

Street Outreach Specialist
West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness (WVCEH)
Full-Time | Community-Based Street Outreach Position

Make a Difference for People Experiencing Homelessness

At the West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness (WVCEH), we believe **people matter**. People in our communities are living without safe, stable housing, and our team works every day to change that.

WVCEH is seeking a **Street Outreach Specialist** to locate, engage, and assist individuals and families who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This is a highly community-based position for someone who is compassionate, resourceful, comfortable working independently in the field, and willing to meet people where they are—literally.

Our programs are built around effective practices, quality services, and continuous improvement. We recognize that improvement requires change, and we expect our team members to be adaptable, solution-focused, and committed to providing excellent services.

What You'll Do

Street Outreach Specialists work primarily in the community to identify and engage individuals and families living outdoors, in vehicles, abandoned buildings, encampments, or other places not meant for human habitation. Outreach Specialists build relationships with people who may be disconnected from traditional service systems and help them navigate the process of accessing shelter, housing, healthcare, behavioral health services, benefits, and other community resources.

The position focuses particular attention on individuals with significant vulnerabilities and barriers who may be least likely to obtain housing or services without intensive outreach and assistance.

Primary responsibilities include:

- Conduct regular, proactive street outreach in locations where individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness live or gather, including encampments, streets, wooded areas, abandoned structures, vehicles, and other places not meant for human habitation.
- Identify and build rapport with individuals and families experiencing unsheltered homelessness, including individuals experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenges.
- Establish meaningful, trusting relationships with participants while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- Provide individualized, person-centered support to help participants identify barriers, develop goals, access resources, and move toward safe and stable housing.
- Assist participants with navigating the process of obtaining housing and securing documentation necessary to establish eligibility for housing programs and other resources.

- Connect participants to appropriate community resources, including emergency shelter, healthcare, behavioral health services, substance use treatment, Peer Recovery Support Services, benefits, employment resources, and other supportive services.
- Provide access and connections to overdose prevention and other health and safety resources, including naloxone and appropriate community-based services.
- Participate in the local Coordinated Entry System and community housing prioritization processes to help ensure individuals with the greatest vulnerabilities and barriers are identified and connected to available housing resources.
- Assist housing programs and community partners in locating and maintaining contact with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- Work collaboratively with WVCEH's Coordinated Entry, Housing Stabilization, Landlord Liaison, Peer Recovery Support Services, HMIS, and other programs to provide coordinated assistance.
- Build relationships with community partners, service providers, local governments, first responders, healthcare providers, behavioral health organizations, shelters, and others who regularly encounter individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Assist with identifying housing opportunities and coordinating with landlords and property managers when needed to support participants moving from homelessness into permanent housing.
- Maintain an active caseload of approximately **25–30 households** experiencing literal homelessness, with additional individuals potentially requiring outreach, engagement, assessment, referral, or other assistance based on community need.
- Work toward successful exits from homelessness, with a goal of moving at least **75% of the annual caseload to permanent or appropriate temporary housing destinations**.
- Maintain accurate and timely participant records and enter client-level service data into the **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** in real time whenever possible and no later than 48 hours following contact or service provision.
- Maintain flexibility to conduct outreach and provide services during non-traditional hours when necessary to locate and appropriately serve individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Participate in WVCEH-required and other relevant professional development opportunities, which may include cultural competency, naloxone use and distribution, motivational interviewing, suicide prevention, trauma-informed and person-centered care, assessment and case management tools, Critical Time Intervention, housing procurement and stabilization, and other evidence-informed practices applicable to the position.
- Maintain professional boundaries and provide services in a manner that promotes participant dignity, choice, safety, self-sufficiency, and long-term housing stability.
- Comply with WVCEH policies, program standards, grant requirements, the WVCEH Personnel Manual, and applicable procedures.
- Perform other duties related to the successful implementation of WVCEH programs.

What We're Looking For

The successful candidate will be a **highly motivated, dependable self-starter** who is comfortable working independently in the community, can manage competing priorities, and can effectively engage individuals experiencing significant barriers and crises.

Street outreach is not primarily an office-based position. Candidates should understand that much of the work occurs **outdoors and in the community**, often in locations and conditions that are unpredictable.

Candidates should have:

- Strong problem-solving, communication, interpersonal, engagement, and conflict-resolution skills.
- The ability to establish rapport with individuals who may be hesitant to engage with traditional service systems.
- An understanding of issues related to homelessness, substance use, mental health, poverty, trauma, and housing instability.
- The ability to work respectfully and effectively with individuals experiencing complex needs and significant barriers to housing.
- Knowledge of community resources and the ability to navigate complex eligibility requirements and service systems.
- The ability to work independently while coordinating effectively with WVCEH staff and community partners.
- Strong computer skills and the ability to learn required databases and technology.
- A professional and mature demeanor with the ability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries.
- A valid driver's license and reliable transportation.
- The ability and willingness to travel regularly throughout the assigned service area and periodically to WVCEH's office in Bridgeport, West Virginia.
- **Previous experience working with individuals experiencing homelessness is strongly preferred.**
- Previous street outreach, case management, behavioral health, substance use services, housing, social services, peer support, community outreach, or other relevant human services experience will be considered.
- Experience using **HMIS** is a plus but is **not required**.

A **Bachelor's degree is preferred but not required**. Relevant professional and lived experience will be considered when evaluating candidates.

Physical & Work Environment Requirements

This is a **field-based position that involves significant outdoor and community-based work**. Employees must be able and willing to conduct outreach in locations where people experiencing homelessness are living and gathering.

The position requires frequent standing and walking and may involve navigating uneven terrain, wooded areas, encampments, stairs, and other outdoor or community environments.

Employees may be outdoors and on foot for extended periods and may work in varying weather conditions.

The position requires the ability to lift and carry materials weighing up to approximately **50 pounds** as needed.

Employees must be comfortable traveling throughout the assigned service area and working in a variety of community environments. Employees must be willing to transport clients when appropriate. Regular travel is required.

The position also requires use of standard office and mobile technology, including laptops, tablets, cell phones, scanners, and other equipment.

Our Approach

WVCEH expects excellence from our programs and our people. We seek continuous improvement in how we engage and serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Because improvement requires change, adaptability is an important part of working at WVCEH. Street Outreach Specialists often serve as the **first connection between an individual experiencing unsheltered homelessness and the broader homeless response system**. The work requires persistence, patience, good judgment, strong boundaries, and a willingness to continue engaging people who may not be ready or able to accept assistance immediately.

Every WVCEH employee has a role in helping people experiencing homelessness move toward **safe, stable, and permanent housing**.

If you are resourceful, compassionate, comfortable working independently outdoors and in the community, and ready to meet people where they are, we encourage you to apply.

West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Candidates should apply at www.wvceh.org/apply-now