



Allegheny County  
Department of Human Services

Fellows  
in  
Local Government

*Creating opportunity  
for the next generation  
of leaders.*

Frequently  
Asked  
Questions



## What is the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) Fellows in Local Government Program?

The Fellows in Local Government program is designed to create a pathway for motivated and talented individuals who have past or current lived experience within a human service system to contribute to and shape the work of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. Eligible applicants include recent graduates of bachelor's level programs in social work, sociology, political science, economics, policy studies, pre-law, business, communications, information technology, accounting, statistics and a variety of other related fields.

The selected candidate has the opportunity to join the DHS for a one-year appointment to work on a variety of projects in a DHS program and/or support office:

### *Executive Office*

- Integrated Services
- Transition Aged Youth & Multi-System Youth Services

### *Support Offices:*

- Administrative and Information Management Services (AIMS)
- Data Analysis Research and Evaluation (DARE)
- Office of Community Relations (OCR)

### *Program Offices:*

- Area Agency on Aging (AAA)
- Children, Youth and Families (CYF)
- Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)
- Office of Intellectual Disability (OID)
- Office of Community Services (OCS)

More information about these DHS offices can be found on our website [www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/Offices.aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/Offices.aspx)

The Fellow will also have access to unique opportunities to meet with DHS staff, foundation executives, and nonprofit and private sector leaders, as well as to participate in educational and professional development opportunities.

## Application process

Application materials, described below, must be submitted and postmarked no later than **January 22, 2016**. To be considered for the position, applicants must provide:

- A fully completed application form;
- A resume;
- Two (2) completed application essays, as outlined in the Fellows application form;
- Two letters of recommendation: one from an academic setting and one from outside an academic setting - such as an employer, community member, mentor, etc.
- Official transcript from every post- secondary educational institution attended.

Applicants who pass an initial application review will be invited to participate in an interview process. For more information on the application process, including the application form, visit [www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Careers/Fellows-in-Local-Government.aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Careers/Fellows-in-Local-Government.aspx). Questions can be emailed to: [fellows@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:fellows@alleghenycounty.us).

## Application Submission

Completed application materials may be emailed to [fellows@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:fellows@alleghenycounty.us) or mailed to the following address.

Ms. Kelly Wilkinson  
Attn: Fellows in Local Government Application  
Allegheny County  
Department of Human Services  
One Smithfield Street, 2nd Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

## Guidelines for submitting letters of recommendation

Letters of recommendation may be submitted in two ways:

1. Via U.S. mail, with recommender signature across envelope seal (see address above);
2. Directly by the recommender via email to: [fellows@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:fellows@alleghenycounty.us).

## Transcripts

Applicants must submit official copies of their transcripts. Photocopies or unofficial versions will not be accepted.

## Eligibility

Eligible candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Completion of a bachelor's degree within 18 months of application;
- Past or current lived experience within a human service system;
- Ability to pass Act 33 and 34 clearances; and
- Willingness to move to the Pittsburgh region by the summer of their Fellows year.

Applicants who have completed education beyond a bachelor's degree are also eligible as long as they completed their bachelor's degree within 18 months of the application.

## Lived Human Service Experience

Involvement in the following service areas qualifies as lived human service experience\*:

- Recipient of child welfare/juvenile justice services (e.g., in-home services, placement services – foster care, kinship care, group home, shelter, residential treatment facility (RTF), Independent Living (IL) services, etc.)
- Recipient of mental health (MH) services (e.g. service coordination, outpatient therapy, student assistance program, Community Residential Rehabilitation (CRR)/Host Home, RTF, Family-Based, wraparound, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), etc.)
- Recipient of drug & alcohol (D&A) services (e.g. case management, treatment services, outpatient services, recovery support services, etc.)
- Recipient of intellectual disability (ID) services (e.g. supports coordination, Individual Support Plan (ISP) planning, community based services, residential services, etc.)
- Recipient of community support services (e.g., housing assistance, employment and training services, homeless services, etc.)
- Other qualifying experience, to be determined on a case by case basis
- Service exclusions: TANF, SNAP, AmeriCorps, HeadStart

*\*Persons with physical disabilities who meet the lived human service experience requirement are encouraged to apply.*

## Does the qualifying human service experience need to have been in Allegheny County, PA?

No. Keep in mind that your human service experience may be verified as part of the application process.

