

BEROS Overnight Support Worker

Application Kit

Role	Locations	Employment	Pay
Overnight Support Worker	Sippy Downs; Dakabin; Wavell Heights	Casual; part-time option after 12 months of regular shifts and successful performance review	SCHADS Level 3

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in joining BEROS. This role is about showing up with care, patience and respect for young people who may be going through some of the hardest moments in their lives. If you value relationship-based practice, trauma & attachment informed practice, practical support and working alongside young people at their own pace, we encourage you to apply.

Application tip: Read this kit in full before applying. Use your cover letter to answer the questions below providing examples from work, study, volunteering or life experience.

About the role

BEROS operates as a partnership between Community Living Association and Micah Projects. We support young people aged 12 to 18 who are in the child safety system and are self-placing away from their approved placement, sleeping rough or staying somewhere unsafe or unstable.

We are looking for skilled, caring and reliable casual workers to support young people in BEROS emergency accommodation. This role may suit social work, human services or youth work students, or people with experience or study in youth work or related sectors.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners are strongly encouraged to apply.

How to apply

Please send your resume, including details for 2 to 3 referees, and a cover letter of no more than 3 pages that answers the questions below. Applications that do not answer these questions will not be considered.

Cover letter questions

1. What interests you about the role, and how many shifts per week are you able to work?
2. From the young people's advice about self-placing (found below in the application pack), what stood out to you? How does their advice guide the way you work alongside young people?
3. What are 4 key skills or values you would bring to working alongside young people?

4. How do you respond when a young person is distressed, in crisis or showing escalated behaviours? Include an example.
5. How do you work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and LGBTIQAP+ young people, families, services and communities?

Send your application to: tsumner@communityliving.org.au

Questions? Contact Beros Team Leader Toni Sumner on 0447 385 199.

Overnight Support Worker - Role Description

Operating hours

BEROS operates 24/7 across 3 locations.

- **Case Management runs Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.**
- **Street to Home runs daily from 4.00 pm to midnight.**
- **Overnight Support runs Monday to Thursday from 5.00 pm to 9.00 am. Friday to Sunday shifts vary from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm, depending on need.**

Overnight shifts

Weekday shifts are rostered from 5.00 pm to 9.00 am and include an 8-hour sleepover. Saturday and Sundays may require 2pm start and finish times and also include an 8 hour sleepover.

Workers can also opt to be 'on-call' meaning they only come to the house if young people require accommodation. On call allowances are paid for these shifts. Each Beros house supports up to 2 young people, with 1 worker on shift.

Work setting

Overnight workers have a private bedroom with a double bed, storage, and a safe place for personal items. After-hours on-call advice is available from the Beros Case Managers.

When the house is empty

Workers are expected to contribute to the smooth running of the house – cleaning, stocking groceries and other necessary items, etc.

There are opportunities for professional development whilst on shift, and workers may join outreach with other overnight workers or the Street to Home team.

Purpose of the role:

The role of the Overnight Support Worker is to provide support to young people accessing emergency accommodation and contribute to a positive team culture and consistent service.

Providing overnight support

- Build respectful and culturally safe relationships with young people, including young people who may feel disconnected from formal supports, family, community, or culture.
- Provide harm reduction/ safety planning/ and support to de-escalate and reduce risk.
- Practice in ways informed by knowledge of trauma, attachment, disability, and cultural humility.
- Complete case notes, incident reports, and communicate with the BEROS team.
- Work with BEROS Street to Home, and BEROS Case Managers and other key people to support young people's safety and wellbeing.

Contributing to team culture & consistent service

- Attend meetings with the wider BEROS team once every 8 weeks, including Street to Home workers and case managers.
- Take part in regular supervision with the Senior Case Manager and day-to-day debriefing where needed.
- Take part in training and professional development.
- Support the shared running of the BEROS houses.
- Work as part of the BEROS team and follow CLA principles, policies and procedures.
- Follow reasonable directions from the Case Managers & BEROS Team Leader.

