



Patient Representative - Part Time

The Organization:

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.

The Role:

Patient Representatives advocate for individuals under the custody of the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and foster communication between such individuals and health care providers. At least weekly, Patient Representatives visit individuals involuntarily residing in designated hospitals, the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital, River Valley Therapeutic Residence, and/or intensive recovery residential programs. Patient Representatives are an integral part of helping MadFreedom Advocates achieve its goals of ending discrimination and improving the lives of those labeled with a mental illness while prioritizing and centering the perspectives and autonomy of those with relevant lived experience.

The following describes the chief functions of this role. This is not considered a detailed description of every duty of the job. The job description is intended to be dynamic in nature, subject to addition or deletion as required by organizational changes and community needs.

Available Positions: 3

Locations: Rutland County and Windham/Windsor Counties

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer

Location: In person with some limited remote work

Schedule: Part Time Hourly 15 hours/week

Application Requirements:

A **Cover Letter** and **Resume** are required with your application.

Responsibilities

- Connect with, listen to, believe, and advocate for individuals under the custody of the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health
- Visit facility in designated area at an agreed upon time each week, and thereafter by appointment at the request of individuals we're supporting
- Share information about the patient representative program, patient/resident rights, and the facility's grievance process
- Advocate for patients/residents and foster communication between individuals and health care providers
- Assist with transition from the facility, including accessing community supports following discharge
- Keep documentation of visits and activities
- Participate in regularly scheduled staff meetings and ad-hoc debriefs with other team members to continuously improve and expand each other's skills, understanding, and approach to advocacy
- Other duties as assigned

Qualifications:

- Familiarity with the challenges often faced by psychiatric survivors, mad people, users of mental health services, and people marginalized by sanism
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Self-motivation and ability to work independently
- Strong anti-oppression lens and affinity for solidarity across movements
- Willingness to self-reflect, learn, and practice new ways of being in relationships
- Tolerance for risk and discomfort
- Ability to learn about mental health law
- Ability to write grievances and appeals (after training)
- Ability to foster communication between involuntary mental health patients and health care providers
- Access to private space with internet capability from which to work remotely on occasion

Preferred Qualifications:

- Familiarity with current mental health services in Vermont and available alternative mental health services
- Proficiency with technology, including Apple devices (MacBooks, iPhones, etc.), Google suite (docs, sheets, etc.), email, Zoom, meetings and more
- Training in Intentional Peer Support, Harm Reduction, Conversations about Suicide, or Hearing Voices Network

Requirements:

- Valid driver's license
- Insured vehicle
- Vermont residency
- Undergo a criminal background check
(a criminal record is not automatically disqualifying)

Compensation:

- \$22.50/hourly
- 15 hours/week
- Mileage Reimbursement

Applications can be submitted using this [form](#).

It is the policy of MadFreedom Advocates that all employees and applicants shall receive equal consideration and treatment in employment without regard to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, veteran status, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identification, perceived mental state or disability. MadFreedom Advocates is committed to a workplace that mirrors the communities we serve.