

**External Posting:**

Position Title: Senior Specialist, Advocacy and Community Engagement

Department: Community Engagement

Reports to: Director of Community Engagement

Direct Reports: 2

Organizational Profile:

Since 1985, North York Harvest Food Bank has been the primary food bank in northern Toronto. Last year, we distributed over 3 million pounds of food through our 35 Partner Agencies, running over 70 community programs.

An independent, charitable organization, we envision a community where all members are able to meet their food needs. Our mission is to engage our community in meeting the food needs of northern Toronto by providing dignified food assistance, education, focused advocacy, and long-term food solutions. We believe in access and inclusion, collaboration, integrity, and excellence.

Position Summary:

The Senior Specialist, Advocacy and Community Engagement will lead North York Harvest's (NYH) efforts to advocate for long-term solutions to poverty, the root cause of food insecurity in our communities. Focusing on the advocacy priorities identified by community members using our food banks, including: increased social assistance rates, affordable housing and tenant protections, decent work, social procurement, financing and real estate and others as they arise, they will work to mobilize and amplify the voices of North York community members in support of these goals.

They will also work to foster collaborative relationships with local government officials.

They will oversee and supervise two team members, who will provide direct outreach to community members visiting our food banks. At times they will supervise Advocacy Ambassadors who are hired from our food bank communities on a part-time basis to assist with specific advocacy campaigns.

They will also facilitate opportunities to mobilize community members through workshops, events, advocacy actions, public-speaking engagements, meetings with political representatives and participation in the organization's Community Action Group. They will work closely with staff and the Community Action Group in developing advocacy strategies and executing plans that respond to advocacy priorities.

Hours:

37.5 hours per week.

Compensation:

Salary Range is \$86,151 - \$101,361 per year, plus comprehensive extended Health and Dental Benefits (after 3 months), defined benefit pension, and three weeks paid vacation.

Key Responsibilities + Duties:Campaign Organizing

- Managing the Community Engagement Team's focused advocacy and community engagement efforts
- Development and execution of NYH's annual advocacy strategy that supports the organization's Mission, Vision and Values, is in line with established advocacy goals, and includes clearly defined outcomes and KPIs
- Creating opportunities and activities to empower and elevate the voices of NYH participants and community members through NYH communication channels, advocacy projects and mobilization efforts
- Staying informed about issues and trends related to food security, poverty and public policy that may affect NYH, our network and participants

Coalition-Building and Community Mobilization

- Fostering deeper relationships with NYH stakeholders through Advocacy and Community Mobilization
- Participating in networking and collaboration opportunities (round tables, coalitions, conferences, etc.) with groups and organizations relevant to the NYH Advocacy Strategy
- Overseeing the Community Action Group's Steering Committee
- Creating opportunities for community members to take action and developing community members into advocacy leaders

Government Relations

- Fostering NYH government relations by organizing and attending meetings with government officials
- Navigating various levels of government to effectively build relationships and work toward policy development that supports our communities
- Welcoming newly (re)elected government officials after every election
- Participating in public consultations
- Maintain and track North York Harvest's advocacy activities in accordance with lobbying regulations

Inter-Departmental Collaboration

- Development and execution of a Community Engagement communications strategy in coordination and collaboration with the Development and Marketing Team's strategies and calendars
- Fostering a culture of collaboration across the organization, but in particular between Development, Programs and Community Engagement Departments in support of their overlapping goals
- Representing NYH in media and at public engagement opportunities (where relevant and appropriate)

Team and Program Management

- Actively contributing to a supportive and inclusive team that works together efficiently, effectively and respectfully
- Overseeing, mentoring and managing the Community Engagement and Advocacy Coordinator, and the Community Connector
- Overseeing, scheduling and managing Community Advocacy Ambassadors
- Managing a program budget
- Other duties as assigned

Qualifications: Knowledge/Skills/Abilities:

- Strong leadership, organizational, and time management skills
- Strong public speaking, media relations, and written communication skills for internal and external audiences
- Effective interpersonal communication and partnership-building abilities
- Experience managing staff
- Experience managing advocacy campaigns
- Knowledge of root causes of poverty and food insecurity, social services in Toronto, and anti-oppression principles
- Knowledge of government jurisdiction and procedures especially at the municipal and provincial levels
- Proficiency with digital campaign tools (Nationbuilder, Callhub, Mailchimp, Newmode, etc.)
- Proficiency with computer tools (MS Office, Excel, Google Apps, Canva, Gmail, data entry, internet)
- Experience working with diverse communities and in social services or community-based programming
- Experience working with programs that serve people with low incomes (asset)
- Frontline social service experience and familiarity with northern Toronto (assets)
- Ability to exercise good judgment, problem-solve, adapt to changing needs, and de-escalate difficult situations
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively across departments and with volunteers

Education:

- Equivalent combination of post-secondary education in a relevant field, and/or relevant on-the-job experience

Experience:

- Minimum of 5 years of experience in a related role, and 2+ years of experience managing staff

Working Environment and Conditions:

- The position is full-time
- Ability to work occasional evenings and weekends
- Physical environment: Typical office and typical office equipment; and work in multiple office and community settings, in shared space and artificial lighting
- The position has the opportunity for a work-from-home component
- Occasional travel to offsite Partner locations is also required
- To be able to work remotely, the incumbent must have access to a stable internet connection
- In order to work on site, incumbent must be willing to follow NYH's Health and Safety protocol

Physical and Sensory Demands:

- Extended periods of desk work
- Standing during public events and program activities
- Engaging in repetitive and/or precise hand/finger movements
- Strong attention to detail
- Proficient operation of various equipment, including computers and office devices (e.g., photocopier, telephony, etc.)
- Exposure to household products and various scents may be encountered in the workplace.

All interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to Sarah Watson, Director of Community Engagement at sarah@northyorkharvest.com by **Friday, January 23rd, 2026**. Please include "Senior Specialist, Advocacy and Community Engagement" in the subject line. Applicants must be legally eligible to work in Canada.

NYHFB is committed to employment equity and encourages applicants from equity-seeking/equity-deserving groups. We recognize that lived experience is as valuable as formal education and as such encourage members of the NYHFB community to apply (employees, volunteers, community partners, and/or clients). We strive for a workplace that reflects the diversity of the community we serve and in which we live.

NYHFB has an accommodation process in place. Applicants requiring accommodation because of a disability or medical need are asked to make their needs known in advance. Information received related to accommodation requests will be treated with confidentiality.

We welcome all applicants, however only those invited for an interview will be contacted.