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East Providence will be 1st Rhode Island municipality to hire community response social worker

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – The city of East Providence is seeking a community response social worker to address the many social needs of its residents and first responders.

Once hired, the Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW), will be tasked with addressing a number of social service needs including crisis intervention, advocacy, short-term counseling, community outreach and education, and other social service assistance including domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, suicide, serious or fatal car crashes, other cases involving emotional trauma and assisting individuals in a mental health crisis.

“We feel it’s important to look at the social needs of our community and staff, especially during a time when many are feeling the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Mayor Roberto DaSilva said. “Our vision is to hire someone whose full commitment is the needs of our residents and public safety team.”

The City of East Providence had contracted with an agency to provide this service in the past, but funding for that contract has been significantly reduced and inconsistent over the years.

“The East Providence Police Department looks forward to having someone on staff that can consistently help us meet the varying needs of those we serve,” Chief Christopher Francesconi said. “This will allow us to ensure our community receives proper and timely social services when exposed to a traumatic incident or when dealing with a mental health, domestic violence or substance use crisis.

“Our officers and staff frequently face very stressful, and often traumatic events,” Chief Francesconi added. “My goal is to have a familiar professional who can provide them with the appropriate support, guidance and resources to keep them healthy.”

Community Response Social Worker

POSITION SUMMARY: Under the supervision of the Chief of Police, the Community Response Social Worker is a civilian position that provides crisis intervention, advocacy, short-term counseling, community outreach and education, and other social service assistance to the East Providence Police Department and the City of East Providence.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Makes assessments to determine the best course of action in providing short-term crisis intervention services in emergency situations, such as, but not limited to: domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, suicide, serious or fatal car crashes, other cases involving emotional trauma and assisting individuals in a mental health crisis.
- Provides resources and referrals for additional services and long-term assistance involving situations of domestic disputes, substance use, mental health issues, trauma, grief and loss, adolescent and geriatric concerns.
- Assists in the coordination and administration of the City of East Providence Employee Assistance Program. Works closely with the East Providence Police and Fire Peer Support Team to provide employee defusing, debriefings, psychological first aid and appropriate follow up. Provides police officers and firefighters with appropriate support and referrals.
- Offers support for police officers and firefighters and city employees on managing their mental health and crises i.e. depression, anxiety, ideations or attempts of suicide, substance abuse, homelessness, disorders, grief and trauma responses.
- Provides emergency social service assistance after working hours to officers in the field as needed.
- Conducts community follow ups on referrals from police officers.
- Upon request of a sworn police officer, responds to a call for service with a police officer in the community.
- Under RIGL 40.1-5-7, “Emergency certification”, be authorized or become authorized within the first six (6) months of employment to make emergency certification applications.

OTHER DUTIES:

- Conducts public education programs and events for the East Providence community.
- Completes all requisite trainings and maintain requisite certifications.

- Acts as a bridge between the Department, community and other professionals and agencies to develop and maintain effective working relationships.
- Demonstrates and maintains a high standard of confidentiality and sensitivity.
- Performs all other duties as determined by the Chief of Police (and/ or the Chief's designee) and the City's Human Resource Director

REQUIREMENTS:

- Ability to write professional correspondences and reports
- Ability to maintain confidential and sensitive information
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing
- Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions
- Ability to respond professionally, fairly, timely, effectively and courteously to the public
- Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with the general public and coworkers
- Ability to operate efficiently, effectively and work well under pressure
- Knowledge of basic computer operation, specifically Microsoft Office software
- Occasional night, weekend and emergency availability
- Ability to pass an in-depth background check
- Must possess and maintain a valid state driver's license
- Must maintain certification as a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)
- Maintains appropriate records
- Thorough understanding of and ability to be HIPAA compliant

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Master's degree in social work, public health, human services or related field
- Minimum five (5) years of related work experience
- Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Multilingual, with the ability to speak Spanish, Cape Verdean Creole or Portuguese
- Prior experience working professionally with law enforcement or other criminal justice agencies