CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRE of Kelowna

FAMILY COORDINATOR & FACILITY DOG PRIMARY HANDLER

Employment: Part-time, 32 hours per week
Salary: $25–$28 per hour, based on experience and qualifications
Additional: Daily stipend for Facility Dog Primary Handler, discussed at interview
Location: Kelowna, BC

THE ROLE

The Family Coordinator & Facility Dog Primary Handler provides administrative coordination, operational support and multidisciplinary team (MDT) facilitation within the Child & Youth Advocacy Centre, while also serving as the primary caregiver and handler for the Centre's facility dog.

The position has two distinct but complementary areas of responsibility. As Family Coordinator, the employee supports the efficient functioning of the Centre through coordination of meetings, maintenance of client records and data systems, support for internal processes and facilitation of communication between partner agencies and frontline service providers. This component of the role is primarily administrative and operational in nature, with limited direct client support.

As Facility Dog Primary Handler, the employee assumes primary responsibility for the facility dog's day-to-day care, wellbeing, routine and continuity of care both within and outside the workplace. The Primary Caregiver provides the dog's primary home environment, supports its safe and purposeful participation in the Centre and serves as the consistent point of contact for the dog throughout its working life.

These two areas of responsibility are integral to the position. The employee is expected to balance the operational requirements of the Family Coordinator role with the needs and wellbeing of the facility dog, recognizing that the dog's welfare must always remain a priority.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

1. Family Coordinator

- Coordinate and manage Centre operations to support children, youth and families accessing services.
- Support coordination and communication between frontline service providers and families.
- Provide occasional supportive coverage for families during appointments, as needed.
- Prepare and distribute MDT and team meeting agendas, record minutes and circulate meeting documentation.
- Coordinate multidisciplinary meetings, including case conferences and collaborative planning sessions, in collaboration with Child and Family Advocates.
- Support communication and coordination between Centre staff, frontline service providers and partner agencies.
- Maintain and manage client records, including digital databases and physical files.

- Generate reports and process documentation as required.
- Maintain Centre statistics and support data tracking in collaboration with the Director of Research.
- Respond to and appropriately direct incoming phone calls, inquiries and correspondence.
- Support the day-to-day organization and functioning of the Centre.
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy in accordance with organizational policies and applicable legislation.
- Apply trauma-informed principles and maintain awareness of the needs of children, youth and families in all aspects of the role.

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2. Facility Dog Primary Handler

The Primary Handler is responsible for providing consistent daily care, stability and oversight for the facility dog and for supporting its appropriate participation in the Centre's work.

Primary Care and Wellbeing

- Serve as the facility dog's Primary Caregiver and Handler, assuming overall day-to-day responsibility for the dog's wellbeing, care, routine and quality of life both within and outside the workplace.
- Provide the dog's primary home environment, including taking the facility dog home at the end of each workday and bringing the dog to the Centre each morning. This is an essential condition of the position.
- Assume responsibility for the dog's care and wellbeing outside regular working hours, including evenings, weekends, holidays and periods when the Centre is closed, with planned respite and backup support available as part of the program.
- Establish and maintain the dog's daily routine, including exercise, enrichment, rest, nutrition, grooming, socialization and general care.
- Provide a safe, stable and consistent home environment that supports the dog's physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Monitor the dog's physical and emotional wellbeing and promptly identify and communicate changes in behaviour, health, stress, fatigue or capacity to participate in the workplace.
- Ensure the dog has appropriate opportunities for rest, recovery and time away from work.
- Recognize that the dog's wellbeing is fundamental to its ability to safely and effectively support children, youth and families.

Veterinary Care, Training & Program Support

- Coordinate veterinary appointments, preventative care, grooming, training and other aspects of the dog's ongoing care.
- Maintain appropriate records related to the dog's health, training, care and workplace participation.

- Communicate with the appropriate Centre staff and external providers regarding the dog's care and wellbeing.
- Participate in ongoing education, training, assessment and professional development related to facility dogs, animal-assisted interventions, canine wellbeing and the specialized role of a facility dog within a child and youth advocacy environment.
- Work collaboratively with the Centre and the facility dog provider to ensure program expectations and standards are maintained.
- All approved expenses associated with the facility dog are the responsibility of the Centre.

Workplace Participation & Handling

- Work closely with designated frontline staff who may involve the facility dog in therapeutic, investigative, advocacy or other client-facing contexts.
- Support the appropriate integration of the facility dog into the Centre's multidisciplinary and client-facing environment.
- Help establish and maintain appropriate boundaries, protocols and routines for the dog's participation in the workplace.
- Ensure the dog's presence is purposeful, safe, trauma-informed and responsive to the needs of both clients and staff.
- Monitor the dog during workplace interactions and recognize when the dog requires a break, rest or removal from an interaction.
- Maintain responsibility for ensuring that the dog is appropriately rested, supported and ready to participate in workplace activities.
- Support staff understanding of appropriate interactions with the facility dog, including expectations related to handling, boundaries, rest and workplace access.
- Act as the primary point of contact for questions or concerns related to the dog's daily care, availability, behaviour and readiness for work.
- Communicate concerns regarding the dog's health, behaviour, stress, fatigue or capacity to work to the appropriate Centre leadership and facility dog provider.

