

Lactation Support Peer Counselor for the Black Community

ABOUT OPEN ARMS

Open Arms was founded in 1997 by a small group of community members who envisioned a future where no one would have to give birth without support. They imagined a world that cherishes birthing people, their babies, families, and communities. Today, that vision translates into a powerful community-based organization with a team of more than 65 staff, doulas, and contractors serving more than 300 women and their families annually who qualify based on income. Open Arms primarily serves the Black, American Indian / Alaska Native, Somali and Latinx communities. Like our clients, over 90% of staff identify as people of color, and some are former clients. We are highly-regarded for providing culturally responsive and appropriate support.

Today, Open Arms has an annual operating budget of more than \$3.7 million dollars through a combination of funding from public institutions, private foundations, as well as individual donors. We are poised for more growth. We weathered and grew during the COVID-19 crisis thanks to careful planning, a talented team, and financial reserves.

Open Arms recognizes that the earliest experiences impact brain development, and we work with families to give our next generation the best beginning. Social justice and racial equity permeate all that we do. We work in true partnership with the communities we serve, listening to their hopes and dreams for pregnant people, babies and new parents, and providing resources to help transform those dreams into reality. Ninety percent of the world's wealthiest countries surpass the United States on measures of maternal and child health and well-being. This impact is felt disproportionately by American babies born into poverty, whose mothers too often suffer from stress, social isolation, domestic violence, food insecurity and unstable housing in addition to insufficient health and parenting resources. In King County today, American Indian / Alaska Native and Black infants are twice to four times more likely to die within the first 28 days of life than white infants. Open Arms' services work to address and mitigate these risk factors, so that pregnant people and babies receive the best possible start and avoid poor outcomes that can have negative consequences possibly lasting a lifetime.

Open Arms' services and community-based approaches are working. Open Arms is the first community doula program in the nation to be nationally accredited through HealthConnect One, a national leader in advancing equitable, community-based, peer-to-peer support for pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and early parenting. Our families' outcomes exceed local and national measures. Our agency has won several local awards including the Seattle Human Services Innovative Programs Award, as well as SOAR's Community



MISSION

Open Arms provides community-based support during pregnancy, birth, and early parenting to nurture strong foundations that last a lifetime.

VISION

Thriving children. Healthy families. Powerful communities.

VALUES

- 1. Respect: Holding complexity for people and cultures**
- 2. Family: Relationships are at the heart of what we do**
- 3. Justice: Boldly disrupting oppression**

Achievement Award. Our current funding partnerships with Best Starts for Kids, the Department of Children Youth & Families, the City of Seattle, and the Perigee Fund demonstrate that Open Arms has earned the support and respect of the local philanthropic community.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Open Arms is searching for a part-time community-based Lactation Support Peer Counselors (LSPC) to serve the Black community. Lactation Support Peer Counselors work within their focus communities for the united goal of reducing barriers to lactation care, decolonizing lactation education, restoring cultural practices of lactation, and providing support through community care. The scope of practice for the LSPC includes providing lactation support through prenatal family and individual education, relationship building with the client to understand their lactation goals and concerns, and guidance through the baby's first year. This candidate will be joining a team of LSPCs serving the Black community, American Indian/Alaska Native Community, Pacific Islander community, and Latinx community (currently hiring); the team is supported by co-Lead Lactation Support Peer Counselors, a Program Coordinator, and the Director of Programs.

Note about COVID-19 work environment: *Since March 2020, Open Arms quickly adjusted to a remote-work model for all office support staff and an adapted visit model for home-visiting doulas. We are keeping a remote-work schedule until further notice and the leadership team is carefully evaluating options for a safe reopening with input from staff. Meetings are all conducted virtually and some of the responsibilities outlined below will be put on hold or modified while we continue working remotely. Birth support still continues to happen in person and there have been adjustments made for safe, in-person client visits. Open Arms will provide you with the technology and equipment you need to be able to work comfortably and safely from home. We have also encouraged staff to flex their schedules to accommodate for children being at home because of COVID-related impacts, and we support adjustments that parents need to make to juggle this complicated time. Feel free to discuss any concerns you have during the interview process.*

Direct Service Work

- Maintain a caseload of 5-10 individual clients who are located in King County
- Provide visits both virtually and at the family's home on a designated timeline prenatally, and throughout the first year of the postpartum period
- Host Lactation Lounges weekly. Lactation lounges are open to the public and are partnered with providers within the Perinatal Collaborative
- Offer community education once a month in formats such as classes, webinars, social media, etc
- Help establish, attend, and assist with prenatal classes and lactation support groups
- Outside of normal business hours be available to new parents who are having lactation difficulties
- Provide basic, foundational techniques of lactation, and support to new parents, including guidance through various intersectionality's of lactation and the human experience: returning to work, family dynamics, attending school, etc.
- Help parents identify their own goals, challenges, barriers, and create solutions together
- Refer families to resources such clinical providers, Open Arms' Family Support Services, community partners, and program leads.
- Engage in continuous education and professional development on lactation, the perinatal period, and infant mental health
- Respect each family by keeping their information confidential
- Conduct screenings and provide prenatal, birth, and early parenting education to families as outlined by Lactation Support program guidelines
- Work within the LSPC scope of practice and follow safe working practices
- Perform other related duties as assigned

Data Management and Reporting

- Document weekly every client contact through our database and data collection forms
- Maintain accurate client records, including intakes, assessments, and client dismissals on a weekly basis
- Turn in additional documentation weekly for reimbursement (mileage)
- Report monthly grant requirements to program lead
- Comply with HIPPA standards of privacy to maintain client confidentiality

Program Support and Community Advocacy

- Take on leadership roles within the community by engaging with topics that focuses on social justice and equity as it relates to and impacts Open Arms families
- Assist in promoting lactation peer counseling through special projects and duties as assigned
- Occasionally speak at various panels, conferences, and community events and build relationships with community partners
- Provide feedback from the community to inform and improve culturally responsive services
- Occasionally attend conferences locally and out of state and share information back with colleague

Required Qualifications:

- Candidates must be able to demonstrate that they are of and from the focus community including providing references and examples of prior community-based work
- Has lactated for at least one baby for at least 6 months
- Prior experience providing lactation support is highly desirable
- A 45-hour, 5-day foundational lactation course is required before taking on clients. New hires will be trained if this has not been completed.
- Ability to teach basic, foundational techniques of lactation such as position and latch, identifying the physiological process of lactation as well as recognizing challenges and red flags, feeding cues, and standard infant weight gain and elimination patterns
- Strong interpersonal skills to form trusting bonds with client families and to work in collaboration with a diverse group of colleagues.
- Strong ability to connect with underserved and underrepresented people, as well as a strong, intersectional approach to promoting racial equity, anti-racist, and anti-oppression work
- Deep understanding of, and ability to work with, the systems that serve communities impacted by trauma, racism, discrimination, and health disparities
- Must have a deep knowledge of and appreciation for culturally responsive services, especially during the perinatal period and early parenting period
- Experience in working with a diverse staff and with communities of color. Able to collaborate successfully with diverse team members. The applicant should have a strong racial, disability, gender and economic justice framework
- Commitment to anti-racist, anti-oppression, and de-colonization work with a focus on racial equity and reproductive justice, specific to birth and food justice
- Able to work independently on time management, scheduling, and following through on home/virtual visits
- High level of responsibility, communication, and follow through
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize complex situations and respond appropriately by seeking appropriate resources or referring out, as necessary
- Ability to maintain confidentiality around HIPAA-protected information
- Ability to meet program deadlines and expectations
- Ability to communicate in English verbally and written
- Have basic computer skills: Sending emails, editing documents, and attaching files to emails

- Valid Washington State Driver’s License and reliable transportation with current automobile insurance. This position requires frequent driving and visits to client homes
- Offer for employment is contingent upon successful completion of a background check.

Mental and Physical Requirements

The physical/mental demands and work environment described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Mental Requirements:

This position continuously requires interpersonal skills, teamwork, customer service, use of discretion, performing basic math, independent judgment and/or independent action, and reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English. Frequently requires independent decision-making and problem analysis to make recommendations for improvement and/or be involved in discussions around changes. The position requires creative thinking for resourcefulness and process improvements. Attention to detail also required.

Physical Requirements:

This position continuously requires sitting, hearing (using assistive devices if needed), and repetitive motion of the hands/wrists. Open Arms is housed in a wheelchair accessible, scented building, with wheelchair accessible bathrooms. Access to reliable transportation will be required for work-related travel. Daily working conditions include an open-office work environment at our Seattle location on Beacon Hill*, normal office work, and frequent driving and travel to client visits and other locations as needed. Some tasks require the ability to lift items heavier than 10lbs. Employment is not dependent on the applicants’ ability to lift items.

**See note above about COVID-19 work environment*

WHAT WE OFFER

- **Compensation:** This is a 20-hour-per-week, non-exempt position with an hourly rate of \$24/hour (equivalent to \$24,960 annually).
- **Benefits:** paid health, dental, vision, and disability insurance; generous paid time off starting at a total of 43 days per year for full-time equivalent employees (12 days per year to start for full-time employees with anniversary increases; 12 days for sick and safe time; 17 paid holidays; 2 floating holidays); employee assistance program; mileage reimbursement; monthly additional stipend that covers cell phone use, self-care, and work-from-home set up; and professional development opportunities. Option to contribute to a 401k, flexible spending and dependent care expenses account, and supplemental insurance.
- **Professional Development:** Open Arms is committed to the professional development of our staff. Each year we allocate professional development funds for each employee as well as support various group-training opportunities provided by Open Arms or by outside organizations. We know that historically BIPOC individuals do not have the same opportunities in society and as a result, these communities are underrepresented in leadership positions. We aim to support employees in their advancement both within Open Arms and beyond our organization.

- **Flexible and family-friendly environment:** Because of our mission and the services we provide, Open Arms is proud and committed to being a family-friendly workplace. We offer flexible work schedules with remote work being part of the usual weekly schedule for almost all staff as it fits with their job duties.* We also offer generous PTO for self and family care. Children of any age are welcome in our office, and many staff bring their children to work on a regular or as-needed basis. We have an onsite lactation lounge and encourage chestfeeding in the workplace. **Note: Children are not allowed at home visits** *See note above COVID-19 work environment
- **Supportive and inclusive workplace culture:** We have an informal workplace culture, and staff develop strong, supportive connections with each other. We have a highly collaborative culture and open office work environment. We are proud of our extremely diverse staff in all demographic areas, which creates a very rich and inclusionary organizational culture. More than 80% of our staff identify as people of color.
- **Commitment to equity:** Open Arms strives to be an affirming, positive, diverse work environment. Open Arms provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. We strongly encourage applications from communities of color and other historically underrepresented and marginalized groups.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Send a resume and cover letter to hr@openarmsps.org with “LSPC – Black community focus” in the subject line by **August 2, 2021**. No phone calls or paper submissions please.