

**NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING**  
7632 North State Street, Lowville, New York 13367

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**TITLE:** BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PEER ADVOCATE

**REPORTING**

**RELATIONSHIP:** Reports to Independent Living Program Director

**JOB SUMMARY:** The Behavioral Health Peer Advocate is responsible for assisting people with behavioral health disabilities to maximize their independence, effect community change and be involved with executing broader agency and community advocacy goals.

**JOB DUTIES:**

1. Promote and provide advocacy services to recipients of mental health services
2. Provide systems advocacy in order to insure that services are responsive to recipients needs
3. Meet formally and informally with recipients and family members to ascertain their satisfaction with services
4. Participate with community peers to develop self-help groups that will make a positive contribution to the recovery of recipients
5. Participate as appropriate in regional and statewide recipient organizations
6. Promote positive public attitudes toward mental health services and the recipients thereof, so as to counteract the negative stigma and resulting discrimination
7. Assist people to learn benefits entitlements such as social security, vocational assistance, social services, housing assistance, adult and child protection services, home health care and personal assistance services, person in need of petitions, Medicaid and food stamps.
8. Maintain a Resource Library for Educational and Self-Help needs
9. Advocate in the mental health and substance abuse systems for training and employment programs for consumers of services
10. Complete all reporting and record keeping as required
11. Engage consumers to become involved in NRCIL programs and participate in Center activities and advocacy efforts
12. Provide Self-Help and Advocacy Training programs and support groups
13. Provide advocacy and support for families of persons with mental health diagnosis
14. Devise a plan for an unexpected absence from this position
15. Work outside regular hours when necessary
16. Perform any additional duties as may fall within the scope of said position and ability of employee as requested by Program Director and/or Executive Director
17. Model and initiate the learning of self-advocacy skills and the Independent Living Philosophy

**PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:** Bachelors degree and minimum of 3 years work experience preferred, or appropriate combination of skills, experience and education. Must have good verbal and written communication skills and strong interpersonal skills. Must be well organized, able to work independently and able to meet deadlines. Should have interests in disability rights and familiarity with the concept and philosophy of the independent living movement. Preference will be given to applicants who have personal experience using mental health services.

January 2017