Program Stewardship

- Recognize that the facility dog is a valued member of the Centre's team while also being an animal whose welfare must always be prioritized.
- Recognize that the facility dog is entrusted to the Centre and is not the personal property of the Primary Caregiver or any other employee.
- Understand that the facility dog's primary working relationship is with the Centre and its clients, rather than with any individual employee.
- Provide continuity, stability and care on behalf of the Centre and the facility dog program.
- Balance the dog's working responsibilities with its needs as a dog.
- Recognize that the dog's needs and capacity to work may change throughout its working life and adjust its role and routine accordingly.

- Support the dog through changes in its working role, including reduced duties and eventual retirement from active service.
- Understand that the facility dog provider retains the right to recall the dog at any time should it determine that doing so is necessary or appropriate.

A SIGNIFICANT LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

The Facility Dog Primary Handler component of this position involves a significant and long-term commitment to the facility dog. The successful candidate is not simply assigned a dog as part of their employment duties. They become the dog's primary caregiver and an important source of consistency, stability and continuity throughout its working life.

The successful candidate must understand and be prepared to provide a stable home environment and consistent routine for the facility dog. This includes responsibility for the dog outside regular working hours, including evenings, weekends, holidays and periods when the Centre is closed.

The relationship with the facility dog is intended to be long-term and continuous, subject to the needs and wellbeing of the dog, the requirements of the program and the employee's continued suitability for the role. As the dog ages, its needs and capacity to work may change. The Primary Handler will continue to have an important role in supporting the dog through these transitions, including any reduction in duties and eventual retirement from active service.

The Centre will provide the financial resources, professional veterinary care, training, equipment, respite and program support required to support the facility dog throughout its working life. The Primary Handler provides the consistency, stability, daily care and relationship that the dog relies upon.

The facility dog is entrusted to the Centre and the facility dog program. It is not the personal property of the Primary Handler or any other employee. Should the Primary Handler leave the Centre, change positions or otherwise cease to hold the role for any reason, the facility dog remains with the Centre/program and does not accompany the employee. Appropriate transition and continuity-of-care arrangements will be established by the Centre.

The Primary Handler is therefore expected to approach this responsibility as the steward of an important working animal entrusted to the Centre, rather than as the personal owner of the dog. The relationship with the dog is an essential part of the role, while the dog's welfare and best interests remain paramount.

EDUCATION & UNDERSTANDING

- Bachelor's degree in a related human or social service field.
- Knowledge of trauma-informed care principles.
- Knowledge of crisis intervention approaches, including suicide prevention and safety planning.
- Awareness of the impacts of colonialism on Indigenous populations, including intergenerational trauma, displacement and ongoing efforts toward justice and self-determination.
- Understanding of culturally safe service delivery.
- Interest in supporting children, youth and families impacted by trauma.

- Understanding of the principles and responsibilities associated with facility dogs and animal-assisted interventions, or willingness to develop this knowledge through ongoing training.
- Understanding of canine wellbeing, behaviour and the importance of recognizing and responding to signs of stress, fatigue or discomfort, or willingness to develop this knowledge.
- Understanding that the welfare, safety and needs of the facility dog must be prioritized alongside its role in supporting clients and staff.
- Willingness and ability to provide a stable home environment and ongoing daily care for a facility dog as an essential condition of the position.
- Willingness to participate in ongoing education, training and assessment related to both areas of the position.

SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational, administrative and advanced computer skills.
- Ability to prioritize competing demands and manage multiple tasks in a dynamic environment.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team and broader community.
- Sound judgment, initiative and professionalism.
- Compassion and commitment to child protection and community wellbeing.
- Ability to maintain appropriate professional boundaries and confidentiality.
- Ability to recognize and respond appropriately to the needs of children, youth, families, colleagues and the facility dog.
- Ability to balance the operational requirements of the Centre with the needs and wellbeing of the facility dog.
- Comfortable working alongside and providing daily care for a facility dog as a significant component of the position.
- Ability to recognize and respond appropriately to canine behaviour, stress and wellbeing, or willingness to develop these skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively with a range of professionals and partner agencies.
- Flexibility and adaptability in responding to the changing needs of the Centre, clients and facility dog.
- Commitment to ongoing learning within a collaborative, trauma-informed setting.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send your cover letter and resume to admin@CYACkelowna.com