



Disability Network Northern Michigan Position Description

Position Title: Independent Living Specialist

Role(s): Options Counselor, Employment Navigator, SHIP Counselor

Immediate Supervisor: PCOC Supervisor; Employment Team Lead

Position Location: Gaylord, Grayling, Alpena; temporarily remote.

Employment Status: Full-Time, non-exempt, hourly.

Wage: 35 hours per week minimum. Base wage \$17/hour without certifications at time of hire, wage increase with certification schedule and longevity. Base Range \$17-21 per hour, negotiable with education, experience, and current relevant certifications.

Benefits: Medical/Dental/Vision/Life/Disability Insurance; Generous vacation/sick leave/holidays; Loan Forgiveness qualification under PSLF; On-the-Job training.

Grant/Program Funding: PCOC/ADEN/E-NAV/CORE.

SUMMARY OF DUTIES

General Description Options Counseling Role: Provide person-centered services to individuals with disabilities and their support networks, helping them navigate long-term community supports tailored to their personalized needs and preferences. Conduct comprehensive assessments, provide unbiased information about resources for supporting basic needs, housing, home modifications, assistive technology, transportation, employment, healthcare, in-home services and supports. Support individuals in facilitated decision-making, weighing options, considering outcomes to informed choices aligned with their values and goals. Connect individuals with services and resources, provide case coordination and follow up services for individuals at risk of institutionalization. Requires certifications/licensure, agency provided and maintained.

General Description SHIP Counseling Role: Provide information/education about and assistance with Medicare and related insurances, including Medicaid, Medi-gap coverage, and other supplemental/prescription drug coverage insurances to groups and in individualized counseling. Provide appropriate referrals and assistance with enrollment. Requires certification, agency provided and maintained.

General Description Employment Navigator: Assist individuals with employment-related goals, obtaining and maintaining employment. Provide Benefits counseling to educate individuals about their Social Security Benefits; Enroll appropriate individuals in ADEN program, monitoring program compliance, and maintaining employment above Substantial Gainful Activity. Requires clearance from Homeland Security and certifications, agency provided and maintained.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE POSITION (JOB)

- Provide Information, Referrals and Assistance to individuals and community partners, focusing on the eastern counties of 17-county region, collaborate with organizations, agencies, and consumers to provide DNNM CORE services.



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- Initially, the position will begin with remote/telework work. Travel and home visits are required. Elimination of remote work is expected within first year of employment. Position meets with individuals as frequently as determined by program, in-person at approved alternate locations, in-home visits, on phone, and on virtual platforms, as appropriate. Occasional night/weekend appointments may be necessary.
- Promote the mission and Independent Living Philosophy within communities and represent Disability Network at community collaborative meetings and events, as assigned. Assisting with defined outreach efforts, delivering community information, and educational presentations about Disability Network.
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with partner agencies.
- Use relevant database(s) to accurately report work activities, in a timely manner; must comply with established deadlines for reporting.
- Maintain a caseload of 25-35 program participants focusing on adult transition and diversion from institutionalized settings or health insurance counseling or ADEN.
- Interpret benefit information forms and communicate this information to the consumer, analyze impact of employment on individual's benefits.
- Be a primary contact during business hours with the ability to direct consumers and community members via phone, email, or direct referral as needed in a timely manner (24-48 business hours).
- Maintain valid Michigan Driver's License and ability to travel within the state of Michigan, using insured personal vehicle. Travel is expected throughout 17 county service region, with occasional travel outside service region for training purposes.
- Employment is contingent on successful clearance of required annual background checks and continual possession of required certifications.
- Other duties, as assigned.

NON ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Cleaning and sanitizing the office, as needed.
- Winter clearing of ice and snow from the office entrance, salting parking lot.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education, Certifications, & Experience

- Minimum bachelor's degree required in a human services field, will consider 3 or more years of relevant experience and current C-WIP or CHW certifications.
- Preference for, and additional wage negotiation considered for, an applicant with a Master's in Social Work, and extensive experience/knowledge of local resources, Older Americans Act funding, Medicare/Medicaid, and public benefits. Personal experience with disability and/or knowledge of disability-related services is highly preferred.
- Successful completion of all Person-Centered, Long-Term Care Options Counseling Training, provided as on the job training, expected to be



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- COMPLETED within the first 30 days of hire.
- Obtain and maintain possession of MDHHS Certified Community Health Worker Certification, provided as on-the-job-training through MiCHWA. If certification is not possessed at time of hire, training will be provided and INITIATED within the first 90 days of hire, with expected completion no later than 6 months of hire. Annual CEU's required to maintain certification.
- Obtain and maintain possession of certification as Certified Work Incentives Practitioner (C-WIP) through either Cornell University or VCI National Training Center. If certification is not possessed at time of hire, training will be provided with expected successful COMPLETION within 6-9 months of hire. Annual CEU's are required to maintain certification.
- Obtain and maintain MDHHS certification for SHIP Counseling within first year of hire. If certification is not possessed at time of hire, on-the-job training will be provided. This role is a lower priority in scheduling training but will be INITIATED within first 9 months of hire. May require annual CEU's to maintain certification.
- Ability to pass background checks and maintain clearance annually, as required in each role.

Minimum Skills and Attributes

- Ability to read, analyze, and interpret for reporting and counseling purposes.
- Strong written communication skills for concise, accurate, and detailed reporting.
- General computer literacy skills and use of Microsoft programs; virtual meeting software (Zoom and Teams); ability to learn/navigate multiple databases.
- Possess mathematical skills required for completion, processing, and interpretation of employment, income, and needs assessments.
- Ability to understand and summarize complex reports, policies, instructions for counseling and supporting facilitated decision making with program participants; possess ability to plan and prioritize tasks assigned to position's various roles.
- Possess physical ability to drive, enter locations with stairs and other physical barriers during home visits; Regularly sit, stand, walk, talk and listen to program participants; read and type written reports and other documentation.
- Possess physical and emotional stability needed to work occasionally irregular or extended hours; to engage with and assist people with possibly urgent, complex, variable needs; to complete duties under strict deadlines.
- Flexibility and ability to adapt and prioritize a broad range of consumer needs and situations, work within the confines of multiple funding sources and programs, and ability to work in a variety of settings. Ability to work both collaboratively and independently, in a fast-paced, passionate, structured, and diverse environment.
- Possess strong independent living skills and understanding of activities of daily living, with an ability to teach and/or demonstrate.



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- Commitment to the Independent Living movement and philosophy, person-first perspective, and best practices in supporting our mission, vision, and core values, in serving individuals of any age, with all forms of significant disability, in both individual and group settings.

Disability Network Northern Michigan is a Center for Independent Living, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, receiving federal funding authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Part C, to provide essential services for people with significant disabilities. Our mission is to promote personal empowerment and positive social change for people with disabilities. All Centers for Independent Living are led and operated by both staff and board members comprised minimally of 51% people who have significant disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply and will be given preference in circumstances when two applicants have the same qualifications.

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