

Job Title: Harm Reduction Specialist

Job Status: ONGOING

(2) Part-Time positions OR (1) Full-Time position available for the following:

Job Summary:

Kalamazoo Harm Reduction is a small syringe access program operated by COPE Network in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Kalamazoo Harm Reduction provides free safer drug use and safer sex supplies, support services, and linkage to care to program participants, including but not limited to individuals who use drugs, individuals who are unhoused or precariously housed, individuals who are at risk of or living with HIV / Hepatitis C, and individuals seeking substance use treatment, recovery services, or peer support.

The Harm Reduction Specialist position assists the Harm Reduction Program Supervisor in the day-to-day operations of Kalamazoo Harm Reduction's syringe access program. This work includes compassionately and effectively engaging high-risk individuals in community-based settings to provide a variety of services and referrals to care. This work also includes managing supplies, tracking engagements and other data, and assisting with program development. This position requires use of a reliable personal vehicle to accomplish daily objectives such as deliveries of supplies or services within Kalamazoo County. The Harm Reduction Specialist reports directly to the Harm Reduction Program Supervisor and may work closely with them, employees of COPE Network, other agencies, or independently depending on scheduling and program needs.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Professionally represent the program and knowledgeably respond to inquiries about the program with accurate, appropriate information.
- Effectively identify individuals who can benefit from the program, register new participants, and conduct intake interviews regarding sensitive and confidential health and behavior information.
- Effectively communicate with program participants in a professional and timely manner both in person and utilizing phone calls or texts to achieve objectives such as scheduling appointments, arranging meet-ups, conducting assessments, providing services, and providing referrals.
- Coordinate and fulfill pick-ups or deliveries in a safe and organized manner while working independently utilizing a personal vehicle in street-based settings, or while working with other staff or agencies in various environments as required.

- Responsibly manage and stock supplies, assemble supply kits, and record supply inventory.
- Maintain precise documentation of encounters with participants, supplies distributed, services provided, referrals to care, assignment progress, daily tasks, mileage driven, hours worked, and more.
- Maintain timely, consistent communication with team members and/or supervisors about schedules, daily tasks, and more, while attending regular check-ins and meetings.
- Assist the program staff with planning, evaluation, and development of the program, protocols and practices, educational materials, fundraisers, projects, and more.
- Maintain an emotionally and physically safe environment for program staff, participants, volunteers, community partners, general community members, and other agencies when encountered.
- Assist in procedures and inspections related to cleanliness, organization, and safety of workplace environments such as office spaces, storage spaces, building grounds, or vehicles.
- Other duties as assigned by supervisors, or other duties assigned as the program evolves.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- Strong knowledge of or ability to understand harm reduction concepts and strategies, particularly in regards to safer drug use, overdose prevention, addiction and recovery services, transmission of infectious pathogens, safer sex, and mental health.
- Lived experience with or personal knowledge of substance use (*including alcohol*), injection or inhaled drug use, substance use treatment or recovery services, and/or syringe access programs *preferred*.
- Knowledge of important streets, neighborhoods, and landmarks in Kalamazoo County, Michigan, or ability to easily, safely, and confidently navigate within county limits independently.
- Experience in or certifications for peer support or coaching related to mental health, safer sex, safer drug use strategies, addiction, or recovery *preferred*.
- Lived experience with or knowledge of HIV/AIDS, PreP/PEP, HCV, COVID, and existing community resources related to safer sex, blood borne pathogens, and/or infectious diseases *preferred*.

Skill in:

- Compassionately engaging with a wide variety of individuals who use drugs, who experience co-occurring substance use and mental health issues, who engage in high-risk activities, who experience houselessness, or who are marginalized in other ways while behaving in a safe, respectful, non-judgmental, and confidential manner.

- Working independently and as part of a team. This includes being skilled in self motivation, self management, and effective organization of one's time, commitments, and tasks, while maintaining accountability to and regular communication with a team.
- Maintaining detailed and legible encounter records and precise data collection. Skill in compiling information into forms or written reports using various basic computer programs or other methods of record keeping.
- Interpersonal and communication skills for establishing and maintaining effective, trusting, collaborative, and productive relationships with participants, staff, and partners.
- Crisis response and de-escalation tactics. Skill in working with participants facing high pressure or high stress situations and conflicts. Skill in navigating complex or high-pressure environments and interactions with good judgment, utilizing professional and non-violent communication.

