

# FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

### CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER

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#### THE ORGANIZATION:

*Mission: Families Forward exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, food, counseling, education and other support services.*

Starting with five rented apartments in 1984, Families Forward has expanded to work with hundreds of families to regain economic independence and find a stable home for parents and their children. Families Forward's vision is to end homelessness for local families. One of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population is working families with children struggling to make ends meet. The high cost of basic living, including rent, transportation, healthcare and childcare, coupled with the significant lack of affordable housing puts many families at risk.

Families Forward works with families experiencing homelessness to find realistic solutions for sustainable housing and build individualized plans to return each family to self-sufficiency. By stabilizing these families and giving them tools to build a future, Families Forward creates a stronger community for everyone. A key factor for success is Families Forward's commitment to collaborate with many organizations to end family homelessness in Orange County, including the Commission to End Homelessness, First Five Orange County, Orange County United Way and many other partner agencies and foundations.

Providing supportive services to improve lives, Families Forward also reaches out to low-income families to help reduce the pressures that can cause homelessness and help them maintain their stability. Through various safety-net services, those at-risk are given access to assistance such as on-site food pantry, counseling, career coaching, financial and life skills education. Families Forward helps families recover from a financial crisis so they can maintain their self-sufficiency.

Families Forward holds strong to their commitment of five fundamental values:

**Dignity:** Honor each individual through an atmosphere of respect, trust and confidentiality.

**Empowerment:** Inspire self-sufficiency through the development of courage, confidence and pride.

**Accountability:** Accept responsibility for commitments and accomplishing our goals.

**Community Spirit:** Realize our vision through teamwork, cooperation and collaboration.

**Hope:** Share a belief in new beginnings and allow dreams of the future to emerge.

To learn more about Families Forward, please visit <https://www.families-forward.org/>.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Chief Program Officer is responsible for the planning, management, development, and implementation of Families Forward's Program and Housing Strategy.

Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer as a member of the Executive Management Team, the Chief Program Officer is also responsible for establishing the goals, impact measures and strategic direction of Families Forward's program along with maintaining and sustaining relationships with housing providers across Orange County to access housing for families in need. The Chief Program Officer is responsible for all program planning, management, coordination, evaluation and staffing across Families Forward's core programs which include Housing Programs, Housing Development, Affordable Housing Services, Prevention and Diversion, Career Services, Counseling, and Community Resources. In partnership with Directors of Program and Housing Development, The Chief Program Officer will develop strategies to gain access to additional housing units and ensure that programming is successfully supporting families to break the cycle of homelessness for children and to ensure families sustain their self-sufficiency through safe, affordable housing.

## **LEADERSHIP:**

- Manage and lead the Program and Housing departments, monitoring performance, performing annual reviews and building team cohesion
- As a member of the Executive Management team provide leadership and input for all strategic planning processes with the CEO, staff, and Board of Directors.
- Oversee Director of Housing Development and Director of Program to ensure appropriate program growth and long-term strategic sustainability.
- Provide effective, inspiring leadership, as well as stewardship of Families Forward's resources by being actively involved in and overseeing all programs and services.
- Promote regular and ongoing opportunities for staff, clients, and partners to give feedback on program operations.
- Be innovative and willing to challenge the status quo; looking outside Families Forward for better approaches and solutions to the challenges facing families experiencing homelessness.
- Facilitate in-house training and education for all Program staff.
- Ensure that Families Forward's services are following all local, state, and federal regulations, certifications, and licensing requirements.
- Cultivate existing relationships with the goal of ensuring enough resources and access to services.
- Participate in relationships with funders as requested.
- Participate in regional, Service Planning Areas or other planning meetings. Serve as a spokesperson for agency programs when necessary.
- Partner with the CEO to represent Families Forward with external constituency groups, including community, governmental, and private organizations.
- Collaborate effectively within Families Forward and with external partners.