What overnight support workers need to do well

- build safe, respectful relationships and spend meaningful time with young people
- Respond
- support safety, wellbeing, practical skills and daily routines
- use trauma-informed practice, harm reduction, de-escalation, risk assessment and safety planning
- work with BEROS Case Managers, Street to Home workers, Child Safety After Hours and other services
- complete emails, case notes, incident reports and data entry in a timely manner
- help keep the house, office and cars clean and accessible
- follow CLA and BEROS practice frameworks, principles, policies and procedures
- attend supervision, team meetings and professional development days

Requirements

- A youth work qualification is not required, but students in these areas are encouraged to apply.
- You need a current driver licence, a Blue Card / Working with Children Check, and a First Aid Certificate or willingness to get one within 3 months.
- You must work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and LGBTIQAP+ communities.
- Overnight Support Workers report to the Senior Case Manager and BEROS Team Leader, receive supervision every 6 weeks, and are supported to access professional development.

BEROS practice principles

Listed here are the key ideas and themes that inform our approach to working alongside young people with complex support needs.

Relationship

Relationship building is a fundamental element of BEROS practice. The cohort of young people we work with, have often had negative experiences of service intervention, and lack trust in workers. BEROS invest time and resources into building trust and developing a professional relationship. Our approach to relationship building is trauma informed and considers young people's attachment styles. Furthermore, it is flexible and changes for each individual young person. Time spent building relationship with a young person could include scheduling in activity days, catch ups over food, outreach to the young person's safe space, engaging with other important people in the young person's life, and getting to know the young person's interests rather than their background or history in care.

Voluntary Cooperation

Working from a principle of voluntary cooperation, BEROS understands that for young people who may be experiencing crisis, it can be difficult to keep a service at the forefront of their mind. BEROS maintains a consistent and persistent effort to engage with them. As a service, BEROS does this by maintaining a non-judgmental and guilt free open door, which allows young people to engage or connect with workers when they are ready to do so. BEROS understand that lives are complex and at times young people might not have the time or space to engage with a service. Sometimes BEROS hangs around in the background for several months but is in contact regularly to encourage 'relationship building' activities – even if that means going for a drive and getting a feed.

Confidentiality Across Systems

BEROS workers build trust and rapport with young people by maintaining their privacy and confidentiality. Young people in the Child Safety system are often familiar with the note taking and report writing processes that Child Safety Officers, placement workers and stakeholders adhere to. In most cases young people have an assumed knowledge that their information is openly shared between stakeholders. This has been most evident by the reaction and feedback from young people when we explain our position on confidentiality. Young people have been brought to tears by the notion that BEROS do not receive their file when we take their referral. Instead, BEROS workers want to meet young people 'where they are at' and get to know them for the person they are today. The information they choose to share with us is at their discretion and will remain within our service.

Transparent Practice

BEROS aim to be transparent in our practice from the moment a young person is referred to the service. Workers start this conversation with our initial induction and maintain open and honest communication throughout our working relationship. Workers explain the voluntary nature of our service and our privacy

Young Person Takes the Lead on Change	and confidentiality policy. We note that this is not a once off conversation and guarantee that we will continue to talk to young people about how they would like us to engage with the systems around them. Through trust and transparency built with a young person, BEROS can have open conversations with young people about what they want and where they are at. BEROS do not hold the position of 'expert' in the work. Instead, we encourage self-determination in the young person. While we maintain a future focus, BEROS acknowledges that change does not always have measurable outcomes. For young people with complex support needs, 'change' can be engaging in harm-minimisation strategies or accessing services to ensure their basic needs are met. Whatever their goal may be on any given day, BEROS work alongside young people to meet their needs and are always there to celebrate their successes.
Work with the Young Person's Reality	As a team BEROS commits to physically and emotionally meeting a young person where they are at. Through the therapeutic alliance BEROS workers can provide a level of attunement that allows a young person to feel valued and emotionally safe. This means working within the young person's current reality and understanding of truth. Rather than challenging their perception of what may be occurring, BEROS sit with and acknowledge the young persons lived experience. When we sit with this reality, we can validate their experience and assist them to emotionally regulate.
Unconditional Positive Regard	Unconditional positive regard is a term coined by Carl Rogers and is an integral part of his client-centred approach. This does not mean that we must like each of the persons choices, but that we accept who they are at a level deeper than surface behaviour. When discussing this cohort of young people and the complexities in their lives, we often hear young people being labelled by the choices they have made or by some the behaviours they exhibit. Young people are very aware of how they have been labelled and how they are viewed by the adults in their life, or society in general. Unconditional Positive Regard asks us to challenge this stigma and respect the young person as a human being with their own free will, operating under the assumption that they are doing the best they can.
Sitting with Risk	BEROS workers often hold a lot of knowledge about a young person's self-placing arrangement and must be comfortable sitting with the risks associated with it. When assessing risk, BEROS consider the young person's current context, which is informed by our relationship with them. BEROS workers make assessments about how much information is shared with Child Safety and discuss this openly with the young person. When safety planning alongside a young person, BEROS workers acknowledge the limits to confidentiality and discuss situations where we may need to disclose information to Child Safety and broader support networks. For example, when a young person is at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others.