Ability to:

- Effectively communicate in English, both orally and in writing. Additional languages (*particularly Spanish*) preferred but not required.
- Follow critical health and safety guidelines regarding daily tasks, collecting and handling of biohazard waste (used sharps), COVID precautions, and other workplace protocols.
- Navigate a work environment where highly complex or emotional subjects and situations related to substance use, overdose, homelessness, communicable diseases, high-risk behavior, physical and mental health challenges, trauma, the criminal/legal system, incarceration, poverty, abuse, and other potentially difficult topics are regularly encountered.
- Effectively communicate essential health and safety information to participants once taught, including but not limited to safer drug use strategies, overdose prevention information, how to use naloxone, and how to use drug testing kits.
- Work alongside community partners or other agencies, performing daily tasks or assigned projects as needed.
- Receive general guidance and direction to perform a variety of non-routine tasks and responsibilities as needed.
- Maintain confidentiality of agency, staff, and participant information.

This Job is Ideal for Someone Who:

- Has lived experience with substance use, homelessness, and/or sex work and has a strong understanding of and belief in harm reduction practices and principles.
- Is people-oriented, enjoys meeting and interacting with people, and enjoys helping others.
- Is highly self-motivated and organized with the confidence to work independently in a variety of settings.

- Has strong communication skills and is detail oriented.
- Is able to deal with difficult topics or interactions with care, compassion, and assertiveness.
- Has a demonstrated commitment to supporting drug user autonomy, gender self determination, and racial, economic, and disability justice.

Qualifications:

- Valid Driver’s License and ability to get a chauffeur's license [*Required*]
- Reliable vehicle available to provide deliveries and accomplish work objectives [*Required*]
- Recovery coach experience or certification [*Preferred but not required*]
- At least one year of experience working or volunteering in community/social services, substance use services, mental health services, health sciences, public health, legal advocacy, or related fields [*Preferred but not required*]
- Must submit to relevant background checks [*Each applicant will be given fair consideration and a fair chance upon review of background checks*]

Compensation: Full time position: salaried range of \$28,000 - \$32,640. Part time position: ~\$15 hourly.

Schedule: Kalamazoo Harm Reduction’s primary operating hours are Monday through Friday between 9am - 5pm. The Harm Reduction Specialist’s schedule can be flexible for the right candidate, with preference given for candidates who are able to work a majority of their hours Monday through Friday during the hours of 10am - 4pm with remaining hours completed mornings, evenings, or weekends. Individuals who need certain days or times off, or who would like to further discuss the parameters of our schedule flexibility are still encouraged to apply. *Please note your schedule preferences or restrictions in your message or cover letter to us.*

- Full time schedule expectations: 32 - 40 hours a week.
- Part time schedule expectations: 15 - 20 hours a week.

Travel Requirements: Daily local travel in Kalamazoo County with reliable personal vehicle required to fulfill deliveries. Distances may range from as little as 1 mile a day to upwards of 80 miles or more per day, with distances each day dependent on frequency and distance of deliveries or other assignments. The ability to legally and safely drive, utilizing a phone as a GPS, during scheduled delivery hours is required for this position. Driving in all weather conditions, including early morning or nighttime darkness may be required. Mileage is reimbursed by the program once a month using federal mileage reimbursement standards.

Working Environment: The Harm Reduction Specialist will work out of a climate controlled office, remotely out of a vehicle, and at various locations (indoors and outdoors) around Kalamazoo County. Some outdoor environments include high or low traffic commercial areas, high or low traffic residential streets, parks, forests, and other remote locations in all seasons and weather conditions.

Physical Requirements: While performing the duties of this job, the Harm Reduction Specialist is required to stand, sit, and walk for extended periods of time. Walking for extended periods outdoors while transporting supplies in all environments and weather conditions may be required. The employee must stoop, bend, lift, or move items of various weights and sizes up to 50lbs. Ability to use hands to finger, handle, feel, and separate small supplies to assemble kits required. Specific vision abilities required include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus for the purpose of safely driving and navigating varying working environments, weather conditions, and encounters in the field.

COVID-19 Precaution(s): Conscientiousness, caution, and care about the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic required. Daily, strict masking with a KN95, N95, or p100 elastomeric is required when working with others, often for extended periods of time, to protect both program participants and other employees [*personal protective equipment such as masks can be provided*]. Physical distancing when meeting with participants is strongly recommended. Remote work and/or physical distancing from other employees, as well as other necessary workplace accommodations to avoid transmission of illnesses such as COVID may be required. Willingness to submit to COVID testing and to provide ongoing disclosures of personal COVID status, illness, high-risk activity or travel, and contact with individuals positive for COVID-19 strongly preferred to prevent transmission of illness to staff or participants.

TO APPLY: Please send a message or brief cover letter AND a resume along with contact information to kzooharmredux@gmail.com. Please include why you are interested in this position, as well as any schedule availability, preferences, or limitations in your message or cover letter (*please note whether you are applying for a part time position, full time position, or either one*). Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

- People of Color and members of the LGBTQIA+ community are strongly encouraged to apply.
- Previous applicants, volunteers, or participants of Kalamazoo Harm Reduction or other COPE Network programs encouraged to apply.