

## **LGBT Youth Line Peer Support Volunteer Position Description**

**The LGBT Youth Line office is wheelchair accessible and strives to be a fragrance free environment. We provide TTC tokens and food for volunteers to be able to attend all training and shifts.**

**Position Title:** Peer Support Volunteer

### **Purpose of Position:**

To staff the phone and chat lines at LGBT Youth Line. Service volunteers answer phone calls, one-on-one instant message chats, emails, and text messages where they provide support, information, and referrals to local LGBT resources across the province. LGBT Youth Line responds to young people who are struggling with isolation, experiences of rejection and violence from their families/communities/schools, and questioning a wide range of experiences including their sexual and gender identities.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Answering phone calls, instant message chats, and text messages in a timely fashion and in accordance with Youth Line policies.
2. Practicing empathy, patience, and active listening skills throughout all interactions with callers/texters/IM'ers.
3. Providing information and referrals to callers on local LGBTQ resources across the province.
4. Keeping up to date with relevant LGBTQ information as needed by attending a monthly three-hour debriefing/training session in addition to weekly shifts.
5. Helping keep service room clean and tidy.

**Time Commitment:** 1 Year

**Expected number of hours per week or month:** 3 hours once a week

**Time of Work:** 4PM-7PM *or* 6:30PM - 9:30PM (Once a week)

**Flexibility:** The 3 mandatory hours can be worked between Sunday-Friday, and does not have to be the same day every week.

### **Qualification/Skill Requirements:**

No previous experience or knowledge is necessary! We are looking for passionate individuals wanting to challenge themselves, share experiences and gain new skills.

- The applicants we are seeking must identify as part of the LBGTTIQQ2SA community and as "youth" (aged 26 and under).

- LGBT Youth Line recognizes the contributions that individuals from marginalized communities bring to our organization. Thus, we encourage applications from Indigenous people, people from African/Caribbean/Black communities, people of colour, trans people, single parents, refugees, immigrants, working class people, and people with disabilities. Applicants are invited to self-identify in their application, which will be kept confidential.

#### **Hard Skills:**

- Must be able to read and write in English.
- Must have basic computer skills (i.e. able to send and receive e-mails/instant messages).

#### **Soft Skills:**

- Must be able to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Must be compassionate and patient.
- Must be open and respectful towards others.
- Must be willing to challenge one's own beliefs and ideas.
- Must be dependable.

### **Orientation and Training**

#### **Formal Training:**

Due to the sensitive nature of our work, volunteers undergo intensive training sessions prior to working on the lines. Training includes topics such as active listening, anti-oppression, anti-racism, sex and consent, STIs, HIV, handling crisis situations, self-care and more.

- Identical training sessions will be offered twice a week for 12 weeks between September-December.
- Volunteers will attend **one** three hour training a week for a total of 36 hours of training.
- VOLUNTEERS MUST ATTEND ALL TRAINING DAYS. Exceptions *may* be made on a case by case basis.
- For confidentiality reasons, training is held downtown and not at the organization's offices.

#### **Informal Training:**

- Following training, volunteers participate in "shadow shifts" where they practice the skills gained in training.
- Each volunteer participates in post-call/text/email/IM debriefings (from 5 to 20 minutes) with the Shift Supervisor.
- In addition to their regular shifts, volunteers are required to attend a monthly three-hour debriefing or training session, offered on a weeknight from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Volunteers must pass a probationary period of three consecutive shadow shifts, after which they are officially considered a 'Peer Support Volunteer'.

**Supervised By/ Reports To:**

Volunteers are supervised and supported by one of the five Shift Supervisors at Youth Line. The volunteer can also request the Shift Supervisor intervene in a call if the volunteer feels uncomfortable.

Volunteers are trained and coordinated by the Service Coordinator, Naomi Martey ([volunteer@youthline.ca](mailto:volunteer@youthline.ca)) and a co-facilitator.

**Supporting Policies:**

- There is always one Shift Supervisor in the call-centre room when volunteers are on duty.
- Volunteers are given a training manual which details relevant organizational policies, procedures, and contact information.
- The Human Resources manual and emergency contact information is permanently stored in the call-centre room, where the volunteers work.

**Working Conditions:**

The Youth Line office is in a confidential location that will only be revealed to successful applicants. The building and office are wheelchair accessible and we strive to maintain a fragrance-free environment.

Volunteers will be using a telephone and computer that are both provided.

**Benefits:**

- Being a crucial part of the largest LGBTQ youth organization in the province.
- 2 TTC tokens per shift.
- Food.
- Joining a diverse, vibrant community of volunteers.
- Access to volunteer socials (including representing LGBT Youth Line at Toronto Pride).
- Gaining employment skills such as workshop facilitation and outreach experience.
- Experience in teamwork, communication, providing referrals, peer support, computer skills, and critical thinking.

**Performance Measurement:**

There will be ongoing feedback and support provided by the Shift Supervisor and Service Coordinator throughout the volunteer's assignment. If volunteer ages out or chooses to leave LGBT Youth Line, an exit interview will be conducted by the Service Coordinator if the volunteer wishes.