



# In Our Own Voice

## Volunteer Job Description

**Job Title:** Speaker for *In Our Own Voice* (IOOV)

**Description of IOOV:** *In Our Own Voice* (IOOV) is a powerful presentation that aims to change attitudes, assumptions, and stereotypes about people living with mental health conditions. Two trained presenters with lived experience of a mental health condition talk openly about their experiences and how they have found pathways to hope and healing. Audience members have the opportunity to ask questions, learn more about mental health, and challenge misconceptions.

**Mission:** The mission of NAMI Massachusetts is to improve the quality of life for people diagnosed with mental health conditions and their families. We seek to improve the public's awareness and understanding of mental health conditions and ensure that all people impacted by a mental health condition receive the support they need in a timely fashion. In Our Own Voice Speakers support this mission by providing community audiences with an accurate, inspiring portrait of life with a mental health condition. Research indicates that when individuals have direct contact with a person living with a mental health condition, it is one of the most powerful tools for reducing stigma and increasing awareness that recovery is possible.

**Work Location:** Presentations are held virtually and in-person. In-person presentations happen across Massachusetts at schools, universities, faith communities, businesses, law enforcement trainings and other community organizations.

The NAMI state office is located at 331 Montvale Avenue, Suite 200, Woburn, MA 01801.

### Responsibilities:

- Provide regular presentations in the year following your certification training (at least once a month).
- Be an ambassador for NAMI's programs such as the Compass Helpline.
- Maintain regular communication with NAMI staff via email.
- Maintain the confidentiality of audience members.

### Required qualifications:

- Identify as an individual with a mental health condition. You do not need a formal diagnosis.
- Able and willing to present your personal story of living with a mental health condition in front of strangers.

- Be at a point in your recovery where you have the time and ability to commit to a one-year volunteer role and bring your full attention to the presentation.
- Be at a point in your journey where you are able to speak openly and honestly about your experiences to others.
- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- All volunteers are required to maintain an active membership with NAMI during their length of service (\$5 per year).

#### **Desired qualifications:**

- Access to a device that is capable of video conferencing on apps such as Zoom for virtual presentations.
- We are seeking individuals with diverse life experiences. Persons with diverse identities are especially encouraged to apply (Ex. BIPOC, LGBTQ, persons with disabilities, veterans, immigrants, refugees, formerly incarcerated individuals etc.)

#### **Expected Time Commitment:**

- Speakers are asked to commit to an initial one-year term of service. This commitment can be renewed during a speaker's annual supervision check-in.
- The training process takes a total of 10-12 hours.
- Once a speaker is fully trained, IOOV has a low monthly time commitment with flexible scheduling. Speakers are asked to present their stories at least once per month.

#### **Benefits**

- Speakers are given a \$30 stipend per presentation.
- Travel for in-person presentations will be reimbursed at 58 cents per mile driven. NAMI will also pay fees for public transportation.
- Training is provided at no cost.
- Opportunities for speakers to network and connect with peers.
- Opportunities to develop job skills such as public speaking, advocacy, and networking.
- NAMI staff can be a reference and write letters of recommendation for jobs, internships, or school applications.
- The opportunity to educate communities and give hope to individuals moving along their recovery journey with a mental health condition.
- Opportunity to get involved with NAMI's other programming.

#### **Training Process**

The training process is broken down into 4 parts:

- 1-hour interview with NAMI staff on Zoom or in-person. Potential speakers will be asked to briefly share their mental health journey with staff. Staff will help applicants understand the program and answer any questions applicants might have.
- 2-hour pre-training session on Zoom. New speakers will watch an IOOV presentation given by current volunteers and have the opportunity to ask questions/ discuss.

- Self-paced at-home writing of story script rough draft. A training guide is provided. This must be completed before in-person training.
- Full day in-person training where speakers will work on their scripts and practice presenting their speaker scripts.

If a speaker goes for more than 6 months without presenting, they will be asked to do a brief refresher training course. If a speaker goes for more than 1 year without presenting, they will be considered inactive and will need to be re-trained in order to present again.

### **Supervisor (and contact information)**

Sarah Ford  
Senior Manager, Community Education & Outreach  
[Sford@namimass.org](mailto:Sford@namimass.org)

Michelle Ward-Gilles  
Division Director, Community Education & Outreach  
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### **Supervision and Support Plan**

- For at least their first presentation, new speakers are paired with an experienced presenter.
- NAMI staff rotate sitting in on presentations to observe speakers and give feedback.
- Speakers have an annual supervision check-in. During this meeting, speakers are given feedback and support. These check-ins are also an opportunity for speakers to bring up any issues or concerns with staff.
- Speakers are encouraged to reach out to staff for support or additional training on an ongoing basis.