

## Help Center Volunteer Job Description

**Background:** Community problems are significant in Montana, resulting in crisis for an increasing number of citizens. The Help Center receives over 16,000 calls a year, far beyond the capacity the staff can effectively handle. Volunteer involvement is critical to the success of the Crisis Line program.

**Purpose:** To make crisis intervention and community referrals available 24 hours a day to all individuals without regard to income, gender, religion, sexual orientation or race. The Help Center connects callers in personal crisis with an anonymous person who remains objective and attempts to empower individuals by providing access to community resources.

**Outcomes:** The goal of the Crisis Intervention and Referral Specialist is to use active listening skills to bring about a positive change in the emotional state of the caller from the time initial contact is made to the time the call is concluded. Callers seeking information or referral will experience increased awareness of the resources that are available in the community as a result of calling the Help Center hotline.

**Training:** Volunteer training is conducted up to 3 times per year by the Help Center Staff. Topics covered include Active Listening Skills, Abuse, Diversity & Sensitivity, Addictions, Suicide, Depression and Sexual Assault. Training also covers how to find referral information as well as answer calls after hours for other agencies and professionals.

### Required skills and knowledge

Our volunteer training involves a time commitment of approximately 2-3 months at 4 hours a week. We train volunteers in the skills necessary to do telephone crisis counseling. However, there are some other necessary requirements in order to be able to fulfill the job demands.

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Not a current client of any of Help Center, Inc's programs.
- Not a recent client (past 3 years) of the crisis counseling programs (hotline, walk in, Intern counseling)
- Proficiency and ease with Internet search engines and online forms
- Skilled listener and communicator (written and oral)
- Some ability to multi task (talk on phone while using searchable database)
- Committed to ongoing learning and personal growth
- Ability to be non-judgmental and handle tense moments
- Excellent customer service skills is a plus!

### Responsibilities:

- Must complete all required 52 hours of the Help Center Training program
- Serve approximately 1 four-hour shift per week at the Help Center
- Notify Staff when a shift will be missed.
- Type up call details in online database form.
- Help with Telecare program calls as appropriate.
- Search database or internet for appropriate referrals as needed
- Assist in updating Resource Database (optional).
- Commit to the program for nine months
- Adhere to confidentiality policy

**Benefits:**

- Shifts may be chosen to fit your personal schedule
- Helping a person in crisis can be an extremely rewarding experience
- The work offers valuable experience to the volunteer