



## **Housing Engagement Specialist – HART HUB**

**Collective agreement title:** Landlord Engagement Specialist **Program:**

HART Hub

**Reports to:** Intensive Supervisor

**Work hours:** 35 hours per week (with the potential to work evenings and weekends)

**Contract end date:** March 31, 2028, *with the potential to extend contract*

**Rate of pay:** \$27.67 - \$31.11

### **About Gateway Residential & Support Services**

At Gateway we believe in a community where all are offered respect, dignity, and hope for recovery. We believe in enabling people with homelessness, mental illness and/or addictions to achieve the highest quality of life possible. The philosophy of Gateway Residential and Community Support Services of Niagara Inc. is rooted in a desire to serve others. We support and encourage the individual's right to independence, personal decision-making, and involvement in all aspects of planning, implementation, governance, and evaluation.

### **Job Summary**

The Housing Engagement Specialist plays a crucial role in supporting clients in their journey from homelessness to achieving stable housing. The primary focus is on active housing acquisition, leveraging local resources and establishing strong relationships with landlords to secure accommodation for clients. Once housing is secured, the Engagement Specialist is responsible for facilitating a seamless transition by coordinating with the HART Hub team to ensure clients receive ongoing support and comprehensive services, ultimately fostering sustainable tenancies and enhancing client well-being.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

#### **1. Client Engagement and Assessment:**

- Meet with new clients to assess income, budget, and preferred housing arrangements.
- Conduct reviews of clients' housing histories to identify successful strategies and challenges, including past evictions.
- Maintain continuous contact with clients through various communication channels (phone, email, text, in-person).

#### **2. Document Preparation:**

- Ensure completion of necessary documentation for new clients, including housing applications and Move-In packages.
- Document each client interaction and housing placement attempt in the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS).



**3. Collaboration and Coordination:**

- Work closely with HART Hub staff, Niagara Assertive Outreach, and other community partners to determine client's housing needs.
- Serve as a liaison between clients and community resources, ensuring seamless integration of services.

**4. Housing Acquisition:**

- Conduct daily searches for rental listings on platforms such as Kijiji and Marketplace.
- Secure housing viewings and accompany clients, providing transportation and support.

**5. Client Preparation and Education:**

- Educate clients on proper viewing etiquette and communication with landlords.
- Assist clients in preparing for viewings, including supporting access to appropriate clothing and hygiene facilities.

**6. Landlord Engagement:**

- Promote the program to landlords through phone calls, viewings, and follow-up communications.
- Assist clients with application processes and provide supporting program information to landlords.

**7. Financial and Lease Management:**

- Secure financial assistance for move-in costs via discretionary funds, OW, or rental supplements.
- Inform Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) workers of client address changes and set up direct payments.
- Facilitate lease signings involving the client, HART Hub Staff, landlords, and other partners.

**8. Post-Move-in Support:**

- Provide backup on move-in day and coordinate a warm transfer to HART Hub staff.
- Conduct follow-up calls with landlords to ensure smooth tenancy transitions.
- Facilitate ongoing support and check-ins with the HART Hub team for client stability.

**9. Eviction Prevention:**

- Proactively step in to provide support for eviction prevention.
- Support team in analyzing underlying issues causing potential eviction, such as financial or compliance problems.
- Facilitate communication and negotiate between client and landlord.
- Inform clients and HART Hub staff of tenant rights and responsibilities.
- Engage in resolution efforts, which may include:
  - Arranging payment plans
  - Sourcing financial assistance
  - Connecting with community resources.

**Additional Duties:**



- Conduct follow-up check-ins with landlords following housing placements to ensure satisfaction and address any issues.

This position description reflects the general duties of the position, but it is not intended to be a detailed description of all duties that may be inherent in the position. Housing Engagement Specialist, HART Hub may also be asked to perform other duties as required or assigned.

## **Requirements**

- Community College Diploma or a University Degree in social services or other closely related field or a combination of education and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities as determined by the employer
- Real-estate or property management experience is beneficial
- Sound understanding of the landlord tenant act and Housing Services Act
- Compassion and nonjudgmental approach towards individuals who require supportive housing
- Two years' experience in the community focusing on homelessness and/or mental health
- Demonstrated knowledge of support within housing, guidelines, and related housing programs
- An understanding of case management; including assessment, service planning, skills teaching, monitoring and evaluation, concepts, acts, and regulations
- Demonstrated knowledge of human/legal rights and relevant legislation
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Good oral and written skills
- A valid drivers' license with permission to carry rider attached
- CPR Certificate/First Aid and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training
- Computer literacy, including effective working skills of HIFIS, MS Word, Excel and e-mail required.
- Good organizational, time management and prioritizing skills
- Strong morals and ethics, along with a commitment to staff
- Demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional education
- Ability to monitor financial accountabilities
- Physically able to perform all assigned tasks
- Bi-lingual in both French and English is an asset

## **Work Conditions**

- May be exposed to infectious waste, communicable diseases, and other conditions
- Interacts with residents, family members, staff, visitors, government agencies/personnel under all circumstances
- Exposure to traumatic situations.
- Travel is required. Client travel in one's own vehicle may be required
- Manual dexterity required to use a desktop computer and peripherals



- Intermittent physical activity including walking, standing, sitting
- May be exposed to environments that have cigarette smoke, drug paraphernalia or illegal substances

#### **Police Clearance and Vulnerable Sector Check Requirements**

To ensure the safety of the individuals we serve, all successful candidates for this position will be required to provide a Police Clearance and Vulnerable Sector Check from their local police service. A clear Vulnerable Sector Check is a condition of employment. Any prior convictions or offenses (outside the scope of the Vulnerable Sector Check) will be assessed in accordance with applicable privacy and human rights legislation. A criminal record may be considered in the hiring decision, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Applicants will have the opportunity to discuss any relevant information once the check is requested.

#### **To Apply**

If you are interested in applying for the above position, please forward your resume to [hr@gatewayofniagara.ca](mailto:hr@gatewayofniagara.ca)

#### **Additional Information**

Accommodation will be provided in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Gateway is committed to supporting a culture of diversity and inclusiveness across the organization. We believe in equal opportunity, and it is our priority to ensure a barrier-free recruitment and selection process. If you are contacted for an interview, please notify Human Resources of any accommodation needs you may have during the selection process. Information received regarding the accommodation needs of applicants will be addressed confidentially. We thank all respondents for their applications but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.