

2024-2025 AmeriCorps Member Position Description



Partner Organization Name: Orleans Public Defenders

Corps Member Position Title: Program Design and Evaluation Coordinator

Supervisor: Wan Qi Kong

Days/Hours of Service: M-F 9:00 am - 5 pm

Physical Location: 2601 Tulane Ave

Organization Mission and/or Goals:

The mission of The Orleans Public Defenders Office (OPD) is to fight for our clients by providing excellent client-centered representation, reforming the criminal legal system, and creating a network or resilience within the affected communities.

Program Mission and/ or Goals:

The Orleans Public Defenders Office provides holistic, community-based representation for all indigent criminal defendants in Orleans Parish. Corps members will work within the Client Services Division (CSD) at OPD. CSD provides a broad range of services to mitigate the significant consequences of incarceration and/or arrest of the individual, the families affected, and the community as a whole by connecting clients with services to prevent future contact with the criminal legal system.

Member Position Summary:

The Client Services Division (CSD) is dedicated to providing clients with personalized service plans as an effective alternative to incarceration. In this context, the role of the Program Design and Evaluation Coordinator is instrumental in enhancing the capacity of our Pretrial Release Advocacy Team. This specialized team is committed to assisting clients in avoiding jail time by facilitating access to treatment, social services, and community resources. As the Program Design and Evaluation Coordinator, your mission will be to assess the program's efficacy and deliver constructive feedback that supports our social workers, advocates, and attorneys in their client advocacy efforts.

Over the course of the year, you'll develop a deep understanding of each team member's role through shadowing opportunities and direct service to clients through impactful activities. You'll acquire hands-on experience in evaluating client needs, crafting service plans to address those needs, and effectively communicating your findings and recommendations. This role not only allows

you to contribute significantly to our clients' success but also offers a comprehensive learning experience in service planning and program evaluation.

Member Impact

Our client's primary goal is securing release from jail and obtaining the necessary support to prevent re-incarceration. This crucial support often entails treatment for substance abuse, mental health issues, or managing other chronic conditions. At times, it also encompasses assistance with social necessities such as securing housing, finding employment, or pursuing educational opportunities. Our dedicated team is committed to offering this support and vigorously advocating for our clients' release. We engage directly with each client to conduct comprehensive assessments, formulate tailored plans addressing their unique needs, and leverage these plans in our advocacy for their release. Our social workers and advocates foster enduring relationships with our clients, guiding them through the implementation of their support plans.

As an AmeriCorps member, you will play a pivotal role in amplifying the reach and efficacy of our program. You'll gain hands-on experience in the multifaceted activities essential for client support and contribute to the program's evolution by evaluating its performance and suggesting improvements. This opportunity not only allows you to directly impact our clients' lives but also to enhance the program's capacity to assist a broader segment of our community more effectively.

Essential Functions of Position:

As the Corps member serving within the Client Services Division, you will perform tasks essential to building capacity of our social work and advocacy teams. Essential tasks include reviewing client profiles according to specific criteria to determine the appropriate range of services. This task is essential for you to make recommendations about the range of services offered to each client. You will also be expected to review client data in order to design reports that evaluate the quality and quantity of services provided. Data review is essential because you will use these reports to make recommendations for updates to our operations with the goal of increasing capacity. Finally, you will learn from our experienced team of social workers and advocates by shadowing and eventually working with clients directly in order to gain hands on experience that will inform your evaluations and recommendations.

Skills, knowledge and trainings the corps members should expect to gain from this position

Working for a law office provides many opportunities for gaining experience through on the ground advocacy. You will learn valuable writing and evaluation skills such as writing project proposals or letters of support for clients. As a member of the office, you will have access to frequent trainings on a wide variety of topics from mental health to immigration advocacy. Making connections with other services in the city is a large part of any role at OPD and you will have plenty of opportunities to build your professional network through your role.

Ideal Candidate Qualifications

Previous education or experience in the legal or medical fields would be helpful but certainly not required. All Corps members should have an excellent working knowledge of various software programs, including but not limited to Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook; Google Documents, and PDFs, as well as being comfortable and adept at learning new software programs such as OPD's case management system, the Sheriff's data management system, etc.

Required Transportation Requirements (ex: own vehicle or able bike to site)

There are no direct transportation requirements. As long as you can make it to the office (by any means necessary), you will be able to carry out any of the activities.