

New Beginnings – Peer Support Group Facilitator

➤ **Overview**

Under the direction of the pastor and in consultation with the New Beginnings staff at Catholic Family Services of Toronto, the New Beginnings Peer Support Group Facilitator is responsible for outreach and facilitation of a Parish-based New Beginnings Peer Support Group. The purpose of this ministry is to provide non-clinical peer group support for those suffering the loss of a loved one through separation, divorce, or death.

➤ **Activities/Responsibilities**

- Facilitates or co-facilitates regular or seasonal New Beginnings peer support groups.
- Creates a safe and welcoming environment for those dealing with marital breakdown and loss in their lives.
- Establishes and maintains ground rules for the group.
- Provides the opportunity for participants dealing with marital breakdown and loss to support and encourage each other through self-reflective, emotional, social and practical activities.
- Offers feedback tools and opportunities which will provide the pastor and facilitator input for the improvement of service delivery.
- Informs parish staff about New Beginnings' scheduled meetings for insertion in Sunday bulletin, digital website, parish bulletin board and other means of communication as well as the booking of meeting room.

The Activities/Responsibilities listed above may not completely reflect the ministry performed at this parish. Please refer to the 'Other Specifics' box for duties that are specific to this parish.

Other specifics:

➤ **Skills, Experience, and Qualifications**

- Demonstrates good speaking/listening skills.
- Knows the importance of maintaining confidentiality.
- Demonstrates empathy and is able to effectively encourage participation in group discussion while mindful of the benefits of periodic silence in a group.
- Able to work as part of a team.
- Has had some training or experience in group work as a participant or facilitator.
- Familiar with experience of marital breakdown or loss of a partner through death.
- Has dealt with his/her own marital breakdown or loss of a partner through death.

- Understands his/her role as peer facilitator and knows not to provide solutions for others within the context of the group.
- Understands that peer support groups provide opportunities for the emergence of hope, increased self-esteem and a sense of belonging.
- At ease with difficult issues and the expression of pain and emotion.
- Knows the importance of clinical/pastoral referrals when the need arises.
- Willing to complete New Beginnings training or its equivalence as approved by the pastor.

➤ **Personal Traits and Qualities**

- Desires to serve the community and to commit time and talents to this ministry.
- Honest, dependable and can maintain strict confidentiality.
- Possesses good listening skills, relational skills and good judgment.
- Needs to be a person of prayer.
- Is comfortable in the presence of sadness, tears, and intense emotion.
- Has a spirit of generosity and creativity.
- Is comfortable with being accountable and is sensitive to the observance of proper boundaries.

➤ **Orientation and Training**

Standard parish orientation program.

Must complete New Beginnings training or its equivalent as approved by the Pastor.

➤ **Participant Group**

New Beginnings Team Members, the group participants and their family/friends.

➤ **Support, Supervision, and Evaluation**

The Pastor is the first level of support, supervision and evaluation.

At Pastor's recommendation may consult with Catholic Family Services' New Beginnings Social Worker/Coordinator.

➤ **Length of Ministry Appointment**

Open with the ability to review.

➤ **Benefits and Working Conditions**

Will directly contribute to the spiritual life of the parish community.

Opportunity to perform community service and gain experience for the purpose of school or career advancement.

This is a volunteer position which requires a time commitment of ___ hours per week/___ hours per month.

Must be available to attend all regularly scheduled meetings.

Must be able to attend the orientation session and training sessions as required.

➤ **Screening Recommendations**

This is a High risk position.

Completion of a Volunteer Information Form is required.

An interview and personal reference checks are required.

A Criminal Record Check is required.

Training and orientation are required.

There will be supervision and periodic evaluations.

Participant follow-ups may be conducted.

“This ministry position description accurately reflects the Ministry of New Beginnings Peer Support

Group Facilitator currently practiced at

(Parish Name)

Parish Volunteer Screening Committee

Pastor

Date

Prepared by: Archdiocese of Toronto