

POINTS OF DISTRIBUTION
OUTREACH WORKER APPLICATION

Background: Thank you for your interest in Points of Distribution (POD). POD is a worker cooperative whose volunteers have been providing free outreach based syringe access and harm reduction services since 2001. Our services include outreach based syringe distribution, OD education and naloxone distribution, harm reduction based health education, HIV testing and counseling, syringe and service home delivery and referrals. Outreach takes place on two routes once a week. Most outreach takes place in homeless encampments in both San Francisco and Oakland; literally “meeting people where they are at”. Because we have very limited paid staff our organization is run cooperatively by all of the volunteers using a democratic process. Because of this becoming a member of POD means becoming an both an outreach worker AND an active member of the coop. **You should only apply if you have an interest in providing outreach based services to injection drug users and others and you want to be part of an active community-based organization that relies on you to run.**

Application Process: In order to be considered for the training every candidate must submit an application and go thru an interview. Applications are due on an ongoing basis. After you submit an application, and we think you'd be a good fit for the work we do, we will contact you to schedule an interview. **Please note that if it more than 30 day until the next training we will hold your application & interview you closer to the date we are starting the next training.**

Training Process: Our training delivers a large amount of information and is very demanding. The training is designed to prepare you to become a harm reduction worker and community health educator as well as a member of the coop. In exchange for your time, you will gain a tremendous life experience and great skills. The in-class portion of the training takes place over four weekends (all day Sat and all day Sun) and the training as a whole takes eight to twelve weeks. In addition to class time trainees are expected to apprentice with seasoned outreach workers, complete weekly homework assignments and complete a referral assignment. In order to become a coop member you must:

- Attend all classes and/or make-up for classes.
- Complete all homework/assignments
- Shadow on at least 6 outreach shifts
- Attend two POD Business meeting
- Attend two bag-making parties
- Complete the final exam and referral project.

*PLEASE NOTE: The training is designed primarily for people with no previous experience working in medicine or social services. **At our discretion** we are happy to negotiate the training requirements for folks who already have extensive experience. Please make sure to highlight your experience in your application. Thank you!*

Please understand that acceptance into the training is not a guarantee of becoming a POD member. There are formal assessments during the training in order to evaluate your skills. Trainees are evaluated not only on service provision skills, but also on the understanding and practice of effective communication, enthusiasm and ability to function within the organization.

After you complete the training, we expect you to commit yourself to POD for at least one year from the date of you are voted into the agency and to maintain membership 'in good-standing' during that year. The quarterly requirements for membership are

- Six direct service shifts per quarter.
- Twenty-four off shift task hours per month (8 per mo).
- Attend two business meetings per quarter.

All of this info isn't designed to discourage you. POD is amazing. You have a unique opportunity to both provide services which profoundly affect people's lives and to create an organization that is a work in progress. This experience can transform your life and the people you will be working with are incredible; however we need people who can reliably provide services to living human beings SO:

Please think carefully about the time and energy we will demand from you before you apply. Thank you and good luck!

POD APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Instructions

Please answer the following questions and return your completed application. We prefer to receive your responses electronically. **When emailing us please make sure to title the document file (your name) POD App with the month and year (for instance: J.Smith POD App 2_2012). Also please only send .doc, .txt, .rtf or .pdf file extensions to insure that we can open your document.** The POD application is divided into 3 sections, you may answer the questions separately, or answer them all as a single narrative. This application may feel intimidating but don't worry! We are not looking for "correct" answers; we want to know about your experiences and your feelings. Please be honest and straightforward. Also we care a lot more about *what* you say then we do about proper grammar and syntax. If we approve your application we will call you for an interview. Please include the following information at the top of the first page:

- Name
- Phone # (s)/ good times to reach you
- Address
- E-Mail
- If you speak any languages other than English what are they?
- Where did you hear about us?
- Are you interested in working primarily in SF or Oakland?
- Do you have a car?

The Organization:

- ◆ Points of Distribution is a worker-run coop that uses a democratic process for decision making. Have you ever worked or lived in any formal coops or collective organization? If so: please tell us about either the positive and/ or negative aspects of that experience.
- ◆ Regardless of your past involvement such organizations, what do you see as the good and bad points of collective decision-making?
- ◆ Because we are a volunteer-run coop all volunteers must do everything including boring administrative stuff. Beyond service provision what skills do you think you are bringing to the collective (training, event organizing, fundraising, grant writing, medical skills etc).
- ◆ What skills are you most excited about learning and/or improving upon?

Service Provision

- ◆ What, if any, experiences have you had with syringe exchange, HIV testing, hepatitis, outreach or the provision of counseling or health services? (these can include personal experiences as a participant/client/patient).
- ◆ If you have extensive experience providing these services please take a look at the training schedule and tell us if there are any subjects you feel you should be exempt from and/or which you feel you could help teach. **Please note that exemptions are based on our discretion and are not guaranteed.**
- ◆ We believe very strongly in the ideals of client centered services, that is making the service as individualized to the client's needs as we can, and harm reduction, that is that people can reduce the harm associated with their behavior without necessarily stopping the behavior altogether. What do you feel are good examples of these philosophies at work in your own life or the lives people you know?
- ◆ What, if any, experiences have you had with active drug users, injection drug users, homeless people, and/or other highly marginalized folks?
- ◆ How do you feel about drug use as it applies to society as a whole?
- ◆ Can you cite an example of when you suspended your personal judgments or beliefs about someone's behaviors in order to allow them to work out decisions for themselves?

Other

- ◆ What are your current goals and responsibilities?
- ◆ Do you have any particular constraints that might conflict with your training?
- ◆ What other fabulous things can you tell us about you?

Statement of Non-Discrimination

For the record POD does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, current or former drug use history, political affiliation, incarceration history, disability status, mental health history, HIV status, size or any other class.

When you have finished your application:

- Make sure that you have included all of your pertinent contact information.
- Send it to us via e-mail or, if you can't, you may also send it to us via snail mail-

Mail

Attn: POD TC
1370 Mission St 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

**E-Mail: volunteer@pointsofdistribution.org
Strongly preferred**