



Job Description: Family Support Specialist – Crisis

Job Type: Part Time/Full Time (20-40 hrs/week)

Location: MA Statewide

Have you traveled or are you traveling the mental health journey with your child, youth, or young adult? Do you have experience with mental health crises and racial/cultural diversity (even if only within your own family)? Do you feel passionate about helping other families? If so, then this job may be for you!

Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Inc. (PPAL) is a vibrant, impactful nonprofit working to make life better for families of children, youth, and young adults with mental health needs. PPAL works with families throughout Massachusetts who need help navigating services in mental health, juvenile justice, school, and other systems, at no cost to them. More information about PPAL can be found at <https://ppal.net>.

As a Family Support Specialist (FSS) - Crisis, you would be responsible for:

- providing information, support, and education to parents/caregivers in handling crisis situations, navigating the emergency department, and obtaining services for their children and family with mental health needs
- doing community outreach to reduce mental health stigma and make PPAL's services known, particularly in diverse and underserved communities
- participating in policy/systems meetings and events to influence improvement in mental health access and services in MA, particularly for diverse and underserved residents. PPAL will provide training.

The Family Support Specialist Crisis **must**:

- have parented or been the primary caregiver of a child, youth, or young adult with emotional, behavioral or mental health needs, including dealing with mental health crisis situations
- have a steadfast commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
- embrace and celebrate all cultures, ethnicities, languages, gender identities, sexual preferences, ages, lifestyles, and abilities - all families are important and treated with respect
- have a strong desire to support PPAL's mission of improving the mental health and wellbeing of children and families
- be able to work some evenings and weekends
- have a valid MA driver's license, and access to a car (driving is required)

This position is currently hybrid – office (Westborough, MA), home, and community-based - generally during Monday – Friday business hours. You must be flexible in your ability to be in the office, in the community, and at required meetings. Bilingual candidates preferred.

Interested? Here are some of the things you would be doing:

- Working with families one-on-one to help them navigate their child's mental health crisis including community behavioral health centers (CBHC), emergency room visits, provide them with emotional support, connect them with referral resources, and educate them around the mental health system, appropriate services for their family, their child's rights, school-related issues, and effective communication and advocacy.
- Educating and empowering families by providing skill building, coaching, and advocacy training.
- Recognizing, acknowledging, and advocating for awareness around systemic racism and trauma as it affects mental health and supporting families affected by it in their journey with their child.
- Preparing parents to represent the voice of families who have children with mental health needs at the local and state levels with a particular emphasis on advocacy around racial, ethnic, and cultural barriers.
- Embracing diversity in culture, religion, race, education, socio-economics, and gender expression, among others, and regularly demonstrating cultural humility, a desire to learn, and a desire to effectively address issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, disproportionality, and cultural responsiveness.
- Facilitating support groups and workshops for families as needed.
- Conducting community and professional outreach and events to inform interested parties of PPAL's services and reduce mental health stigma, particularly in diverse and underserved communities.
- Partnering with PPAL team members to advance the mission of PPAL and the families it represents.
- Representing PPAL and family voice always in a positive and professional manner; consistently communicating PPAL's mission and vision as a representative of family voice in mental health.
- Embracing diverse cultural norms and regularly demonstrating cultural awareness, humility, and a desire to learn.

If this describes you, then let's talk! Submit your resume and a cover letter (including your personal experience with children's mental health) to apply@ppal.net.

This is a 20-40 hr/week position with a salary range of \$20 to \$22 per hour. Benefits include generous PTO and holidays. Contributory health/dental insurance available at 30 hours.