



Hello:

YouthLink requests referrals for young people to serve on our new Voices of Youth Advisory Council. Please consider recommending a young person, between the ages of 18-28, who you believe would be an asset on this council. Youth referred should have lived experience of homelessness (and/or have used supportive housing, education, or employment resources through YouthLink or a peer organization); this could mean being unsheltered living on the streets, staying at shelters, couch surfing, extended foster care and/or another combination.

To refer a youth, please have them complete the online application or in the drop in.

Also attached is a VOY job description, FAQ, and the short application for youth to complete. Please send completed applications via email to KJ Rolenc, YouthLink VOYAC Coordinator (Keegan.rolenc@youthlinkmn.org). If you have any questions regarding the Voices of Youth Advisory Council, please call 612-253-1465.



VOICES OF YOUTH

Job Description

The Voices of Youth Advisory Council consists of 6 young people (18-28), 1 board member, and 1 staff who use their lived experiences to voice and influence planning, governance, and decision-making at YouthLink; this is done to strengthen and continuously improve the quality of services provided to youth served by YouthLink.

This Council was created to provide a platform for young people who have experienced homelessness or being unstably housed at some point in their lives

Responsibilities

- Participate (attend and engage) in all meetings and activities
- Advise administrative leadership and members of the Board of Directors on policies, procedures, programs, and partnerships
- Advocate for youth at YouthLink
- Develop and facilitate focus groups and surveys

Expectations

- Make a 1-year commitment to serve on Council
- Be between the ages of 18 and 28
- Willingness to participate in personal and professional leadership development
- Willingness to build and strengthen new relationships
- Interested in mentorship

Compensation and Support

- \$20/hour for all work/events done with YouthLink
- One service award at 6 months, and one at the completion of a year
- Food will be provided at each Council meeting
- Professional advocate/mentor

Additional Benefits

VOY advisory members will receive the opportunity to meet and collaborate with peers, professionals, and community leaders from all over the state of Minnesota on projects aimed at reducing homelessness to a temporary and non-reoccurring experience. This opportunity will help selected young people grow professionally and use their lived experiences to advocate for policy and programs that are culturally responsive and promote transformative opportunities. VOY advisory members will receive training to develop lifelong skills and capacity needed to access and sustain employment in their interest, as well as professional competencies necessary to develop as leaders. VOY advisory members will also gain confidence from their exposure while making the community a better place and helping the state prevent others from long term experiences of housing insecurity and unemployment.

**VOICES OF YOUTH (VOY)
ADVISORY COUNCIL**
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the (VOY) Advisory Council?

We are young people (18-28), disproportionately black and brown youth, with lived experience of homelessness (and/or currently); this could mean unsheltered living on the streets, staying at shelters, couch surfing, extended foster care and many other ways. Our purpose is to center and inform our -"voice"- in the governance, policy, procedures, partnerships, programs, and activities of YouthLink. We are agents of change to better the lives of youth experiencing homelessness served by YouthLink and the community.

What does the Voices of Youth Advisory Council do?

We use our voices to work together with YouthLink and youth experiencing homelessness to make sure the most impactful, relative, and inclusive services are provided. We use our lived experiences to inform board members, leaders, staff, community, and policy makers of the real solutions needed for removing barriers for youth to achieve equity in long-term stability and self-reliance. We use our collective unity to conduct regular community forums in the community to keep the issues of youth homelessness on the agenda for change and action.

How often do they meet?

The Voices of Youth Advisory Council meets at least once per month; but more than likely will meet 2 times per month. Youth selected for the VOY council are asked to make a one-year commitment to the VOY advisory council. VOY members are paid a stipend for meetings and VOY sponsored activities attended. Members are also awarded two service awards per year.

How do I know if I qualify?

Required eligibility criteria includes: candidates must be between 18 and 28 years old and have experienced being formerly unstably housed. This could mean living on the streets, staying at shelters, couch surfing, extended foster care or living in unsafe housing conditions. This lived experience helps guide the work that you will do as a member of the advisory council.

Would I get paid if I am on the VOY?

Yes. You will get paid \$20 for all VOY meetings and sponsored activities. You will also be awarded two service awards per year of \$1,000 each pending participation and engagement.

How do I apply?

Just follow these 2 easy steps:

Complete the attached application and email it to: keegan.rolenc@youthlinklinkmn.org

When will I know if I got selected?

All applicants will be notified by email and phone call regarding the process. You will hear back within one week of the application being received. Qualified candidates will be asked to meet the selection committee on a scheduled date.

Voices of Youth Advisory Council Application

Thank you for applying to serve on the YouthLink Voices of Youth Advisory Council. We are so excited you are interested. Please complete the application and email it to Keegan.rolenc@youthlinkmn.org.

THE BASICS

First Name: _____ Last Name _____
I Prefer to Be Called: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____
Primary Phone Number: _____ Alternate Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____ Best Way to Contact You: _____
Gender Identity: _____ what is the highest level of education you completed? _____
Are you currently in school? If yes, what level and where? _____

YOUR GIFTS, TALENTS, AND INTERESTS

What made you interested in joining the Voices of Youth Advisory Council?

What do you hope to get from being on the council? Check as many as you want.

- Receive mentorship and professional development
- Connect with other young people doing same or similar work
- Learn lifelong skills I can use in to help me thrive beyond this experience
- Advocate for improved services for youth

Other: Please elaborate

What makes you passionate about advocating for youth who have experienced homelessness?

Since the council will be advising on ways to better serve youth experiencing homelessness and youth that are unstably housed, it is important for us to understand a little bit about your experiences. Please circle Yes or No after each question. These answers will only be shared with a small group of people reviewing the application.

Have you ever been homeless?	Yes	No
Have you ever stayed at a shelter?	Yes	No
Have you ever stayed in a space unsuitable for human shelter?	Yes	No
Have you ever couch surfed?	Yes	No
Have you ever had no safe place to live?	Yes	No

Work Experience and Leadership

You do not need to have any experience to be accepted. Just want to learn more about you. Please share any work and leadership history including volunteer work, school programs, and recreational activities.

If selected for the VOY, can you commit to the following?

Attend 2 meetings a month in the evening? Yes
Contact someone if you are unable to attend a meeting Yes

By signing this form, I commit to serving on the Voices of Youth Advisory Council to the best of my ability.

Applicant Signature

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

You should scan and email the completed application to KJ Rolenc at Keegan.rolenc@youthlinkmn.org. Any questions please feel free to email or contact KJ directly at 612-253-1465

Thanks!