What young people in out-of-home care want you to know about self-placing

This advice comes from 11 young people who spoke about self-placing as part of a University of Queensland research project. They asked workers to focus on respect, honesty, safety planning and basic needs.

Young people said workers should:

- Be kind, patient, compassionate, person centred, empathetic, curious, non-judgemental and trauma-informed.
- Be respectful of young people's belongings – it might be all they have.
- Give young people information about all the possible resources, services and support they are entitled to – especially after hours services.
- Stress your availability to young people. Be transparent about the future and provide stability where possible.
- Support young people to have a safety plan in case their placement doesn't work out. This could involve using other services or making a safe word.
- Advocate for the needs of young people with Child Safety and other services, and provide guidance where possible
- Support young people to secure their future by providing resources – eg. Centrelink support, housing application, driver's licence, updated resume etc.
- Understand AOD and other typically "naughty" behaviours as mechanisms for survival, and encourage harm minimisation approaches.
- Don't make promises you can't keep about staying in touch when you leave. This is how young people lose trust in workers.

Source: Venables, J., Healy, K., & Cullen, J. (2022). Enhancing outcomes for young people in out-of-home care who 'self-place': Optimising practice and policy responses. The University of Queensland. Community Living Association

Community Living Association

Policy and Procedures

Trauma, Vicarious Trauma, Burnout, and Self-Care

Preamble

Work in community services and at CLA can be stressful and tiring as well as fulfilling and rewarding. The work at CLA can also involve working with people who have experienced trauma and may be experiencing trauma on a continuing basis. Work at CLA can also at times include involvement in situations where workers and volunteers may feel personally threatened. This happens rarely but can happen.

CLA identifies this potential not as a way of deterring people from working in the organisation but as a reality which people should be prepared for.

We encourage prospective workers, including students at CLA, to reflect on their personal history of trauma and whether this might prevent them applying for a job at CLA, or whether it is something they consider in their self-care plans. Prospective workers are encouraged to reflect on how they will plan for an appropriate work/life balance, monitor their sleep and self-care plans. If you are successful in being offered a position at CLA, we will support you to reflect on these matters.

Policy

CLA recognises the potential for burnout, vicarious trauma and trauma impacts of this work and will work with its workers to maintain appropriate self-care.

Procedure

- Applicants for work at CLA will receive a copy of this policy and procedure as part of the Application Pack – included in Recruitment Checklist.
- Interview processes will include questions related to potential exposure to vicarious trauma and trauma.
- This policy will be included in the Induction Checklist.
- Supervision will include checking with workers on self-care plans and strategies. This will be written into every supervision agreement. (See Supervision Agreement).
- Workers are encouraged to consult resource material on burnout/vicarious trauma, trauma/self-care and sleep hygiene. (See Related Documents).
- Team Leaders and workers are reminded that if there are concerns about worker safety then safety plans need to be established. (See Section 2.4.12 Outreach Worker Safety Policy).
- It is not an expression of personal failure for workers to experience fatigue, apprehension or distress. It can be a natural reaction to stresses on the job. We encourage workers to be open about these feelings with their supervisor.

- Where workers are experiencing negative impact due to the work, team leaders will engage with them around remedial actions. These may include self-care plans, safety plans, counselling, critical incident responses, or disengagement from certain situations.