

Job Description

POSITION:	Alternative Care Worker
ACCOUNTABILITY:	Team Supervisor
CLASSIFICATION:	Full-time
DATE APPROVED:	February 15, 2023

JOB PURPOSE

The Alternative Care Worker is responsible to provide support to Alternative Care Providers, recruitment and retention of Anishnawbek alternative care homes and adoptive homes. The Alternative Care Worker will conduct Home Assessments in accordance to agency and ministry guidelines. Also, the Alternative Care Worker is responsible to ensure that children in care receive optimum care that meets Agency and Ministry standards. The Alternative Care worker functions within legislative requirements, regulations, policies and procedures and the Mission, Beliefs and Vision of the Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services and contributes to the accomplishment of the strategic priorities.

KEY JOB FUNCTIONS

Support Children:

Provide day-to-day case management services for children placed in the care and custody of the Agency and in Alternative Care settings.

- Conduct assessments of physical, mental, emotional and social needs of children in Alternative Care settings
- Develop a thorough knowledge of the stages, process and milestones of normal development of children from birth to adolescence;
- Demonstrate effective, age-appropriate interviewing skills for children who range from school-aged to adolescence;
- Coordinate services and supports to meet the child's physical, social, emotional, cultural, spiritual and recreational needs;
- Identify a strength-based approach to preparing a child and the child's immediate family for the child's placement in an Alternative Care setting either short-term or permanently;
- Identify and assess the effects of separation on children and their parents or caregivers and strategize effective responses;
- Identify and differentiate healthy attachment and behavior-related problems and outline appropriate services to address the specified needs;
- Identify and strengthen connections between a child and those who are identified as meaningful and beneficial caregivers while the child is in an Alternative Care setting;
- Train caregivers how to establish realistic expectations of children and how to adjust their parenting skills accordingly;
- Responsible for coordinating travel or transport of a child in care for medical treatment when an alternative care giver is not able or willing to attend;
- Support Alternative Care Providers to work with biological families in support of reunification;
- Assess the child's readiness and preparedness for reunification;
- Utilize visitation and access visits for reassurance, ongoing assessment, planning and modeling of interventions;
- Identify and ensure timely, concurrent and permanent placement options are available for children;
- Complete all pertinent data for case records and reports, including case management notes, plans of care, case assessments and reviews, case histories, legal reports and correspondence;
- Ensure Agency compliance with Ministry of Child and Youth Services Serious Occurrence directive and reporting requirements;
- Be aware of the duties and services of the Children & Youth – Ontario Ombudsman.

Supporting Alternative Care Homes:

To recruit, assess and support the ongoing efforts of Alternative Care homes..

- Identify policies and procedures for recruitment, assessment, training, approval, and ongoing support to Alternative Care and kinship caregivers
- Identify a plan and complete recruitment opportunities for Alternative, utilizing current caregivers as role models and educators;
- Completing detailed home assessments for Alternative Care applicants;
- Utilize public relations, marketing, media, community awareness, social networking and community development strategies to support recruitment efforts;
- Ensure Alternative Care Providers are active participants of the team servicing the needs of children in care
- Ensure compliance with Agency policies and procedures that are compatible with legal requirements, best practice standards and ongoing requirements in working with children in Alternative Care;
- Prepare Alternative Care Providers to develop supportive relationships with Natural Caregiver families to facilitate communication, enhance visitation and sustain children's attachments;
- Support and train Alternative Care Providers in problem solving and crisis intervention strategies;
- Identify and support Alternative Care Providers in responding to the issues and challenges associated with caring for children with physical or developmental disabilities, mental illness, emotional disturbance, behavior problems, chronic health issues or who have experienced trauma;
- Identify linkages for Alternative Care Providers to appropriate community services and providers to address the needs of children in care;
- Implement and monitor training strategies to prevent burnout, maintain positive morale and increase retention of skilled Alternative Care Provider;
- Identify and encourage members of a child's extended family and social network to consider becoming a placement resource for the child;
- Decrease the anxieties and emotional conflicts of Alternative Care Provider in order to maintain stable placements for children in care;
- Develop case plans and provide supportive services that can strengthen and stabilize placements;
- Identify linkages to appropriate community services and providers to address the needs of children in care for Alternative Caregivers;
- Intervene at the first indicators of placement stress to help stabilize Alternative Care Provider and prevent placement disruption;
- Complete all pertinent data for case records and reports, including case management notes, case assessments and reviews, case histories, legal reports, SAFE/Heart & Spirit (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation) tools, home study reports and correspondence;
- Educate Alternative Care Provider families about Agency policies and procedures, and expectations to avoid unwarranted Serious Occurrences;
- Participate in the coordination of pre-service orientation training for all Alternative Care/Kinship applicants.

Support Functions:

Assess, monitor and support Alternative Care services to ensure that children in the care of the Society receive optimum care, and that the services meet Society and Ministry standards.

- Complete quarterly reviews, semi-annual/annual reports in accordance to ministry standards;
- Complete termination/transfer summaries when an alternative care home closes or transfers to another Alternative Care Worker;
- Complete placement reviews with child in care team and participate in rapid case conferencing when requested;
- Complete safety and intervention plans when a concern or allegation has been identified with an Alternative Care home;
- Maintain working files that are accurate, concise, legible and up to date according to licensing, accreditation, and society policies and procedures;
- Complete reviews on alternative care home status and maintain current placement list;
- Ensure Alternative Care parents complete an Exit Interview for placement over 60 days;

- Organize and coordinate recognition and/or appreciation events.
- Participate on committee's internally and, if necessary, externally to support the recruitment and retention process and efforts.

Adoption Support:

Provide wide range of case management functions to support adoptions.

- Provide a spectrum of adoption services to children in care, adoptive applicants and birth families;
- Manage a caseload of children and adoptive applicants through the process of adoption, preparation, assessment, matching, placement, adoption probation and finalization;
- Prepare affidavits, coordinate counselling prospective adoptive parents or other stakeholders regarding court procedures and reviewing case information with internal Legal Department;
- Complete case recordings including reports, correspondence, and legal forms, as required by the Child and Youth Family Services Act and Nogdawindamin Family & Community Services policy;
- Provide information to members of the First Nation communities served by the agency regarding the provisions and requirements of relevant legislation, adoption standards, and internal policies;
- Conduct home studies and assessments of prospective adoptive parents;
- Regular consultation and Case Conferencing with various internal departments – including, but not limited to: Legal, Child in Care, Protection, and Culture.

Relationship and Team Building:

Work collaboratively and cooperatively at all levels in order to support the use of a family-centered, strengths-based, child-focused practices while assisting families in building their capacities to provide safe and nurturing environments for children.

- Demonstrate behaviors, actions and attitudes that are consistent with Agency vision, mission and values;
- Provide opportunities for the enhancement and development of positive cultural identities of the children, families and communities served;
- Ensure appropriate communication and consultation with Supervisor at appropriate times;
- Ensure effective and professional communications with all internal and external service providers;
- Share information according to privacy and/or confidentiality guidelines;
- Work respectfully, positively, professionally and collaboratively with team members.

Cultural Competency

Participate in cultural activities within the agency.

- Follow the Seven Grandfather teachings as it relates to the position in line with the vision and mission of the Agency;
- Actively attend and participate in regular Anishinawbe Aadziwin cultural training and/or activities provided by the Agency;
- Ensure appropriate cultural opening when coordinating meetings both within the agency, for clients, families, communities and other collaterals;
- Actively seek guidance from cultural staff how to incorporate culture into the position or how to work from a cultural perspective;
- Engage in learning and incorporating Anishnawbemowin language within the position.

Administration and Reporting:

Complete administrative functions and reports, and adhere to Agency policies, procedures, and relevant practices.

- Ensure submissions of reports are completed and reviewed;
- Prepare reports, statistics, briefing notes and correspondence as required;
- Develop and maintain an individual detailed work plan of activities;
- Ensure confidentiality and safekeeping of all Agency documents and records;
- Develop and maintain accurate, up-to-date and concise work files;
- Work in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and any other relevant legislation;
- Prepare and submit monthly reports and travel expense claims and maintain attendance records;

- Follow Agency human resources, finance and other policies and procedures in the performance of duties.

