**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Applications for Iowa Family Support Peer Reviewers Are Now Being Accepted**

**Become an Iowa Family Support Peer Reviewer**

We are looking for qualified individuals to serve as peer reviewers for the Iowa Family Support peer review process. Below is a summary of the role of the peer reviewer, peer reviewer qualifications, and the type of commitment involved.

**Purpose of the Iowa Family Support Peer Review Process**

The purpose of the Iowa Family Support Peer Review process is to improve program quality, provide an outside evaluation perspective and to ensure that family support programs in Iowa represent a deep and abiding commitment to delivering the highest quality services possible to families and children. As the family support initiative continues to grow and expand in our state, quality improvement helps assure that family support will continue to be regarded by the interested public as a quality service, representing a given set of standards. The Iowa Family Support Peer Review process is intended for programs that do not have access to an external evaluation.

The Iowa Family Support Credential is public recognition by the Iowa Department of Public Health that a family support program is following best practice standards. The Iowa Family Support Credential will be awarded to family support programs that complete the peer review process and are complying with all of the Iowa Family Support Standards.

**Who are Family Support Peer Reviewers?**

Peer reviewers are dedicated professionals with substantial experience in family support programming and are committed to continuous quality improvement. Peers must be knowledgeable about family support and the best practice standards, and have ability to openly, honestly, and fairly assess a program’s current ability to implement the standards. Peers are individuals who are comfortable with conducting interviews and documentation review that focuses on the program’s positive changes and quality improvement efforts, while also helping program’s by identifying areas in need of further strengthening. Peers have a variety of backgrounds and may be program managers, family support trainers, human service educators at the college level, statewide family support system level coordinators, supervisors, and direct service providers.

**Benefits of Being a Family Support Peer Reviewer**

Being a peer reviewer provides many unique opportunities for professional development. Peers participate in training on quality assurance and the family support standards. Because of their unique role within family support, peers form a network of skilled professionals, all sharing a deep commitment to continuous quality improvement. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the site visits conducted by peers provide each peer with an opportunity to see how other programs have implemented best practices.

**Time Commitment & Certification**

This commitment requires completion of two-day training. Additionally, completion of at least one peer review in the first year following the training is required and one peer review must be completed in the second year. Once trained, a peer reviewer status is provisional until successful completion of two peer review site visits. A provisional peer reviewer will also be observed and evaluated by the IFSC coordinator during the course of a peer review. After a peer has successfully completed two reviews and had a positive evaluation, they will be considered a certified Iowa Family Support peer reviewer. In order to maintain certification, peers must complete a minimum of one peer review per year. The peer review is scheduled for at 1-5 days depending on size of organization, type of program, and type of review. In addition there is preparation prior to the site visit that takes a minimum of one day.

**Avoiding Conflict of Interest**

External quality assurance systems all share one major commitment: to avoid bias and conflict of interest between the peer reviewer and the site. Therefore, it is the policy of the Iowa Family Support quality assurance and credentialing process to ensure that:

1. Peer reviewers review programs in locations other than their own
2. Peers may not review programs of which they have provided technical assistance in the two years prior to a site visit
3. Peer may not review programs where they have competed for funds to operate a similar program in that location in the two years prior to a site visit

These policies are necessary in order for the Iowa Family Support Quality Assurance & Credentialing to be upheld as a system that is objective and fair.

**Qualifications required to become an Iowa Family Support peer reviewer**

**Peer reviewers must have:**

1. A bachelor’s degree or higher in social work, human services, education or health related field;
2. Successful completion of the Iowa Family Support peer reviewer training prior to selection and;
3. One or more of the following:
	1. at least three years experience managing or supervising a family support program; or
	2. at least five years experience as a direct service worker in a family support program; or
	3. at least three years experience at a statewide family support system level; or
	4. at least three years experience as a family support trainer; or
	5. at least three years experience as an educator at the college level in a human service related field.

**In addition to the above mentioned, applicants must demonstrate:**

1. knowledge of the Iowa Family Support Standards\*\*;
2. an ability to fairly and objectively evaluate family support programs;
3. a commitment to continuous quality improvement;
4. an ability to travel if necessary and
5. an ability to complete the initial peer reviewer training and at least one site visit per year.

**Iowa Family Support Peer Reviewer Training**

The goal of training is to equip peer reviewers with the information, confidence and skills to conduct a thorough site visit review. It will cover family support standards, best practices, confidentiality, role and responsibilities of the peer reviewer, an explanation of the credentialing process, as well as explanations of and practice in reviewing the self-assessment, rating standards, conducting interviews, writing rationale, etc. Training class size is limited to no more than 6 persons.

Peer reviewer training will include a two day virtual training. This training is scheduled based on the needs of the accepted applicants for peer review training. This training will occur one time per year at a minimum.

**Financial Commitment**

Applicants are not required to pay a fee for the peer review training or training materials. If an applicant is selected to be a peer reviewer, they will receive a flat fee stipend per peer review and will be responsible for all travel, lodging and associated expenses. Experienced peer reviewers may be selected to be the lead peer for a peer review team. They will have the additional responsibility of completing the final report. Lead peer reviewers will be paid an additional stipend of $480. Below is a table of the peer reviewer stipends.

**Virtual Peer Review**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Days** | **Lead Peer Reviewer** | **Co-Peer Reviewer** |
| **1** | $1,468.80 | $988.80 |
| **2** | $2,086.80 | $1,606.80 |
| **3** | $2,464.80 | $1,984.80 |
| **4** | $2,842.80 | $2,362.80 |
| **5** | $3,220.80 | $2,740.80 |

**Selection process**

All applications will be reviewed by IFSC program for completeness and to ensure applicants meet required qualifications. Additional information will be sought, as needed. Applicants meeting required qualifications will be informed of which training they must attend. No final selections will be made until applicants have successfully completed the peer review training Applicant’s performance will be evaluated during the training. Not all applicants meeting the requirements and completing the training may be selected to participate in a peer review. All application decisions will be communicated in writing within 30 days after completion of the training. Decisions may range from accepted, accepted pending peer review schedule (waiting list), not accepted at this time

\*\* The Iowa Family Support Standards are available by contacting the IFSC coordinator, IFSC program or the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services..

**Iowa Family Support Peer Review Process**

**Peer Reviewer Application Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name:** | Click here to enter text. |
| **Street Address:** | Click here to enter text. |
| **City State, Zip:** | Click here to enter text. |
| **Phone Number:** | Click here to enter text. |
| **Cell Phone Number (if different):** | Click here to enter text. |
| **Email Address:**  | Click here to enter text. |
| **Current Position / Organization:** | Click here to enter text. |
| **List all counties you live in, work in, or provide services in:** | Click here to enter text. |

**Also, as part of the application please include the following:**

1. A two to three page personal statement providing information addressing the following:
	1. why you desire to be an Iowa Family Support peer reviewer;
	2. your experience working for family support program(s) including your experience with various home visit models;
	3. your personal philosophy or commitment to continuous quality improvement;
	4. your ability to fairly and objectively evaluate family support programs;
	5. your ability to attend the initial peer reviewer training and at least one site visit per year for the first two years; and
	6. any unique qualities or skills you may bring to the role of a peer reviewer (i.e., bi-lingual capacity).
2. At least two letters of support for the applicant to become a peer reviewer
	1. we recommend that one letter come from the applicant’s supervisor indicating the applicant’s ability to fulfill the time and travel commitment
3. A copy of your resume

Please email the completed application and all materials to ifscprogram@lsiowa.org