



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title:** Foster Care Specialist

**Ministry:** Good Shepherd Children and Family Services

**Reports To:** Foster Care Supervisor

**Date:** 01/01/2025

## **OUR MISSION**

To bring the healing, help, and hope of Jesus Christ to those in need with a compassionate, caring presence.

## **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Foster Care Specialist provides case management services to children/families in the custody of/or under the supervision of the state agency with a primary focus on permanency, safety and well-being of the child. This position demonstrates a commitment to connecting children to families and keeping families connected and provides all services in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

## **OVERVIEW & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### *CLIENT CONTACT*

- Visit every child in alternative care at least twice monthly with a minimum of one meeting in the child's placement with the placement provider present as well. Additional visits may be required based on the child's needs. This requirement may be reduced with supervisory approval.
- Build rapport with parents in the home of removal, at other institutions (incarceration) or out state.
- Visit each parent at least monthly with any children that remain in the home present during the visit to provide ongoing assessment and service coordination to all family members. Additional visits may be required based on the family's needs.
- Facilitate parent/child and sibling visitation per the client's individualized case plan.

## *PERMANENCY*

- Coordinate parent/child/sibling contacts and visits as described above to facilitate family connections.
- Facilitate Family Support Team (FST) meetings and coordinate service delivery based on the recommendation of the FST to achieve timely permanency for all children.
- Coordinate Permanency Planning Review Team (PPRT) meetings no less than every 180 days to evaluate the appropriateness of the child's placement and need for on-going placement, identify an appropriate permanency plan and a concurrent plan, evaluate progress towards permanency and making changes to the permanency plan.
- Ensure all paperwork is completed, attend all legal proceedings, and assist families seeking financial assistance.
- Follow all legal requirements regarding timeframes for contacting extended family members about custody, possible placement and connections.
- Ensure all family members have been considered as placement options and included in the FST as appropriate. Utilize family finding practices to identify connections and potential placement providers for the children.
- Attend all court hearings, provide factual testimony and follow up on all court order treatment plans and court orders.

## *WELL BEING*

- Complete initial and ongoing assessments of service needs of the child and family including the psychological, developmental and emotional areas of functioning. Based on needs assessment, develop and implement case planning for children and their families.
- Monitor child's placement in alternative care assuring that the child's medical, educational, social and emotional needs are being met.
- Advocate for children and families within the systems impacting service delivery i.e. educational, legal, medical, and mental health systems.
- Attend school, agency, medical, therapeutic and court meetings with child and placement providers as needed.
- Help children and families plan for and adjust to transitions. Utilize the 3-5-7 Model tools to help children process multiple losses and transitions.

## *SAFETY*

- Assist foster parents and kinship caregivers to provide a safe, nurturing environment and coordinate supportive services for the caregiver as needed.
- Identify risk and create safety plans to ensure safety of all children and family members.
- Provide crisis intervention services when needed and be available for after hour's emergencies as they arise within reason.

- Assess child and family functioning, protective factors, family strengths, family needs, stressors, and coping mechanisms in the foster home and the home of removal.
- Provide coaching and skill building activities to families to improve family functioning and help parents improve their ability to care for their child.

#### *GENERAL*

- Maintain the clients' legal record which includes documentation of all clients related activities on the child and family as required by CD and COA. Ensure timely and accurate documentation in the state system (FACES) according to established timeframes.
- Complete written reports, including court reports, case reviews, case plans, referrals and other documents as required by the contract.
- Represent the agency/CD at all court hearings and ensure compliance with court orders.
- Coordinate with community professionals as required, including D.M.H., C.D., M.R.D.D., D.Y.S. Juvenile Court, Family Court, School Personnel, Residential Center Personnel, Hospital and Psychiatric Personnel, etc.
- Attendance at all CD Contractor's meetings/training as required.
- Comply with all confidentiality and security standards imposed by HIPAA, COA, and other external bodies as well as those specified in internal organizational policies.
- Work as an effective member of the Foster Care Team including working peer caseloads during absences, vacations, vacancies, etc. as needed; facilitating team meetings; participating on committees or subgroups; and participating in recruitment efforts for resource families.
- Participate in agency and departmental events that support the general function of the agency or program.
- Respond to all emails and voice messages promptly and courteously.
- Participate in St. Louis Partners peer record reviews as required.
- Attend all Foster Care Team meetings and Good Shepherd all staff meetings.
- Attend training to enhance competencies related to job position and ensure all required job-related knowledge is acquired.
- Gain knowledge and implement new initiatives required by CD or the agency.
- The majority of this job is performed in the community and staff will need to transport clients to activities or appointments and therefore must be 21 years of age, possess a valid driver's license, reliable access to an automobile and valid automobile insurance is required.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

#### **KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS**

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited program of Social Work, Counseling or Psychology and two (2) years of related experience or a Master's degree from an accredited program of Social Work, Counseling or Psychology.
- Working knowledge of community resources.

- Understanding of juvenile court processes and Missouri child welfare laws and practices as well as federal child welfare laws including ICPC, ASFA, ICWA, MEPA and Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.
- An understanding of family systems, the impact of abuse and neglect; substance abuse; mental illness; poverty; grief and loss; and trauma on children and their families.
- Successfully complete basic Child Welfare Practice Training.

## **SKILLS & COMPETENCIES REQUIRED**

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from groups of managers, public groups and/or clients.
- Commitment to ensuring that every child is connected to a family.
- Effective team player
- Non-judgmental attitude.
- Excellent assessment skills.
- Ability to work with a culturally diverse population.
- Ability to develop effective treatment plans for families.
- Ability to advocate assertively for children and their families.
- Flexible schedule including availability on the evenings and weekends according to client's needs.
- Independently arrange a weekly work schedule not to exceed 40 hours to accommodate clients' and agency needs.
- Conflict resolution and crisis intervention.
- Ability to prioritize and organize needed tasks to be successful in the position.
- Ability to make independent decisions through application of common sense, data, and knowledge gained through training and education.
- Proven ability to utilize Microsoft office products (i.e. Outlook, Word, Excel, etc) and navigate various electronic databases. Sufficient typing skills required.
- Strong ability to lead, organize and plan.
- Engage hostile, angry, non-compliant and mandated families who may not want the service

## **RESOURCES FOR WHICH ACCOUNTABLE**

N/A

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EMPLOYEE NAME

DATE

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HR REPRESENTATIVE

DATE