SUMMIT INDEPENDENT LIVING
JOB DESCRIPTION

COMMUNITY LIVING SPECIALIST

I. JOB SUMMARY:

The primary responsibilities of this job include: providing advocacy and other independent living services to people with disabilities on affordable and accessible housing and other community resources, and assisting Summit’s advocacy coordinator with local and statewide advocacy, public education and technical assistance initiatives. Duties also include providing other independent living services such as IL skills training, transition assistance, peer support, benefits assistance and information and referral services. Also assists with outreach, advocacy, and public education activities to improve service systems, develop community resources and advance the civil rights of people with disabilities.

II. JOB RELATIONSHIPS:

A. Responsible to the Advocacy Coordinator.

B. Supervision of others: As assigned; supervise support staff, interns, trainees, and/or volunteers.

C. Interrelationships: Responsible for maintaining successful relationships with management, coworkers, consumers, community representatives and the public.

D. Work as a team member in support of Summit’s mission, programs and services; work collaboratively with other team members on joint projects or assignments.

III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

1) Program Coordination Duties and Responsibilities:

A. Coordinate Summit’s housing consumer and advocacy efforts in the Missoula area and serve as lead staff on maintaining Summit’s Missoula housing list. Provide guidance on housing issues to Summit’s branch office as needed.

B. Assist with development and ongoing provision of housing and employment services for people with disabilities in Missoula and surrounding areas.

C. Responsible for maintaining effective working relationships with consumers, community partners, local and state social service agencies, government officials and the general public.

D. Serve as a leader and role model to promote Summit's mission, programs and services and maintain a positive image of the organization in the community.

E. Communicate with direct supervisor on a regular basis to discuss any problem areas, provide updates on new developments and report progress on program objectives.

2) Consumer Service Duties:
A. Act as service coordinator for consumers to assist them in meeting their independent living, housing, and economic self-sufficiency goals, including assessment of current needs, development of independent living plan, and coordination of services within Summit and with outside agencies and service providers. Service coordination includes documentation required for the Consumer Information File to include application for services, independent living plan or waiver, progress notes, and other documents.

B. Work as a team member to provide assistance with housing needs for people with disabilities, including identification of affordable and accessible housing options and information and referral services for community resources such as subsidized housing and other financial assistance programs and maintain a community resource list for home adaptation/modification resources.

C. Provide advocacy, information and referral, resource development, IL skills training, peer support, and transition assistance services to consumers to facilitate achievement of their independent living goals. Work as a team member to coordinate services with other staff.

D. Provide information, training and support to consumers to facilitate understanding of their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Housing Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and other civil rights laws for people with disabilities.

E. Work closely with Summit staff involved with youth transition services in the main Missoula office as well as the BASE youth program office for transition-age youth with disabilities, as assigned.

F. Work as a team member to provide employment related services to include advocacy, counseling on integrated, competitive employment opportunities and other services, as assigned.

G. Provide information and referral services to consumers, family and community members.

H. Work with consumers to set clear expectations, responsibilities and goals. Assist consumers in learning and exercising self-reliance and self-advocacy skills.

3) Advocacy, Public Education and Outreach Duties:

A. Work as a team member in collaboration with the Summit advocacy coordinator to plan, organize and implement advocacy and public education initiatives designed to improve service systems, develop community resources, increase public understanding of disability issues and advance the civil rights of people with disabilities, as assigned. The primary focus is to conduct advocacy and promote affordable and accessible housing options essential to community living in western Montana and across the state.

B. Assist advocacy coordinator with accessibility consultation and technical assistance services such as site reviews, review of architectural plans, and other activities to evaluate overall accessibility and compliance with the ADA, Fair Housing Act, and other laws on architectural and program access for people with disabilities.

C. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with housing experts and groups to develop opportunities for increased affordable and accessible housing for people with disabilities.
D. Serve as liaison to local, state and national agencies and organizations to promote disability issues and programs, as assigned.

E. Work as a team member to organize, conduct, and participate in community awareness events, public relations efforts, and training seminars to include workshops, public speaking/presentations, in-service presentations, resource fairs, and other community meetings, as assigned.

F. Work as a team member to conduct outreach activities to identify and serve underserved/unserved populations, as assigned.

4) General Duties:

G. Document activities including timecard and employee expense sheet, online CIL Suite database time tracking, consumer, I&R, and community activity records, and other required documentation.

H. Maintain consumer confidentiality.

I. Utilize computer for preparing correspondence, consumer documentation, reports and other documents, email, internet access, and organizing, storing and retrieving data.

J. Travel as required to carry out assigned duties and responsibilities.

K. Comply with all Summit policies and procedures.

NON- ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

A. Assist with planning, development, and implementation of new programs designed to meet emerging consumer and community needs.

B. Other duties as assigned.

IV. REQUIREMENTS:

A. Education: Bachelor’s degree in social work, human services, education or related field; or a combination of related education, training and experience.

B. Licenses, Certification, Registrations: Must be able to provide/coordinate own transportation as well as have a valid Montana Driver’s License and proof of insurance if employee uses his/her vehicle for work-related travel.

C. Qualifications:

1. Two (2) years’ experience providing human services to people with physical, sensory or mental disabilities or people with special needs related to barriers to independent living. Personal experience with disability preferred.

2. Ability to learn and work within the independent living model with a focus on consumer control, self-help and self-advocacy strategies, peer support, development of community resources and self-direction to the greatest extent possible.
3. Prior experience in housing services and/or advocacy is preferred but not required; must have ability to acquire knowledge, resources and skills needed to succeed in Community Living Specialist role.

4. Excellent advocacy skills and ability to learn and apply systems change strategies in support of Summit’s goals and objectives to bring about positive social change on behalf of people with disabilities.

5. Ability to learn and apply basic tenets of the Fair Housing Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Montana Human Rights Act and other civil rights laws for people with disabilities with respect to housing provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability; and ability to provide technical assistance to people with disabilities, landlords, property management companies and housing developers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the law.

6. Strong organizational and time management skills and ability to manage multiple priorities, meet project deadlines, and maintain high quality of services.

7. Ability to network with community partners to promote Summit services and foster inter-agency collaboration on important disability issues, with an emphasis on housing issues.

8. Ability to work effectively with people of diverse disabilities, ages, cultures, and backgrounds.

9. Excellent written and verbal communication skills as well as public speaking skills.

10. Skilled in the use of computer and software programs used in a modern office setting; prefer experience with Microsoft Office suite including Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

11. Ability to work independent of direct supervision and in the community.

12. Reliable source of transportation and ability to travel; primarily within the local Missoula area and other communities in western Montana.

13. Experience working within plans, policies, and procedures of an organization; following regulations of local, state, and federal agencies.

14. Ability to pass a criminal background check.

V. OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

This is a full-time, (40 hours/week) position, housed in Summit’s Missoula office. This position is classified as non-exempt from state and federal overtime regulations and is compensated on an hourly wage basis.

VI. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION:

Summit will provide reasonable accommodation for any known disabilities of employees to enable them to complete the essential functions of their jobs.