



Job Description

JOB TITLE: Shelter Supports Specialist (SSS)

PROGRAM: Emergency Shelter Homes (ESH)

REPORTS TO: Shelter Supports Manager

TYPE OF POSITION: Non-Exempt

APPROVED BY:  **DATE** 1/12/2026
Executive Director

SUPERCEDES JOB DESCRIPTION TITLED AND DATED:

- I. **JOB SUMMARY:** The Shelter Supports Specialist provides 24-hour direct care and supervision to youth ages 12–17 residing in Hale 'Ōpio Kaua'i's Emergency Shelter Services program. Transitional Supports Specialists are the primary day-to-day agents of change in the home, responsible for creating a safe, predictable, and nurturing environment; supporting youth with daily living skills; implementing behavior and safety plans; and modeling healthy, respectful relationships.

Working as part of a multidisciplinary team, Shelter Supports Specialists support crisis intervention, educational stability, family engagement, and preparation for the youth's next placement, in alignment with Hale 'Ōpio's mission and DHS goals.

II. **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Provide active supervision of youth on assigned shifts (day, evening, awake overnight), ensuring safety, structure, and adherence to house rules and routines.
- Maintain a calm, trauma-informed presence and use de-escalation skills to respond to youth distress, conflict, or crisis situations.
- Support youths' daily living needs, including hygiene, grooming, clothing, meals, medication support (per agency protocols), bedtime and wake-up routines.
- Supervise and participate in chores, recreation, cultural activities, and pro-social groups, modeling positive behavior and respectful communication.
- Coach youth in communication skills, self-regulation, anger management, problem-solving, and conflict resolution using evidence-informed strategies.
- Facilitate or co-facilitate life skills, coping skills, and cultural groups as assigned.
- Implement individualized safety and behavior support plans developed with the Clinical Supervisor and Transitional Supports Manager.
- Identify early warning signs of escalation and utilize approved crisis prevention and intervention strategies; seek support from on-call supervisors when needed.

- Follow all agency emergency procedures (fire, medical, elopement/runaway, natural disasters) and report incidents promptly and accurately.
- Assist with transportation to and from school, appointments, court hearings, and community activities, following agency and DHS guidelines.
- Support youth in school engagement, including homework, communication with teachers, and preparation for the next school day.
- Monitor youth health and wellness, report concerns to appropriate staff, and support access to medical, behavioral health, and dental care as directed.
- Complete shift notes, incident reports, medication logs (if delegated), behavior/point sheets, and other required documentation accurately and on time.
- Participate in hand-off communication between shifts, ensuring continuity of care and awareness of key events, concerns, and plans.
- Attend and participate in staff meetings, supervision, and training sessions; provide input on youth progress and program improvements.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries, ethical conduct, confidentiality, and respect for youth rights at all times.
- Demonstrate cultural humility and respect for diverse backgrounds, values, and family systems; integrate Hawaiian values and cultural practices into daily routines when possible.
- Support a clean, organized, and welcoming home environment, including participation in cleaning, organizing, and basic maintenance tasks.
- Participate in on-call, holiday, weekend, and overnight coverage as scheduled.
- Perform other related duties as assigned to meet program and youth needs.

III. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience

- High school diploma or GED required, some college coursework in human services, social work, psychology, education, or related field preferred.
- At least two (2) years of experience working with adolescents in residential care, shelter, school, youth program, or related setting preferred; equivalent combination of education and experience considered.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Genuine desire to work with adolescents who may have experienced trauma, loss, and system involvement.
- Ability to remain calm and supportive during crises and to use approved de-escalation and crisis intervention techniques.
- Basic understanding of adolescent development, trauma, and positive behavior support (training provided).
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills; ability to work effectively as part of a team.
- Ability to maintain clear, accurate written documentation and follow program procedures.
- Willingness to learn and integrate Hawaiian cultural values and practices and to respect the cultural identities of all youth.
- Basic computer skills (email, simple data entry) preferred.

Other Requirements

- Must be at least 21 years of age (or minimum age required by licensing/contract).
- Valid Hawai'i driver's license, current auto insurance, and acceptable driving record.
- Able to pass criminal history, child abuse/neglect registry, and other background checks required by DHS and licensing bodies.
- TB clearance and physical exam as required by law and agency policy.
- Ability and willingness to work variable shifts, including evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays.

IV. WORKING CONDITIONS / PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: Work is performed in a group home/shelter environment with active adolescents who may present challenging behaviors, verbal aggression, or emotional distress.

Requires the ability to stay awake and alert on assigned shifts, move quickly within the home, and respond immediately to safety concerns; may require lifting up to 25–35 pounds, walking up and down stairs, and participating in recreational and community activities.

V. OTHER: Must have access to a vehicle and must have a valid driver's license, a safe and responsible driving record, plus current no-fault auto insurance, with \$100,000 bodily injury liability coverage on personal auto(s).

This job description is intended to indicate the kind of tasks and levels of work difficulty that will be required of the position given the title **Shelter Supports Specialist** and shall not be construed as declaring all the specific duties and responsibilities. It is not intended to limit or in any way modify the right of the supervisor to assign, direct, and/or control the work of employees under his/her supervision. The use of a particular expression or illustration describing duties shall not be held to exclude other duties not mentioned that are of similar kind or level of difficulty.

Employee's Acknowledgement _____ Date _____