



**CIDNY**  
Center for Independence  
of the Disabled, NY

# Housing Benefits Counselor

## Position Summary

The Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York (CIDNY) is the leading organization serving and representing people with disabilities in New York City. Our goal is to ensure full integration, independence and equal opportunity for all people with disabilities by removing barriers to the social, economic, cultural and civic life of the community.

## Role and Responsibilities

- Consumer Assessment and Service Plan Development/Coordination
  - Conduct comprehensive situational assessments relevant to consumer housing needs, particularly as it relates to ability to maintain and/or retain independence in the community.
  - Collaborate with consumers to formulate and implement appropriate plans of service and act as primary contact for services to consumers.
  - Monitor and document progress of service plans, including periodic review of plan for appropriate adjustments and ongoing interactions with or on behalf of consumers, as needed.
- Crisis Intervention
  - Provide appropriate crisis intervention services to individuals and families; make referrals as needed.
  - Provide support in assisting consumers with critical benefits-related or other issues, such as revocation of existing benefits, denial of desired benefits, eviction notifications, etc. This may include accompanying consumers to hearings and court appearances.
- Information and Resource Referrals
  - Stay current on services and benefits available to consumers.
  - Provide individuals and families with information about and referral to appropriate benefits, entitlements and services relative to their needs.

### ABOUT CIDNY

CIDNY is a nonprofit organization founded in 1978. CIDNY is part of the Independent Living Centers movement: a national network of grassroots and community-based organizations that enhance opportunities for all people with disabilities to direct their own lives. CIDNY is the voice of people with disabilities in New York City. CIDNY staff and board include social workers, lawyers, and other highly qualified professionals, most of whom are people with disabilities. The staff all have a strong belief in self-determination and bring valuable life experience and insights to their work.

- racially and ethnically diverse with the ability to communicate in over 27 languages including ASL
- speaks for everyone who lives with a disability, whether it came at birth, by injury, disease, or during the process of aging
- educate the public and advocate for civil rights and a strong safety net of benefits and services

- Inform people with disabilities of available government and other benefits for which they may be eligible. Assist in applying for these benefits with the consumers, as necessary.
- Follow up on the status of referrals made to consumers. Work with consumers to ensure they are receiving the services they require.
- Advocacy
  - Assist consumers in optimizing available information, benefits and services, thus facilitating their active involvement in the achievement of service goals. Encourage, where possible, self-advocacy.
  - Act as liaison and/or advocate with other service or benefits providers for consumers, as necessary.
- Contribute, as needed, to the organization's systems-based advocacy programs by communicating observed barriers/successes related to benefits and services available to people with disabilities, participating in selected advocacy activities and/or identifying consumers representative of certain systems-based advocacy issues.

## Qualifications

- BA or BS degree
- At least three years of experience in benefits counseling
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong computer skills, particularly with Microsoft Office applications, and ability to learn new applications quickly
- Expertise in range of housing assistance issues highly desired
- Language fluency in ASL; Spanish; South Asian or Chinese dialects; Korean or Russian preferred

## Application Process

To apply for consideration for this career opportunity for people with disabilities, email application and any request for accommodations to Jill Zomp, [jzomp@benderconsult.com](mailto:jzomp@benderconsult.com) with **CIDNY Housing Benefits Counselor** in the subject line. Please include how you heard about the search. Applications will be reviewed as they are received. Applications should contain a **resume** and thoughtful **cover letter** that **must** describe how your skills and experience meet the qualifications and personal characteristics stated above and in the job description.

CIDNY has retained the executive search firm and certified woman with a disability-owned business enterprise, Bender Consulting Services, Inc. to conduct this search, [www.benderconsult.com](http://www.benderconsult.com). Bender Consulting Services, Inc. is the leading national expert in disability employment solutions for private and public sector employers.