



ELEVATING THE SPECTRUM  
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

## Residential Support Professional Job Description

<b>Job Description for:</b> Residential Support Professional (RSP)	<b>Start Date:</b> July 2020
<b>Reports to:</b> Residential Manager	<b>Section:</b> Residential
<b>Classification:</b> Hourly, non-exempt	<b>Term:</b> Full time, year-round

**About Ascendigo:** Ascendigo is a nonprofit organization that enhances the lives of children and adults living with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) through outdoor/sports education, employment, adventure camps, community integration and an array of behavioral health services. We are headquartered in the heart of the Roaring Fork Valley (Carbondale, CO) and provide programming to over 200 individuals with autism of all ages from Aspen to Rifle. Currently, Ascendigo employs approximately 55 full- and part-time staff members with an additional 60-65 seasonal employees during the summer (June-August). In 2019, Ascendigo celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary as one of the premier nonprofits in the Aspen community and was named "Nonprofit of the Year" by the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce.

**Job Summary:** The primary responsibility of the RSP is to inspire and coach Ascendigo clients to achieve their goals and see their best selves in the RSP's eyes. The RSP is part of Residential team for residents within the Life Enrichment program. He/she is the primary caregiver during assigned shifts. Overnight shifts currently are 16 hours long and begin at 4:30 pm and end at 8:30 am the next day. Support shifts currently are 4 hours long and begin at 4:30 pm and end at 8:30 pm. Below market housing may be available for this position. Specific responsibilities include providing behavioral health services to adult clients on the full spectrum such as leading recreational activity outings, independent living support and general life skill building. The RSP will collaborate with Ascendigo's Clinical Managers and Case Managers to learn and implement Behavior Plans or other guiding documents included in the client's Individualized Plan.

### **Essential Job Functions:**

#### Skills Training:

- Work with other members of the Life Enrichment team (including but not limited to ACE, A2A, resident families, clinical or behavioral consultants, therapists, other staff, friends, and community partners) to coordinate care, facilitate care transitions, and implement resident goals and objectives.
- Follow directives established in each resident's Individual Life Plan (ILP) as well as those from the resident and their guardian/parent.
- Act as a peer mentor and household staff who strives to uphold the values of Ascendigo. Residents should have a structured home life with a family atmosphere including a safe, nurturing, caring environment which promotes learning and growth. The RSP should work to be a positive role model, fostering trust, respect, compassion, emotional grounding, and social bonding.
- Work with the Supervisors and other RSPs to provide for physical, mental, social, and emotional needs of residents.
- Facilitate an ongoing professional relationship with each resident and their families.
- Supervise residents' personal care with respect and sensitivity while remaining in compliance with each residents' goals and objectives.
- Provide appropriate supports and supervision to facilitate general health and safety for themselves, other staff, and all residents.

**Effective Date: 7/2/20**

- Recognize natural teaching opportunities; provide counseling and teaching to residents as they tackle life's daily problems. Respond to maladaptive behaviors while maintaining calm and composure, using positive behavioral supports and autism-friendly strategies.
- Learn and implement resident communication including specialized language and any auxiliary communication aids/devices/apps.
- Maintain a clean and orderly household; participate in household chores as needed.
- Make sure that residents' personal effects are well cared for and kept in order.
- Participate in training and professional development as directed by the House Manager
- Become familiar with Personal Needs Funds of residents and assist with appropriate spending and documentation of those funds.

**Other Job Duties:** Arrives to work on time, engages in appropriate behavior with clients at and outside of work, appropriate interactions with supervisors & managers, attends trainings, and meetings. May be asked to help with other Ascendigo programs as needed.

**Physical Requirements/Equipment Used:** Basic computer skills (MS Office, email, social media), lifting and moving light to heavy objects (up to 25 pounds), use of full physical prompts for teaching or safety, competent to learn new technologies related to disabilities, able to accompany residents on some exercise and recreational activities. Other requirements include:

- Cooking: prepare meals that meet the dietary needs of each resident.
- Light household chores: cleaning, tidying, laundry, light yard work.
- Lifting household objects such as backpacks, groceries, laundry, supplies, etc.
- Some more robust yard work and heavier lifting may be required.

**Qualifications:**

- Knowledge of the field of autism as it pertains to adults.
- Understanding and ability to learn behavioral approaches as practiced by Ascendigo, including the ability to allay maladaptive behaviors while maintaining calm and composure, principles of Natural Developmental Behavioral Interventions (NDBI), using positive behavior support plans and recognizing natural teaching opportunities and acting on them.
- Knowledge of healthy nutrition and basic cooking skills.
- Basic knowledge of physical fitness and exercise regimens and willing to engage in physical activities including outdoor activities with residents.
- Ability to handle the personal care of residents with sensitivity and caring.
- Possess effective skills in active listening, coaching, and human supervision.
- Display a positive attitude, show concern for people and community, demonstrate presence, self-confidence, common sense, and good listening ability.
- Be organized and exhibit "follow through" on tasks and goals.
- Strong interpersonal skills, the ability to collaborate with colleagues.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to work independently, set priorities and meet deadlines.
- Must be a team player.
- Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings, weekends and extended hours for meetings and events may be required.
- Access to a vehicle for travel throughout local community.
- Follow the policies and procedures of the organization.

In addition,

- Must be age 21 or over and have legal working status.
- Must maintain a valid driver's license and excellent driving record.
- Must successfully complete required training.
- Must have a current CPR certification
- Must obtain certifications or successful training completion for crisis management and medication administration. Willingness to take Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) classes and obtain certification.
- Should have at least a high school diploma.
- Understands that some households may be under security surveillance including but not limited to video monitoring, and that video may be reviewed on a need-to-know basis on request by the Ascendigo CEO/President
- Must have flexibility to travel for occasional professional development and resident activities.
- Has a cellphone for communication purposes

**Personal Characteristics:** Should be committed and passionate about the Ascendigo mission of a holistic, active, community-based, independent, and person-centered life. He/she should believe in the dignity and potential of our clients. Additionally, should:

- **Show maturity, responsibility, and dependability** and follow through on tasks with modest supervision.
- **Be diplomatic and discreet:** commitment to maintain strict confidentiality and respect of clients and the privacy of residents and their families.
- **Be proactive:** taking the initiative, willing to pitch in and assist.
- **Behave ethically:** understand ethical behavior and business practices and ensure that their own behaviors is consistent with these standards and aligns with the values of Ascendigo.
- **Build relationships:** establish and maintain positive working relationships with others, both internally and externally.
- **Communicate effectively:** speak, listen, and write in clear, thorough, and timely manner using appropriate and effective communication tools and techniques.
- **Creativity/Innovation:** develop new ways to improve operations of Ascendigo and to create new opportunities.
- **Focus on client needs:** anticipate, understand, and respond to the needs of clients to meet or exceed their expectations and provide high quality care.
- **Foster teamwork:** work cooperatively and effectively with others to set goals, resolve problems, and make decisions.
- **Lead:** positively influence others to achieve results that are in the best interest of Ascendigo.
- **Make decisions:** assess situations to determine the importance, urgency and risks, and make clear decisions which are timely and in the best interests of Ascendigo.
- **Organize:** set priorities, develop a schedule to accomplish required tasks monitor progress toward goals, and track details, data, information, and activities.
- **Solve problems:** Assess problems situations to identify courses, gather and process relevant information, generate possible solutions, and make recommendations and/or solve the problem.