

NOW HIRING

Guidance Counselor

Front-Line, Full Mission, Paid Position

Grace Circles · Family Restoration & Foster Support · Care Team

Compensation Commensurate with Experience · Pennsylvania Act 153 Clearances Required

Who We Are

Black Sheep Ministries is a Pennsylvania 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization built on one conviction: no one is too far gone. Our tagline is simple — "Where the system ends, we begin." We operate three programs serving Armstrong, Westmoreland, and parts of Allegheny County: Grace Circles (youth and family stabilization), Family Restoration & Foster Support (non-custodial families navigating the child welfare system), and the Black Sheep Care Team (crisis hospitality and street-level outreach).

We are not a referral clearinghouse. We are not a check-the-box program. We walk alongside the people nobody else stays with — and we are looking for someone who is built for that.

The Position

The Guidance Counselor is one of the most important front-line roles in the organization. This is not a desk job. It is not a case-management-from-a-distance job. It is a presence-based, relationship-driven position that requires someone willing to be fully in it — sitting across the table from a participant, on the phone with a caseworker, in the room when it is hard, and still there when things get harder.

This position operates org-wide, meaning the Guidance Counselor serves participants across all three BSM programs. The role is paid and reports directly to the Executive Director.

Core Responsibilities

Participant Intake & Onboarding

BSM utilizes a structured intake and assessment process developed with input from licensed clinicians. The Guidance Counselor does not need a clinical background to complete it — full training is provided. Your role is to walk through each section accurately and thoroughly with the participant, using the tools and guidelines BSM supplies, and to document what you learn with care and consistency.

- Guide newly enrolled participants through BSM's structured intake process, covering household background, educational status, system involvement, and self-reported stress and coping — following the provided training and documentation guidelines.
- Develop Individual Development Profiles in direct collaboration with each participant and, where applicable, their guardian — capturing goals in the participant's own words and building a shared plan of support.

- Complete Enhanced Stabilization Plans for court-referred and foster youth, using the provided framework to align BSM programming with existing court orders, case plans, and agency directives.
- Document intake findings accurately, flag areas of concern to the Executive Director, and initiate referrals to appropriate external services — mental health, substance use, housing, legal, or crisis — as directed.

Ongoing Participant Support & Goal Coordination

- Maintain consistent one-on-one check-in relationships with assigned participants on weekly or bi-weekly schedules as determined by individual plans.
- Work directly alongside participants to ensure they are meeting not only judicial and agency-mandated goals but the personal goals they have identified for themselves — academic engagement, emotional regulation, decision-making, relationship health, and future planning.
- Conduct 30, 60, and 90-day IDP reviews, updating goals and support strategies based on participant progress and changing circumstances.
- Facilitate restorative meetings with participants experiencing behavioral concerns, developing corrective action steps collaboratively and with dignity.
- Serve as the primary point of relational continuity for assigned participants, maintaining stability even when other systems around them shift.

Agency, Court & External Coordination

- Coordinate directly with referring courts, probation officers, Children and Youth Services caseworkers, foster care agencies, and other external authorities on behalf of enrolled participants — consistent with signed Release of Information authorizations and applicable law.
- Prepare and transmit progress reports to referring authorities at 30, 60, and 90-day intervals or as ordered by court, limited strictly to factual program engagement information.
- Attend external coordination meetings, case conferences, or collaborative reviews as needed to represent the participant's engagement and progress within BSM programming.
- Maintain clear, professional, and legally compliant communication with external agencies while protecting participant confidentiality and program integrity.

Documentation & Compliance

- Maintain accurate, complete, and confidential participant records in compliance with BSM's documentation standards, HIPAA-aligned confidentiality policies, and Pennsylvania child welfare law.
- Complete and sign all required intake documents, IDP agreements, Enhanced Stabilization Plans, and incident reports within required timelines.
- Fulfill mandatory reporter obligations under Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law (23 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63) and report suspected abuse or neglect immediately and in accordance with BSM's Mandatory Reporter Compliance Policy.
- Work within and uphold BSM's Two-Adult Rule, supervision protocols, and all safeguarding standards during all participant-facing engagements.

Staff & Program Collaboration

- Report directly to the Executive Director, maintaining regular communication on participant status, emerging concerns, documentation compliance, and program observations.
- Work closely alongside BSM staff, Program Directors, and volunteers to ensure coordinated, consistent support for each participant across all program touchpoints.
- Participate in program meetings, staff briefings, and organizational events as required.
- Communicate concerns, emerging participant needs, and systemic observations to Program Directors in a timely and structured manner.

Who We Are Looking For

The right person for this role does not treat people as cases to be managed. They treat them as human beings who have been let down by systems that were not designed to stay — and they show up anyway, ready to do what those systems couldn't.

They know how to sit in the hard conversation without flinching, hold a boundary without losing the relationship, and celebrate a small win like it's the biggest thing in the world — because for the person standing in front of them, it might be.

We are looking for someone who:

- Has direct experience working with at-risk youth, system-involved families, court-referred individuals, or similar populations — whether in a social services, counseling, case management, advocacy, or ministry context.
- Is comfortable working within a structured, documentation-driven environment without losing the relational warmth that makes the work effective.
- Can navigate interactions with courts, CYS caseworkers, probation officers, and agency representatives with professionalism and clarity.
- Understands trauma-informed principles and applies them practically — not just as a philosophy, but as a daily operating standard.
- Is a mandated reporter under Pennsylvania law or is willing to complete required mandated reporter training prior to participant-facing engagement.
- Is grounded in faith in their personal life and is comfortable working within an organization whose culture and mission are faith-rooted.
- Can handle the weight of this work without burning out, and knows when to ask for support.
- Is organized, reliable, and takes documentation seriously — because accurate records protect participants as much as presence does.

Required Qualifications & Compliance

- Completion of Pennsylvania Act 153 clearances prior to participant-facing engagement: PA State Police Criminal Background Check, PA Child Abuse History Clearance, and FBI Fingerprint Clearance.
- Compliance with BSM’s Mandatory Reporter Certification requirements under Pennsylvania law.
- Adherence to BSM’s Two-Adult Rule, safeguarding standards, and all organizational policies governing participant engagement.
- A valid Pennsylvania driver’s license may be required depending on role responsibilities and program deployment.

A formal degree in social work, counseling, or a related field is not required. Relevant lived experience, community work, ministry involvement, or professional background working alongside at-risk populations will be given serious consideration. BSM will provide full training on all intake tools, documentation systems, and organizational protocols before participant-facing work begins. What we cannot train is character, presence, and the willingness to stay.

Compensation

This is a paid position. Compensation is commensurate with experience and will be discussed as part of the interview process. Black Sheep Ministries is committed to compensating its front-line staff in a manner that reflects the value and demands of the work.

How to Apply

If this role describes the work you were built for, we want to hear from you. Send a brief introduction of yourself, your relevant background, and why you believe you are a fit for this role to:

info@blacksheepministry.org

Subject Line: Guidance Counselor Application

blacksheepministry.org · (724) 334-8851

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. All candidates selected for interview will be required to provide documentation of Pennsylvania Act 153 clearances prior to any offer of employment.

“Where the system ends, we begin.”

Black Sheep Ministries · Tarentum, Pennsylvania