



Job Opening

Project Director: Chosen Family Justice

CloseKnit seeks a passionate and detail-oriented person to lead our policy project: Chosen Family Justice. This leading-edge project develops practical resources for the public while also creating policy proposals to overcome barriers that impede caring adults from hosting the young people they know who are facing housing instability, especially if those adults are renters. Because, due to long-standing systemic racism, 3/4s of Minnesota youth facing homelessness are BIPOC and the majority of BIPOC households in Minnesota are renters, Chosen Family Justice is key to creating a racially equitable response to youth homelessness. Resourcing and stabilizing informal hosting arrangements is the single most important thing we can do to reduce the disproportionate rate of BIPOC youth facing homelessness.

Over the last year, CloseKnit has laid the foundation for our Chosen Family Justice initiative through legal guides and extensive relationship building. The project director will elevate our work to help youth and hosts bring their hosting arrangements above board because everyone deserves to live openly and freely. This is an opportunity to champion an upstream and transformative approach for youth homelessness prevention!

Job duties include:

- Engage local and national housing and legal organizations to distribute our legal guides on informal chosen family hosting arrangements for minors, young adults, homeowner hosts and renter hosts
- Update our legal guides as information changes: we see them as living documents!
- Engage Minnesota direct-service providers to create legal resources and tools to incentivize providers to implement a chosen family approach
- Identify funding streams and collaborations that can create incentives for Minnesota property owners to bring informal hosting arrangements above board
- Develop policy recommendations to better stabilize and resource informal hosting arrangements at the local, state, and federal level
- Identify and strategize how current homelessness programming can expand eligibility criteria to renter hosts and youth, with special emphasis on third-party rental assistance programs
- Strategize to challenge the dominant deficit approach in the youth homelessness sector and provide a counter-narrative that shifts the paradigm from stranger-match host homes and hyper-independence to one of community and relationships, including training frontline direct-service staff on implementing a chosen family approach
- Cultivate relationships with potential allies among government, housing, policy, and youth homelessness stakeholders

Required qualifications:

- A strong desire to create system change, the requisite patience to see it through, and a sense of humor in addressing inevitable resistance
- A highly creative “can-do” mindset; must be able to look beyond perceived obstacles to formulate possibilities and identify missed opportunities. We welcome (re)imagining as a liberatory practice!
- Experience with housing, youth law, public policy issues, state policy making experience is a plus
- Deep commitment to racial equity; skilled at navigating differing cultural contexts and willingness to see conflict as generative.
- A self-starter who is highly detail oriented and organized
- Excellent oral, public presentation and written communication skills: Ability to explain policy issues clearly to the general public, as well as convey complexity in more technical contexts
- Ability to organize engaging convenings where all voices are respected and heard
- Knowledge of systems currently serving vulnerable youth would be helpful!
- Humility in learning our paradigm-shifting approach and/or navigating any hiccups along the way!

People who are BIPOC, who have lived experience of youth homelessness, and/or have served as a host, either in a formal program or informally, are especially invited to apply.

This is a full-time (37.5 hour) position that includes health insurance and pays \$50,000-\$60,000, depending on experience. We offer a hybrid work environment that is fully accessible. We would like you to join us in person for at least a few days each week at our North Minneapolis office.

Interested? Send an email to Hello@closeknit.us with a cover letter explaining your interest and a resume or link to your LinkedIn profile.

About CloseKnit

CloseKnit conducts research, pilots new programming, develops policies, and advocates for investment in an upstream service-delivery model that stabilizes informal chosen family hosting arrangements between youth and their natural supports.

Our Vision

We see all youth facing homelessness as already loved,
especially youth from underestimated and under-resourced communities.

Our Mission

CloseKnit catalyzes system change,
building a holistic response that overcomes racism
to honor and invest in existing "chosen family" arrangements
that prevent youth homelessness.