



Education and Employment Specialist, My First Place

ABOUT THE JOB

My First Place is an education and employment program developed over two decades ago by First Place for Youth. Envisioning a future where the disparities between foster care involved youth and their non-foster peers have been eliminated, the My First Place program is expanding to communities across the country. Through My First Place, youth receive stable, safe, and affordable housing, community-based case management and individualized education and employment support. A team of staff including a Youth Advocate, and Education and Employment Specialist, and a Housing Specialist, support a youth in working towards healthy living, education, employment, and housing goals set by the youth. HopeWell began serving youth through My First Place in February of 2018 and the program is steadily expanding, now launching in Springfield in 2022. This is an exciting opportunity to join a growing and engaged team to serve transition age youth comprehensively.

The Education and Employment Specialist is a dynamic, collaborative, and results oriented service provider who will partner with 18–22-year-old transition age foster care involved youth to support them in their path to independence. This position requires a professional whose passion for HopeWell’s vision is matched with sound judgment in the face of complex challenges, and a proven track record of successfully supporting transition age and youth.

The Education and Employment Specialist provides targeted employment and education support to foster care youth in our supported housing program. The Employment and Education Specialist must understand what it takes to support youth skills and resources to secure employment and retain employment along with a solid understanding of the traditional school, post-secondary, and alternative education systems. The Specialist must be able to influence, teach, and motivate youth. The Specialist performs both one-on-one support and group-based work. This position maintains a caseload of 36 youth. The Specialist works closely with the Youth Advocate position to coordinate targeted support to youth.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop a partnership strategy with each youth. Provide direct support, coaching, mentoring and intervention to increase youth self-sufficiency and goal attainment.
- Meet with youth regularly to assess educational and employment status and interest; support youth with exploring careers of interest and identifying, enrolling in and pursuing degree programs, vocational programs, and stackable vocational certifications.
- Work collaboratively with other My First Place™ staff and community providers to ensure seamless and effective service delivery. Ensure continuous information sharing and communication.
- Establish and maintain external collaborations with individuals, businesses, agencies, and institutions to identify education and employment opportunities for young adults and create warm handoffs and ongoing collaborations where possible.
- Teach classes and workshops related to career education, job seeking skills and other pre-employment related classes, resumes, development and interviewing skills.



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- Complete documentation including but not limited to initial and regular assessments, Care and Services plans, needs assessments, and progress notes.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will possess:

- Bachelor’s degree in social service field.
- Experience working with transition age youth with complex presentations including chronic trauma preferred.
- Two years of experience working with youth in career development and job placement capacities.
- Excellent knowledge of education and employment resources for youth in the local area.
- Must be comfortable working in community settings.
- High level of personal accountability for the quality and impact of work.
- Excellent communication skills, professional demeanor, sound judgment, and strong organizational skills.
- A high level of professionalism in work and interpersonal interactions with both internal and external contacts
- Strongly prefer a candidate that will have a demonstrated understanding of and competence in serving culturally diverse populations.
- Willingness to work collaboratively, but with the capacity to work independently.
- Computer skills sufficient to perform essential functions.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Daily access to an automobile is required
- A valid MA State Driver’s License
- Clearing of background checks as required by state and federal law.
- Commitment to our organizational vision, missions, and program

BENEFITS

HopeWell offers a comprehensive total rewards package that values employee wellness, work-life balance, and continuous learning. Benefits include **student loan pay-down assistance**, tuition reimbursement, funding for professional development, as well as a full suite of healthcare benefits, and generous paid-time-off.

To apply, please submit an application:

<https://recruiting.paylocity.com/recruiting/jobs/Apply/998135/HopeWell-Inc/Education-and-Employment-Specialist-My-First-Place>