



ROLE OF THE CONSULTANT

LIVED EXPERIENCE EXPERT PARTNERSHIP

Lead Contributor: Tawanna Brown, LEEP Consultant

PURPOSE

Lived Experience Expert Partnership (LEEP) Consultants will assume crucial roles in collaborating with DCF, using their own lived experience to inform their work to co-develop and implement changes designed to transform DCF. LEEP empowers constituents to serve as consultants, working alongside DCF staff and partners to inform decisions, shape policy, and enhance programs and services.

The following is not an exhaustive list but reflects potential roles/areas of work as a LEEP Consultant:

- 1 ADVOCACY:** Utilize advocacy skills and experience to champion the rights and needs of families and youth within DCF and broader community settings.
- 2 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION:** Serve as a community liaison and speak to the needs of communities impacted by the child welfare system.
- 3 CONFERENCE FACILITATION:** Represent OFV/LEEP at state and national conferences, sharing insights and experiences as panelists or co-presenters to influence broader systemic change.
- 4 RESEARCH:** Conduct or participate in research to identify best practices, community resources, and innovative approaches to address the challenges faced by families and youth involved with DCF. Review and/or participate in the collection of data through surveys, interviews, and synthesizing information.
- 5 DIVERSITY, EQUITY & BELONGING:** Provide expertise based on lived experience, ensuring that programs and services are inclusive and respectful of families and youth's diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Provide insight on authentic engagement and ways to ensure that lived experts' experiences are prioritized and highlighted appropriately to advance the LEEP Consultants' role.
- 6 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:** Provide guidance on program development and improvement based on personal knowledge and professional expertise to ensure programs are responsive to the needs of families, children, and youth. Collaborate with community partners to ensure the voices of families and youth are represented in decision-making processes. Provide insight on what needs to be continued, stopped, and started to improve DCF's outreach to varied and diverse communities.
- 7 TRAINING FACILITATION:** Co-develop and co-facilitate trainings and webinars to increase awareness and understanding of youth and family engagement principles among DCF staff and community partners.
- 8 EVALUATION:** Participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of OFV activities and DCF services, ensuring that initiatives are effectively meeting the needs of stakeholders and driving positive outcomes.
- 9 POLICY ANALYSIS:** Review and analyze policies to identify areas for improvement and advocate for changes that promote accessibility, equity, cultural responsiveness, and effectiveness in services.