

Job Description: Communications Coordinator / Newspaper Editor

Position Summary

MadFreedom Advocates, Inc. seeks a passionate, detail-oriented Communications Coordinator to serve as the Editor of *The Madvocate*, its quarterly statewide newspaper. The Editor will lead all aspects of newspaper production—from editorial planning to content creation, contributor coordination, design review, distribution, and online publishing. The publication is a critical tool to amplify the voices of individuals with lived experience of mental health and substance use challenges, support advocacy efforts, and build peer leadership across Vermont.

Key Responsibilities

Editorial Leadership:

- Plan, coordinate, and publish four print editions per year (Oct 15, Jan 15, Apr 15, June 15) of the tabloid-format newspaper.
- Convene and facilitate an advisory Editorial Board composed of individuals with lived experience to advise on content scope, policy, and priorities.
- Develop a quarterly editorial calendar with standard content categories: news, opinion, arts, statewide events, and resource listings.

Content Development:

- Solicit articles, artwork, and opinion pieces from individuals with lived experience, advocates, and community partners.
- Write, edit, and fact-check content in line with the publication's editorial guidelines, policies, and mission.
- Ensure regular coverage of state boards and commissions that require representation of those with lived experience.

Design and Production:

- Coordinate with contract graphic designer and freelance writers (stringers) to meet print and digital production deadlines.
- Review layouts and approve final proofs prior to printing.
- Ensure consistent editorial style, accessibility, and visual branding across all media formats.

Distribution and Promotion:

- Maintain and grow a print subscriber list and oversee mail distribution of each issue.
- Manage distribution to peer support centers, agencies, and community spaces across Vermont.
- Publish digital editions on the organization's website and promote content through email and social media channels.
- Track readership growth and engagement metrics (print subscribers, web views, social media shares, etc.).

Online & Interim Content:

- Post timely and topical articles between print editions to the website and social media platforms.
- Work with contributors and the community to share emerging stories relevant to readers.

Collaboration & Organizational Participation:

- Participate in staff meetings, planning sessions, and community events.
- Ensure coverage of MadFreedom's educational workshops, advocacy events, and other key organizational activities.
- Align newspaper content with MadFreedom Advocates' leadership, education, and advocacy goals.

Legal and Risk Review:

- Coordinate the pre-publication risk and compliance review process, including submitting final drafts to the Board or its designee for legal and ethical review.
- Revise content in response to legal risk concerns while upholding editorial independence.
- Ensure all published content aligns with *The Advocate's* policies on editorial ethics, including standards for fairness, respectful representation, accuracy, and the responsible use of anonymous sources.

Compliance with Nonprofit Regulations:

- Ensure that opinion and advocacy content complies with 501(c)(3) nonprofit restrictions, avoiding political endorsements and maintaining a nonpartisan, fact-based approach.

Qualifications

Required:

- Demonstrated commitment to civil and human rights and the voice of individuals with lived experience.
- Strong editorial and journalistic writing/editing experience.
- Experience managing print production cycles, editorial calendars, and content contributors.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, and Google Workspace
- Familiarity with digital media platforms and newsletter tools (e.g., Mailchimp, social media, Issuu).
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal communication skills.
- Lived experience of trauma, institutionalization, neurodivergence, extreme states, or other marginalization by sanism.

Preferred:

- Experience working in peer-run or advocacy organizations.
- Basic understanding of layout/design tools (e.g., Adobe Acrobat, Creative Suite).
- Proficiency in content management systems (e.g., WordPress)
- Comfort facilitating groups and incorporating community input into editorial planning.

Work Conditions

- Hybrid remote with availability for in-state travel to events, meetings, and distribution points.
- Some evening/weekend hours may be required around publication deadlines.

Compensation and Reporting

- Salary: \$55,000 annually
- Benefits: Competitive health, dental, and life insurance
- Reports to: Executive Director
- Employment Type: Full-Time (Non-Exempt)
- Location: Hybrid (Remote work with in-state travel as needed)

About MadFreedom Advocates, Inc.

Founded in June 2024, MadFreedom Advocates (MFA) is a grassroots, non-profit organization run by and for psychiatric survivors, mad folks, and others marginalized by the mental health system. We're working towards equal rights, better services, and ending discrimination. MadFreedom Advocates works across Vermont to support leadership, education, and advocacy

for people with lived experience of trauma, institutionalization, neurodivergence, extreme states, or other marginalization by sanism.