

## **Ombudsperson**

### **King County Regional Homelessness Authority**

**Role Title:** Ombudsperson

**Salary Range:** \$100,000 - \$150,000 per year

#### **Overview of KCRHA**

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (the Authority) oversees all homelessness related programming and prevention initiatives in the Seattle/King County region. The Authority was created with an interlocal agreement between the City of Seattle and King County in 2019. It is the Authority's job to build and implement a regional approach to ending homelessness in King County. To accomplish this, the Authority is specifically tasked with:

1. Empowering and distributing authority to people with lived experience to be a central part of decision making processes and program implementation, assessment, and design.
2. Focusing on justice-based approaches to actively address disproportionalities in the population experiencing homelessness; and
3. Integrating the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders across King County through a sub-regional planning process that recognizes the unique attributes of communities within the county.

The Authority is currently in its founding era and seeks dynamic and skilled leaders at all levels.

#### **Team Overview**

The Ombuds office within the Regional Authority is responsible for assisting the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCHRA), providers, and the greater community improve access to equitable, client-centered, and quality services. The Ombuds office will promote constituent confidence in KCHRA by responding to concerns and proposals from people living homeless in an impartial, efficient and timely manner and use this feedback to inform policies and programs within the homelessness system. The primary goal of the Ombuds Office is to assist people living homeless on their path to fairer access to external resources and improve their quality of life while in shelter and other housing interventions. The Office will be an

advocate to ensure that people experiencing homelessness have a meaningful role in the decision-making processes throughout the homelessness system. The Office will assist people living homeless on their path to fairer access to external resources thereby improving their quality of life while in shelter and other housing interventions.

The team has direct lines of interaction with all offices across the agency, working closely with the Executive Office to ensure direct alignment with the big-picture strategy and goals of the Regional Authority. The team has approximately 5 team members working directly in related offices.

### **Role Description**

As part of the Office of the Ombuds, the Ombudsperson's primary role is to build customer decision-making power and to facilitate ongoing community engagement that can be leveraged to systematically integrate the daily lived experiences of customers and their perspectives into system policies and priorities. The Ombudsperson will be responsible for implementing a continuous quality improvement framework driven by customer voice and creating metrics for assessing the ability of the system to address individuals specific and needs. This work will include designing mechanisms that ensure that all customers have an opportunity to participate in decision making processes in accessible ways and working closely with providers to coordinate customer engagement and inform processes and programs. Additionally, the Ombudsperson and office will partner with the Community Impact team to create follow up assessments to understand how customer needs evolved over time, accessible and intuitive data collection methods to collect both qualitative and quantitative feedback, and establish a system dashboard that tracks specific customer input to be used in longer term planning and provider performance management. The Ombudsperson will ultimately be accountable to people experiencing homelessness, the Lived Experience Coalition, the Implementation Board, and the Chief Executive Officer and will be held to the processes that customers of the Regional Authority's services, community groups, and frontline staff establish to ensure that accountability.

Reporting directly to the CEO, this role manages a team of five with the opportunity for considerable expansion subject to budget availability.

### **Accountabilities**

#### **Strategy & Team Management (20%)**

- Actively partner in an accountable relationship with people experiencing homelessness, including those belonging to organized groups and those with no formal affiliation, to design and implement a system-wide accountability framework for the Authority.
- Support the development and design for Ombuds related work to support KCRHA in day-to-day operations.
- Provide support to KCRHA in overseeing homelessness and housing related programs and initiatives.
- Support Ombudsperson direct reports in their work and engagement by identifying and creating professional development and educational opportunities.
- Create structures that support the wellbeing of Ombuds office staff as they engage with the community.
- Coordinate the Ombuds team and related stakeholders against the team vision.
- Develop a work plan to set and track goals and progress against goals for the Ombuds team.
- Model a customer-centric work-style through leadership and personal accountability towards inclusive practices.

