteen (15) hours of continuous education achieved.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES: None

QUALIFICATIONS: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily and be able to occasionally travel overnight as business necessitates. Flexibility to adjust schedule to work nights and weekends is occasionally required. The requirements listed are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

EDUCATION and EXPERIENCE: All new employees are required to possess a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university, *and* have two (2) years of experience in early childhood care and education, counseling/social work, family support, adult education, or higher education.

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Ability to problem solve and navigate complexities of large institutions of higher education. Ability to foster the required relationships with a variety of different student populations as well as community college, university, and child care community. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from clients, providers, agency staff, and the general public with consistency and integrity via telephone conversations, in-person visits, and email. Ability to compose professional business correspondence and complete agency and programmatic documents. Ability to accurately, and grammatically, supply written documentation for data entry and reporting, and address groups of 25+ at the local level.

MATHEMATICAL SKILLS: Ability to perform basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

REASONING ABILITY: Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS: None. However, must become a member of the Gateways to Opportunity Registry upon hire and renew membership yearly to remain in compliance with IDHS contract.

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 regularly required to sit; use hands and fingers, handle or feel; reach with hands and arms; and talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to stand and walk. The employee is occasionally required to climb or balance, stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 30 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, and ability to adjust focus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Office environment with moderate temperature and noise levels. Position may offer and/or mandate remote work at times. Must have a reliable internet connection at home and familiarity with digital platforms.