

**Position Title: *Benefits Assistance Specialist***

**Accountable to: *Benefits Assistance Coordinator***

#### **JOB SUMMARY**

The Brazos Valley Food Bank is a member of the Community Partner Program (CPP). The CPP is a collaboration between the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and a statewide network of food banks; government, faith- and community-based agencies; and other social service organizations. Community Partner organizations are trained and certified by HHSC to help low-income Texans apply for services using the HHSC online benefit portal, YourTexasBenefits.com. This position helps low-income Texans apply for Health and Human Services benefits programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Medicaid, CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and other state benefits in the following counties: **Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Madison, Robertson, and Washington**. The position requires traveling to partner sites in these counties daily. The position is responsible for assisting clients with accessing SNAP and other state assistance programs through an online portal. This position will be certified as a Case Assistance Navigator through HHSC's Community Partner Program.

#### ***Partner Recruitment***

- Work with the Benefits Assistance Coordinator to identify and establish partnerships with existing community organizations. Provide them with outreach/education materials for distribution. Maintain working relationships with the partner agencies.
- Develop and implement a plan to provide partner agencies with updated information about HHSC's social program requirements, benefits, and the application procedure.
- Utilize existing channels of direct assistance to reach potentially eligible populations (PEPs) and educate them on HHSC's social programs.
- Present material as a subject matter expert to community groups at private and/or public events.

#### ***Application Assistance***

Provide thorough application assistance using the HHSC online benefits portal, YourTexasBenefits.com. Related activities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide comprehensive, client-centered application assistance to help eligible individuals enroll in SNAP and other HHSC benefit programs.
- Educate applicants on how to successfully submit process-ready applications and supporting documents through YourTexasBenefits.com and the Mobile App.
- Facilitate referrals of clients to other community supports and BVFB Referral Partner Program.
- Assist client in gathering all required documentation, if necessary.
- Actively seek information about perceived barriers to participation in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and other state benefits program and inform the Benefits Assistance Program Coordinator.
- Work and perform accurately in a detail-oriented environment with good interpersonal communication skills.

### **Data Entering and Reporting**

- Interview and record data in assisting with benefits application eligibility through online and paper application formats. Review and process case changes and statuses to clients.
- Enter data of clients assisted on Oasis and BVFB internal software tracking tool in a timely manner.
- Provide Information needed for reports based on HHSC, Feeding Texas, CPP, state, and federal procedures and guidelines.
- Keep and organize personal and confidential client data information files.
- If required, complete follow-up calls on applications submitted and record outcome of calls on BVFB internal software tracking tool.

### **Document**

- Collect the necessary data to document compliance with HHSC policies and processes and fulfill contractual requirements and deliverables.
- Document processes that are working effectively, clients' perceived barriers to participation in state benefits, including detailed descriptions of specific experiences reported, and suggestions for viable solutions with Supervisor and Feeding Texas Program Manager.
- Consult with program staff on policies, practices, records, and community resources.
- Reviews, edits, and reconciles discrepancies in reports, correspondence, summaries, manuals, journals, records, and other related documents.

### **Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university accredited is preferred. Relevant experience may be substituted for education.
- One-year social work or casework experience

### **Other**

- Bilingual- English & Spanish (Preferred).
- A professional demeanor, good boundaries, excellent communication and listening skills and solid problem-solving ability are a must.
- Ability to work independently with minimum supervision.
- Ability to organize work, time, and self, attention to detail, accuracy, and meeting of deadlines.
- Ability to work as a team member in a dynamic organization while maintaining an understanding of BVFB's business operations, goals, and objectives in order to set priorities and objectives for benefits assistance program.
- Proven ability to develop and strengthen new relationships/partnerships.
- Excellent written, oral, leadership, and interpersonal skills. In particular, the ability to understand and organize detailed information and to write about or talk extemporaneously on that information.
- Exercise good judgment and discretion; strong ethical character capable of handling confidential information.
- Computer-literate with in-depth knowledge of relevant software such as MS Office Suite, especially Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, Internet such as Google Chrome and client tracking software such as Oasis and Charity Tracker.
- Knowledge of hunger and poverty issues.
- Customer-service oriented.
- Knowledge of community resources and ability to use them effectively for clients.
- Must be able to accept constructive criticism.
- Highly motivated, with proven capacity to take initiative, work independently and effectively with others at all levels of BVFB with a high level of professionalism in all interactions.
- Ability to work cooperatively under pressure with a diverse range of people and demonstrated ability to communicate tactfully with all members of society.
- Ability to set priorities, identify goals, and plan effectively.

- Ability to work in stressful situations and under program timelines.
- Ability to be flexible with working hours to meet the client and community events schedule (includes evenings and weekends).
- Delivers, picks up, or receives documents, supplies, equipment, or materials; checks for quantity and quality; or make arrangements for repairs and services.
- Must be able to pass a criminal background check administered by BVFB and HHSC.
- Current driver's license and ability to use personal vehicle for BVFB business (mileage reimbursement for work travel).
- Performs related work as assigned.

#### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS WITH OR WITHOUT REASONABLE ACCOMODATION**

- Ability to walk, stand, sit, kneel, push, stoop, reach above the shoulder, grasp, pull, bend repeatedly, identify colors, hear with aid, see, write, count, read, speak, analyze, alphabetize, lift, and carry up to 50 lbs., perceive depth, operate a motor vehicle, and operate motor equipment.
- Conditions may include working inside, working outside, working alone, working protracted or irregular hours, and traveling by car, van, bus, and airplane.
- Equipment (machines, tools, devices) used in performing only the essential functions include computer and related equipment, calculator, copier, fax machine, telephone, and automobile.

#### **TO APPLY:**

Interested candidates should send a cover letter and resume (or professional vitae) to:

Mellissa Roy, Benefits Assistance Coordinator

[mellissar@bvfb.org](mailto:mellissar@bvfb.org)

***Please, no calls or walk-in inquiries about your application. If we are interested in interviewing you, we will contact you.***

#### **BVFB is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE).**

##### *About the Brazos Valley Food Bank*

The Brazos Valley Food Bank, a local nonprofit organization in Bryan, is a central distribution site that unites food donors, volunteers, and hunger-relief agencies. As the hub of over 36 different agencies that feed the hungry throughout Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Madison, Robertson, and Washington counties. In addition to supplying food to partner agencies, the Food Bank oversees Children's BackPack, Senior Bags, Family Box, Going the Extra Mile, Screen and Intervene, Nutrition Education, Together We Grow, and Benefits Assistance programs including the Referral Partner Program, as well as oversees Mobile Food and School-Based Food Pantries to reach those in need.