#### **Program Design and Development (40%)**

- Providing Racial Equity and Social Justice Trainings and other supports to the homelessness system to better operationalize KCHRA's Theory of Change and to address multiple forms of historical oppression such as racism, colonialism, cisgenderism, ableism, adultism, heterosexism, transphobia, Christian hegemony, adultism, nationalism, elitism, classism, etc. through an intersectional lens
- Develop and implement, through a restorative justice model, strategies to ensure that individuals who are 'exited' from programs are not permanently cut off from access to vital resources
- Provide transformative/restorative justice space to mitigate conflicts that may arise between people experiencing homelessness and the Authority
- Maintain a high level of understanding of project management strategies.
- Attend trainings on new tools that may help with the teams ability to successfully complete work activities and share learning with the team.
- Develop data collection tools that are accessible for people who are currently or have been homeless.
- Develop metrics, in partnership with people with lived experience, providers, and the Lived Experience Coalition, that measure the system's ability to serve the holistic needs of households experiencing homelessness.
- Create agency wide systems of accountability to feedback received from people with lived experience. Work across departments to educate about the importance of

customer voice and work with KCRHA staff to ensure customer voice is integrated into every department.

- Develop proposals and make recommendations to change Agency policies and contracts to improve the system for customers.
- Provide training and support to the greater homelessness system on how to center Lived Expertise. Partner with community based organizations and people with lived experience to design and implement these trainings.

### **Operations & Continuous Improvement (20%)**

- Lead annual survey of people living homeless to evaluate service providers on quality. The survey would be conducted in partnership with the Lived Experience Coalition and be used to help inform provider partners quality of services and inform future funding decisions.
- Ensure the team has enough capacity to support KCRHA's goals.
- Evaluate, investigate, and assist customers in resolving grievances with provider partners and systems.
- Design and implement ways of collecting data, engaging communities, and developing goals, in coordination with the Community Impact Department, that promote the agency wide mission to respond to customer feedback.
- Oversee the day-to-day operations of all Ombuds team members.
- Collaborate with the Deputy Directors to ensure that all departments center customer needs.
- Ensure staff members meet target goals.
- Engage with stakeholder groups to inform KCRHA's policies, activities, and goals.
- Oversee the delivery of services to support staff members in making changes to work activities or identify additional resources they need.

### **Stakeholder Engagement (20%)**

- Attend all Lived Experience Coalition (LEC) meetings and host conversations between Authority departments and the LEC.
- Help broaden reach and scope of outreach to people with lived experience regionally and form other sub-regional coalitions of people with lived experience.
- Regularly engage community groups to support ongoing improvement and design efforts.
- Attend relevant meetings with community-based organizations and other government agencies and partners to engage them in policy and program design.
- Actively build relationships with people across the sector/across sectors to support innovation and change within the departments work activities.

### **Minimum Requirements**

- People with lived experience of homelessness or housing insecurity are strongly encouraged to apply
- BIPOC community members strongly encouraged to apply
- Trans\* and gender-expansive people strongly encouraged to apply
- Strong Advocacy Skills
- Demonstrated ability to lead with Racial Justice and Social Equity
- Community organizing experience
- Transformative/Restorative Justice and Mediation Skills
- Ability to lead committees and effectively organize work activities to accomplish goals.
- Deep connections to communities most impacted by homelessness
- Knowledge of King County homelessness system, programs, and interventions
- Ability to conduct work with data and understand policy to make recommendations
- Variety of experiences working effectively with others from different backgrounds and cultures

### **Additional Requirements**

- Ability to meet with stakeholders and people experiencing homelessness across the region.
- Experience working with community members to advocate and design solutions.
- Experience in managing projects and engaging community members and people with lived experience.
- Experience listening to people's stories and experiences to create solutions and influence policy.
- Ability to plan for future needs and work with other staff to accomplish goals.
- Ability to engage with all people respectfully and with a customer service mindset.
- Ability to provide and accept feedback
- Willingness to learn technology that may be used by the Authority.

### **EEO STATEMENT**

The Regional Homelessness Authority is committed to a policy of Equal Employment Opportunity and will not discriminate against an applicant or employee based on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, alienage or citizenship status, ancestry, nationality, national origin, marital or domestic partnership or civil union status, familial status, sex, pregnancy, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. In addition, The RHA will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities.