

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR PROGRAM DIRECTOR?

HELPFUL TIPS FROM THE FLETCHER GROUP

WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

A Recovery Housing Board of Directors searching for new leadership must think about the responsibilities and requirements, but is it also a time to think about the new leader's title? What will work best for you? Titles such as Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer or President indicate that the Board is seeking a higher level of experience and education to lead the Recovery House. Such titles also suggest the payment of higher salaries.

Smaller facilities with less revenue may want to consider titles such as Program Director, Director, Residential Program Supervisor, or Director of Programs. Set expectations that align with the title and the pay level you have in mind. If the plan is to hire an Executive Director at \$100,000 per year, more responsibility is expected. A Program Director hired at \$40,000 per year would have fewer responsibilities.

The Fletcher Group RCORP-Rural Center of Excellence on SUD Recovery is here to help with decisions like these. Contact us for assistance at www.fletchergroup.org.

SOME HELPFUL GUIDELINES

For deciding responsibilities, requirements, titles and expectations.



WHAT'S EXPECTED

Of an Executive Director

Below are the responsibilities typically assigned to a newly hired Executive Director who's given a high level of autonomy in managing day-to-day operations. The Executive Director would also be empowered to develop and execute strategic plans.

- Provide leadership in terms of inspiring, engaging, and motivating both staff and community
- Implement and oversee the organization's current strategic thinking through annual operating plans
- Recommend and lead subsequent revisions to all strategic planning efforts
- Strengthen the facility's ability to positively influence the behavioral health profession through leadership, advocacy, and exemplary clinical and administrative practices
- Strengthen core programs and implement best clinical and operational practices
- Expand access to services that improve client care
- Apply best-practice Management Metrics to ensure the production of assessments, outcomes, and reporting standards equal to or exceeding industry standards
- Financially manage site operations and adjust practices as changes impact the budget
- Put processes in place for clients to reach their personal milestones and guide throughput of care from Admission/Intake to Discharge/Step-Down to a lower level of care
- Oversee facility managers to ensure that care is provided in a safe environment



Of a Program Director

Below are the responsibilities typically assigned to a Program Director with supervisory power but less autonomy than an Executive Director.

- Can re-design and lead programs in partnership with community stakeholders
- Collaborates with the Board of Directors on all aspects of program administration, program development, and scheduling
- Provides leadership to the team regarding program operations
- Prepares and presents performance evaluations
- When needed, makes appropriate compensation recommendations
- Provides training and holds staff accountable for actions
- Interviews applicants for open positions and selects final candidates
- Monitors adherence to accreditation procedures and practices
- Complies with the organization's policies to create and support a positive, professional, team-oriented, harassment-free work environment.

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WHAT'S REQUIRED

Of an Executive Director

Below are the requirements that must typically be met to be hired as an Executive Director. Meeting the requirements proves that the candidate has the experience and educational background deserving of the Board's trust.

- A Master's Degree in a Behavioral Health field
- Active Licensure and ten years of experience as a Professional Counselor, Clinical Social Worker, Addictions Counselor, or Marriage Counselor. Associate licensees are also encouraged to apply if they have seven or more years of experience.
- Strong knowledge of principles and practices governing the operation of an inpatient behavioral health facility
- Extensive knowledge of state and federal regulatory and various accreditation requirements related to behavioral health management
- The ability to read and interpret written information, write clearly and informatively, and edit written material for accurate spelling and grammar
- The ability to speak clearly and persuasively in both positive and negative situations
- The ability to listen carefully, clarify misunderstandings, respond to questions, make effective presentations, and hold productive meetings
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite, Google Business Suite, and EHR software
- If the candidate is in recovery herself or himself, she or he must be in continuous sobriety for at least five years



Of a Program Director

The experience and education requirements of a Program Director candidate are much less extensive, as indicated below:

- At least a Bachelor's Degree with a Master's Degree preferred
- Prior and current experience in the fields of addiction and mental health
- A working knowledge of behavioral health management practices and clinical operations
- Familiar with state and federal regulatory and various accreditation requirements related to behavioral health management
- A working knowledge of services, financial management, and marketing techniques
- Ability to travel at least ten percent of the time

Note: Some Board members may not be aware that many of those in recovery dedicate themselves to the recovery of others. The requirement that Executive Directors who have been in recovery must have five years of continuous sobriety is significant. Posting this requirement in a job opening tells job seekers that your organization is a recovery-friendly employer.