## **PROGRAM:**

- Provide programmatic leadership and direction to program staff.
- Provide direct support to Director of Programs to ensure consistent focus on quality of services, progress toward goals, and adherence to mission and strategic plan.

- Implement and lead a continuous quality improvement process throughout the program and service areas: focusing on systems and process improvement, program outcomes, and program evaluation.
- Support the entire program staff and lead a high performing team by further developing and implementing recruitment, training, and equitable retention strategies.
- Lead relationship management and negotiations with public agency funders of programs and services, ensuring alignment of grants and contracts.
- Ensure the delivery of qualitative and quantitative goals and outcomes of programs and services.

## **HOUSING:**

- Provide direct support to Director of Housing Development to ensure consistent focus on quality of services, progress toward goals, and adherence to mission and strategic plan.
- Develop strategies to gain access to additional properties through Housing Navigation and to ensure that Families Forward's clients have access to appropriate information related to acquiring and maintaining housing.
- Lead the development and growth of the Affordable Housing program by increasing relationships with housing developers and communities across Orange County.
- Support Director of Housing Development in the property management of Families Forward owned housing units.

## **FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT:**

- Manage effectively within the annual operating budget, ensure continued financial viability of program services, property management, and housing growth, and report accurately on progress made and challenges encountered.
- Oversee the coordination, integration, and delivery of all programs, contracts and related services, promoting collaborative relationships between program areas and ensuring that the expectations of funders, partners, constituents, clients, and other stakeholders are consistently met.
- Evaluate new capital acquisition funding opportunities and develop strategic partnerships with housing developers to increase access to units for families in need.
- Respond to government and foundation requests for proposals and applications in partnership with development and senior staff; coordinate planning and activities necessary for development of model program designs in response to RFPs and RFAs.
- Evaluate new private funding opportunities and collaborate with Fund Development to ensure alignment.
- Work closely with the finance department to budget and monitor housing and programmatic operations to ensure sound fiscal and system management.

## **BOARD COMMUNICATION:**

- Attend Board and Executive Committee meetings
- Coordinate and lead Program Committee and Real Estate Adhoc Committee

## **TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS DESIRED:**

The successful candidate will be a strategic, highly motivated, hands-on professional with exceptional interpersonal and communication skills. The individual will be a compelling, charismatic leader with the ability to move a team forward by inspiring and motivating people with creativity, energy and a sense of humor. The Chief Program Officer should be highly collaborative, resourceful and results-oriented the ability generate new ideas, prioritize, plan, and set goals and objectives, and support the team.

## **EXPERIENCE:**

Leading candidates will have a passion for Families Forward's mission and values. At least seven years of demonstrated high-level leadership success developing and implementing comprehensive programs of comparable size. Team management experience is required, and the successful candidate will have a clearly articulated management philosophy which supports high performance and employee retention. Families Forward seeks a strong relationship builder and communicator with experience leading diverse work teams and developing an organization wide strategy for program excellence. Candidate must excel in engaging community partners and partnering with CEO and Board of Directors. The ideal candidate will have experience in program development, evaluation, and strategic growth, as well as an understanding of volunteer-supported organizations, and a fluency in databases that support program management. Exceptional financial, organizational, project management and administrative skills are essential and expected.

## **JOB QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and experience with fund raising databases, preferred
- Highly driven, results-oriented work ethic
- Maintain valid California Driver's License and state mandated vehicle insurance

## **EDUCATION:**

Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.

## **COMPENSATION:**

Annual compensation will be competitive. A comprehensive benefits package will be provided.

## **TO APPLY:**

Please direct inquiries, nominations, and applications, including resume and a compelling letter of interest in confidence to:

Elizabeth Childs – Director of Human Resources  
Families Forward  
8 Thomas  
Irvine, CA. 92618  
949-379-8381  
[echilds@families-forward.org](mailto:echilds@families-forward.org)

*Electronic submission is encouraged.*