Other Duties

- Act in accordance with agency Code of Ethics and maintain confidentiality at all times to protect the privacy of Agency staff, families and communities;
- Participate in internal or external committees as required or assigned;
- Perform additional related duties in accordance with job responsibilities and department objectives;
- Participate in training, cultural events and other mandatory training as required;
- Other duties as required or assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum Education

- Preferred university degree in Human Services
- Required College Diploma in Human Services.

Minimum Experience

- Two (2) years' direct experience in a social services agency
- Equivalent combination of training and experience may be considered

Knowledge Requirements

- Knowledge of Nogdawindamin programs and services
- Solid knowledge of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, Eligibility Spectrum, Ontario Safety Assessment, Family Risk Assessment and Strengths and Needs Assessment
- Knowledge of First Nation service delivery, customs and traditions in relation to child welfare
- Knowledge of external services and service agencies
- Thorough knowledge of the stages, process and milestones of normal development of children from birth to adolescence
- Knowledge in all Ministry and legislative standards related to alternative care;
- Required skills and experience in assessments related to alternative care/family assessment, orientation, training, and counselling;
- Knowledge of North Shore First Nations.

Special Skills

- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent computer skills including Microsoft Outlook, Word and Excel.
- Excellent crisis intervention, conflict resolution, mediation and problem solving skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Excellent organizational and administrative skills
- Ability to work with First Nation communities and people
- Ability to consistently display a positive/helpful attitude
- Ability to work with and meet tight timelines
- Ability to take initiative and work independently
- Ability to work within a team environment
- Ability to meet deadlines and work flexible hours
- Ability to work with confidential and sensitive information

Other Requirements

- Respect for, sensitivity towards as well as knowledge and understanding of Anishnawbek culture, traditions and the Seven Grandfather Teachings.
- Ability to understand and speak Anishnaabemowin is a definite asset;
- Must provide a Police Records Check deemed satisfactory by the employer;
- Must have a Class 'G' Ontario Driver's Licence, access to a vehicle and the ability to travel;
- Must have \$1M automobile insurance coverage.

WORK SITE LOCATION

Location to be determined.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

While performing the duties of this job, the Alternative Care Worker will typically be in a home or office setting with regular meetings with children, families and other professionals. The Alternative Care Worker is frequently required to operate a computer, file and retrieve written documents, and work overtime when required or during emergency situations.

The physical demands and range of motion include, but are not limited to, standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, lifting up to 40 lbs., carrying, reaching, handling, kneeling, crouching and bending. The Alternative Care Worker will be required to travel to meetings and home visits within the district.

The Alternative Care Worker must be able to multi-task within a fast-paced, high-volume and demanding environment. The Alternative Care Worker absorbs and interprets information from multiple parties on a regular basis and is required to listen and reconcile multiple points of view, which can be mentally challenging. As a result, this position is more emotionally challenging than physically challenging. There will be extended periods of sitting required when performing administrative tasks and while attending meetings.

Non-physical demands include a work environment where the noise level is usually moderate to high. The nature of the position may expose the Alternative Care Worker to high levels of tension when dealing with issues. The level of tension is usually moderate, with high levels of tension occurring occasionally.

The Alternative Care Worker may be exposed to potentially hazardous environments including driving conditions and volatile situations during home visits.

Given the traditional practices of Indigenous people, from time to time exposure to smoke from the burning of sacred medicines; tobacco, sweet grass, sage or cedar, may occur.

TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT

Computer, photocopier, telephone, fax machine and cell phone

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

This position is not required to supervise any staff.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

The position requires interaction with the Team Supervisor, Manager of Legal Services, other Alternative Care Workers, Children Support Workers, Client Records Clerks, Cultural Services Department, Administrative Assistant and other staff.

External

The position requires interaction with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, Children's Aid Societies, other First Nation communities, and all service-related agencies within the First Nation that respond to child welfare service delivery needs.

DISCLAIMER

Alternative Care Worker Job Description

This document describes the position currently available and is only a summary of the typical functions of the job. It is not an employment contract. The above job description is not an exhaustive list of the duties, responsibilities, working conditions or skills required for this position. Additional duties may be assigned. Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services reserve the right to modify job duties or the job description at any time.

SIGNATURE

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of this job description and understand its contents.

Signature of Employee

Date