## How many Fellows will be selected?

One qualified Fellow will be selected.

## Selection Process

A committee of reviewers from DHS will evaluate all applications. The top candidates will be invited to interview in person at the DHS office in Pittsburgh.

The interview process consists of an individual interview before a small panel consisting of DHS staff and community leaders. Applicants are evaluated on the quality and completeness of their application materials as well as their overall performance in the interview process. Candidates will be informed of their status between mid March and mid April 2016.

## Is the Fellow a full-time or part-time employee?

The Fellow is a full-time employee who will work 38.75 hours per week.

## Is the start date negotiable?

The Fellow should be prepared to begin work in May, June or July of 2016. We understand that applicants may have prior commitments, and we will accommodate these commitments when possible on a case-by-case basis.

## What types of work will the Fellow perform?

The Fellows program will provide opportunities to obtain practical experience in direct service and/or administrative human service activities in a DHS office (please see the list of DHS offices on page 1 of this document). The Fellow could spend the full year in their office assignment or could choose to complete six month rotations in two different DHS offices. Specific projects are tailored to the current needs of the Department and the unique skill sets and interests of the Fellow. The following list provides examples of work the Fellow could perform; however, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it represent any guarantee about the work the Fellow will perform:

- Coordinate a mentoring program for youth who are recipients of service.
- Design surveys to capture feedback from a variety of audiences and to contribute to continuous quality improvement of the services provided by the Department.
- Prepare and present child welfare cases at multidisciplinary reviews aimed at continuous quality improvement.
- Extract data from one or more sources in order to answer questions from DHS staff.
- Analyze financial statements and operations throughout DHS in order to make efficiency recommendations.
- Utilize Excel to organize, analyze and present data that DHS improves administrators' understanding of community needs, consumer needs, service utilization and national best practices.

- Assist with event planning and help to improve donations acquisition.
- Work to further develop and maintain a presence for DHS in social media.
- Develop a table of contents for and assemble a departmental procedures manual.

## Will the Fellow have opportunities to participate in educational and professional development opportunities?

Yes, Fellows are encouraged to take initiative in seeking out these opportunities and asking for approval to participate from their supervisor. Limits may apply to the number and type of activities the Fellow can participate in. Opportunities may include, but are not limited to:

- Leadership seminars
- Speakers and other community events
- Local and/or national conferences
- Informational interviews with community leaders

## Is the Fellow guaranteed a job after completing the one-year placement?

Fellows are not guaranteed employment beyond their one-year placement. However, Fellows who complete their one-year commitment, receive a favorable evaluation, and want to continue working at DHS will be given special consideration for full-time employment.

## Salary

Fellows earn a salary of \$35,000 per year and a full range of benefits. The salary is taxable and non-negotiable.

## Does the program pay for the Fellows relocation and/or housing expenses?

No, the Fellow is responsible for their relocation and housing expenses.

## Terms of employment

The Fellow is employed by Great Lakes Behavioral Research Institute, a nonprofit organization that provides professional services and technology products uniquely designed for organizations that work in the field of human services. DHS contracts with Great Lakes in order to meet specific staffing needs. More information about Great Lakes can be found on their website [www.greatlakesresearch.com/](http://www.greatlakesresearch.com/).

## Is the Fellow eligible for tuition reimbursement for coursework completed during the placement?

No, tuition reimbursement will not be available during the one-year placement.

## How do I know if I'm a good candidate?

The knowledge, skills, and abilities desired in a candidate include:

- Strong interpersonal skills
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Strong time management, planning and organizational skills
- Ability to set priorities and accomplish a wide variety of tasks
- Ability to maintain a professional demeanor
- Ability to establish relationships and collaborate with other organizations and individuals
- Ability to learn and apply new concepts
- Ability to exercise sound professional judgment
- Self-directed and flexible, with strong problem-solving abilities
- Leadership potential
- Commitment to public service
- Diverse background and experience
- Sensitivity to cultural diversity both in and out of the workplace
- Desire for personal and professional growth
- Knowledge of Microsoft Word
- Knowledge of or ability to learn Microsoft Outlook

