

Status: Non-Exempt

Class: Professional

Reports To: 988 Clinical Coordinator

Title: Crisis Chat & Text Specialist

General Summary

The Crisis Chat & Text Specialist provides essential support to individuals in emotional distress and mental health crises through online chat and text messaging platforms through our Call Center Services department's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988 Lifeline program). This role involves providing empathetic listening, crisis intervention, and resource referrals in support of those experiencing emotional distress. Strong communication skills, empathy and advanced computer skills are key requirements associated with this position. This is not a supervisory role.

Duties & Responsibilities:

The Crisis Chat & Text Specialist is charged with the following duties & responsibilities:

- **Provide Support and Crisis Intervention:** Offer compassionate, nonjudgmental support through key crisis counseling approaches including active listening and collaborative problem-solving according to 988 Lifeline Suicide Safety Policy standards.
- **Safety Assessment and De-escalation:** Assess help-seeker safety risk-levels based on established protocols and respond accordingly through emotional support, de-escalation and other essential practices.
- **Safety Planning and Resource Referrals:** Assist help seekers able and willing to plan for their safety and other aspects of well-being with emphasis on providing referrals to the community resources most appropriate for each help seeker's circumstances including mobile crisis teams, emergency departments, community mental health centers and more.
- **Empowerment and Advocacy:** Promote resilience and sense of agency through efforts that reinforce each help-seeker's fundamental strengths, preferred coping strategies and ability to navigate hindering barriers.
- **Follow-Up and Documentation:** Schedule and conduct follow-up contacts to ensure continued support and maintain accurate, confidential records of all interactions based on documentation guidelines and privacy regulations.
- **Collaboration and Protocol Adherence:** Work with other crisis professionals to address high-risk situations involving need for emergency services interventions based on definitive procedures outlined for this aspect of crisis work.
- **Training and Other Duties:** Participate in ongoing training and professional development to enhance crisis counseling skills and perform additional tasks as assigned.

Qualifications and Experience

The skills, abilities and education requirements listed below serve as the minimum qualifications for the Chat & Text Specialist role:

- **Crisis Counseling Skills:** Ability to apply active listening, clinical interviewing and similarly relevant skills with demonstrated capacity to engage, assess and collaborate effectively with help seekers of diverse social, cultural, economic, educational and other with significant distress and/or high-risk crisis circumstances.
- **Mental Health Systems Knowledge:** Familiarity with local, state, and national mental health resources including general crisis support resources, inpatient care, outpatient supports and specialized supports specific to substance use, co-occurring condition, family members and caregivers and more.
- **Technological Proficiencies:** Strong command of computer and other technological skills with the ability to navigate online platforms and other systems, troubleshoot disruptions to ensure smooth workflow and adapt to shifts and upgrades. Must be a skilled typer able to type at least 60 WPM in support of preparing text-based emotional support correspondence and documentation efficiently.
- **Educational Background:** Obtained bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college and/or lived experience as a mental health peer with high school diploma and/or life experience as a mental health consumer.
- **Applied Experience:** Training and/or experience in telehealth communications is preferable (1 year minimum).

In-Person in Springfield, NJ

The Crisis Chat & Text Specialist works an in-person schedule, responding to incoming messages through online chat and text platforms. The position may involve sitting for extended periods and using computers and mobile devices to communicate with individuals in crisis. The role may also involve extended periods of looking at digital device screens and long periods of continuous typing. The work schedule for this role is evenings, weekends, and some holiday shifts to ensure continuous coverage of our crisis chat and text services.

Salary Range: \$25/hr. (15-24 hours/ week). Evening and/or weekend availability required.

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