



# Program Director, 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, starting with HopeWell's implementation in Boston in 2018. 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, an 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 in Boston, and now out to Springfield. This is an exciting opportunity to join a growing and engaged team to serve transition age youth comprehensively.

The Program Director of My First Place™, Springfield is an essential part of HopeWell's senior leadership team, responsible for ensuring HopeWell's mission, values, and vision are the cornerstone of this integrated services program for 18 to 22-year-old youth who have been impacted by the foster care system. The position will oversee the full scope of the program's operational and case management services and inspire a culture of continuous improvement that values learning and a commitment to quality. This position requires an experienced professional whose passion for HopeWell's mission is matched with strong leadership, sound judgement in the face of complex challenges, and a proven track record of successfully managing direct-service teams.

**LOCATION:** Springfield, MA

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Launch and oversee the My First Place™ program model in Springfield. As the program launches, this will include providing direct supports to youth and taking on a range of rolls while building program census and the staff team.
- Implement high quality, youth-centered services. Apply trauma-informed, evidence-based, and best practice approaches to transition age youth services.
- Manage program to provide excellent care to youth in ways that are aligned with all applicable agency, affiliate partnership compliance, and state regulatory standards, as well as legal and ethical principles that govern practice, in regards to services provided, record keeping, and data collection and management.
- In collaboration with executive team staff and Boston My First Place™ staff, provide strategic direction to My First Place™ programming, focusing on developing and growing a sustainable program.
- Perform regular outreach to promote referrals, education about services, and utilization of programming and services as intended.
- Establish close and productive working relationships with public and private agency partners and represent the agency at all relevant meetings. Develop strategic alliances with other service providers to ensure that all youth have excellent access to all needed services. Remain apprised of current trends, legislation, and practices in transition age youth services through networking and publications.
- Interview, hire, evaluate and supervise a multi-disciplinary team of program staff. Provide on-going coaching and recognize good work performance through commendations and other staff appreciation programs.

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- Ensure staff are trained on and have tools they need to follow regulations, procedures and changes in protocol as well as agency policies.
- Collaborate with executive team staff to develop budget. Monitor and ensure execution of approved budgets and staffing allocations. Ensure that accurate and prompt billing and payment for services rendered is achieved through monitoring and communication with referring agencies.
- Ensure 24-hour on-call support. Provide backup crisis management support as needed.
- Support youth through the intake process and provide other direct services to youth as needed.
- Other duties as assigned. My First Place™ is being newly launched in Springfield, and as such, the program implementation process will be subjected to a continuous cycle of analysis and assessment as it launches. As we learn more about how to best support youth needs in Springfield, the roles and responsibilities of various team members will likely adapt and change as the program is launched and evolves.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

The ideal candidate will be well versed in services for transition age youth. The candidate will bring a unique skill set of clinical, business, and managerial expertise and will also possess:

- MSW or equivalent degree in the Human Services; Clinical license or license eligible preferred.
- 5 years of experience in child and family services, including extensive experience with transition age youth, providing direct service as well as managing programs and teams.
- 3 years of supervisory/management experience.
- Extensive experience with various youth support strategies that use client-centered and trauma-informed approaches; knowledge of best practices in transition age youth field.
- Demonstrated understanding of and competence in serving culturally diverse populations.
- Decisive, effective leadership and management skills. Strong interpersonal skills, with the ability to drive high levels of performance, engagement, and accountability.
- A high degree of effective oral and written communications skills.
- Advanced analytical and problem-solving skills and judgement with specific application to crisis management. Ability to gather and use information and data to monitor program outcomes and manage workloads.
- Demonstrated ability to organize, plan, and prioritize activities with specific attention to higher level strategies while ensuring that details are also effectively addressed.
- Must be comfortable working in community settings and supporting a team who is consistently in the field.
- Successful experience in strategic program development and growth, and entrepreneurial spirit a plus.
- Computer skills sufficient to perform essential functions.

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- Daily access to an automobile is required.
- A valid MA State Driver's License.
- Remain current in all DCF required trainings.
- Clearing of background checks as required by state and federal law.

## **WORKPLACE CULTURE AND BENEFITS**



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HopeWell has an unparalleled work culture, with an emphasis on diversity, belonging, inclusion, equity, and holistic wellness. At HopeWell, each team member is called to uphold and live daily the values of empathy, strength, learning, and integrity. HopeWell is an environment where we laugh and smile while handling serious, life-changing work.

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.