

## Operations Advocate

Are you great at thinking on your toes and able to identify the needs of others without them asking? If so, this might be an excellent career choice for you!

Fort Bend Women's Center has over 40 years of providing healing and hope to survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in the Greater Houston Area. As United Way- Funded Partners, we aim to guide survivors as they heal from abuse. We equip them with the emotional, psychological, and practical skills and resources to create a hopeful, safe, independent life free of abuse. Our services are free of charge and open to ALL survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault – regardless of gender, race, age, religion, sexual orientation, or identity – because we believe EVERY survivor deserves the chance to thrive. Therefore, FBWC provides outstanding and innovative programming that is brain health based. We operate services within a positive reinforcement framework that increases hope and social connectivity to reduce the negative impact of trauma, often from lifelong abuse. Our mobile services, client services, and programs aim to foster client self-determination and accountability. We are data-driven and use evidence-based traditional and innovative services.

Adjusting to life in a shelter can be challenging. The Operations Advocate is one of the first faces a new shelter resident sees on their journey to a life free from domestic abuse and sexual assault. The OA prepares a welcome kit comprised of new pillows, sheets, and towels for each new household member. When new client arrives, the Operations Advocate welcomes them and provides a shelter tour while ensuring shelter residents' overall safety and well-being.

The Operations Advocate works a regular, predictable schedule and arrives to their assigned shift early enough to complete a shift change with the prior shift Operations Advocate. This is imperative because The Fort Bend Women's Center shelter is operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and all team members need to be on the same page to address our client's needs best. To appropriately respond to crises when necessary, the OA works rotating shifts, including weekends, holidays, and overtime. This rewarding job requires a great deal of optimism, so an enthusiastic personality is a must.

Most OAs have previous experience working with individuals dealing with trauma to demonstrate strong communication, strong time management, and problem-solving skills in a manner that encourages and empowers clients to seek remedies for positive change. The Operations Advocate displays the ability and willingness to make appropriate decisions by responding compassionately to clients being served while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries. Working with limited supervision, the OA exhibits sound and accurate, independent judgment while including the right people in decision-making when necessary—displaying creativity by meeting challenges with resourcefulness, generating suggestions for improving workflow, and developing innovative approaches and ideas that show tenacity and thoroughness, with the ability to solve practical problems and deal with various crises.

As an important position in keeping the shelter a non-toxic, safe, Rules Reduction environment, the Operations Advocate is a team player who can roll up their sleeves to get involved in everything from big projects to mundane, simple tasks. By applying our Core Values (**S**pirit, **P**assion, **I**ntegrity, **R**espect, **I**nnovation, and **T**eamwork), the OA applies strategies for good communication to develop rapport and build trust with shelter residents using active listening, practical nonverbal communication, and cultural competency. Working with clients in a respectful and non-judgmental manner, the Operations Advocate employs a victim-centered, strength-based, and trauma-informed perspective that supports the client's

self-determination and confident, informed decision-making. The OA applies strategies for addressing conflict while moderating one's reactions to communications with clients and coworkers.

### **Operations Advocate Skills**

- Respect client confidentiality.
- Understand that this is High-Risk work.
- Have a self-care routine in place to prevent vicarious trauma.
- Focus on victim/ survivor empowerment.
- Have good listening skills.
- Be a team player.
- Be flexible.
- Respond to clients and callers courteously.
- Project a caring attitude.
- Willing to perform other duties as assigned.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, emphasizing Outlook and Excel.
- Clear and compelling written, verbal, and non-verbal communication skills.
- Speaks clearly in positive or negative situations.
- Listens and asks for clarification.
- Responds well to questions.
- Follows instructions.
- Responds to management direction.
- Takes responsibility for own actions.
- Keeps commitments.
- Willing to course correct.
- Confidence in advocating for yourself with Management.
- Ability to pivot quickly.
- Understands the signs of burnout.
- Possess a high index of being trainable, teachable, and coachable.
- Leans into peer support.

### **Daily Tasks for the Operation Advocate**

- Monitor shelter security cameras both in real-time and recorded.
- Provide crisis intervention assistance to clients and prospective clients.
- Rotates with team members to transport clients locally.
- Assists in the kitchen.
- Set out designated food and drink items for clients during snack times.
- Wipes down dining room tables.
- Removes trash in the dining room and bathroom.
- Empties outdoor trash in the various patio areas.
- Handles calls for donations and administrative inquiries.
- Complete shift change before the start of shift:

- Reads and completes prior shift “pending to-dos” and updates accordingly.
- Reads shift notes, takes notes, and asks questions to gain clarification regarding any shift notes recorded by previous Operations Advocate.

### **Additional Operation Advocate Responsibilities**

- Maintain the shelter log and required documentation, including hourly entries about shelter activities and other happenings.
- Responds to email correspondence in a timely fashion.
- Updates client information on the shelter board accordingly.
- Checks that the “empty” beds on the board are available for an incoming client by visiting the room and cleaning the room whenever necessary.
- Checks overall shelter conditions and maintains shelter cleanliness.
- Sorts and ensures client mail is filed.
- Relays information for tours, events, etc., to the appropriate staff member to ensure proper staffing supplies, etc.
- Organizes, stocks, and distributes client supplies regularly.
- Attends weekly meetings with supervisor.
- Take messages or transfer calls to ensure the calls and messages are appropriately relayed to the corresponding staff member.
- Completes timely and accurate documentation.
- Respects client confidentiality and autonomy.
- Deadline and solution-oriented with the ability to handle multiple competing priorities and responsibilities.
- Actively participates in meetings.
- Writes accurately, respectfully, and informatively.
- Edits work for spelling and grammar.
- Commits to non-traditional hours of work when necessary to reach goals.
- Completes tasks on time or notifies the appropriate person with an alternate plan.

### **Qualifications and Education Requirements for Client Engagement Specialist**

- Ability to work split shift schedule of Mondays and Tuesdays, 1p – 11p shift; Thursdays and Fridays, 9p – 7p shift with possibility of shift schedule changing to Thursdays – Mondays, 11p -7a with advanced notice.
- High school diploma or equivalent; some college preferred.
- Have a valid Texas Driver’s License and carry out liability insurance as required by the State of Texas.
- Pass a criminal background check and drug screening.
- Travel may be required in Greater Harris and Fort Bend County areas.
- Proficient in working on computers for successful note-taking, documentation, data entry, scheduling, directory, and complex data management systems.
- View video [Your body language may shape who you are | Amy Cuddy - YouTube](#)
- View video [Understanding Apathy Through Cognitive Dissonance | Hattie Seten | TEDxBrookings - YouTube](#)

- View video [The power of positive re-inforcement | Wendy Smith | TEDxPlymouthUniversity - YouTube](#)
- View video [The Power of Positive Thinking | Helen Peterson | TEDxDhahranHighSchool - YouTube](#)
- View video [The Suicide Crisis Line: An Education in Listening | Dylan Gunaratne | TEDxCalStateLA - Bing video](#)