



Position Profile

Chief Program Officer

Chicago, Illinois

About Covenant House

Covenant House (CH) has a 50-year history of serving young people experiencing homelessness across locations in 34 cities in five countries. Sites in the Covenant House Federation deliver innovative programs and provide incredible care through the services offered to young people. Core to what makes CH unique is the focus on building transformational relationships with young people. It is the foundation for how CH staff engage youth, demonstrate unconditional love and absolute respect, and relentlessly support youth in their journey toward healing, learning, achieving, and thriving. Because of the size and scope of the Federation, CH is in a unique position to collectively deepen the impact of its work to improve outcomes for youth and move closer to its goal of ending youth homelessness.

In recent years, CH has evolved and enhanced its program model to better serve its youth and to ensure the wellness of staff in their implementation of CH's services. Under the CH Program Model, there are better standardized policies, practices, language, and service delivery as well as alignment in outcome measurement to support future growth and expansion and to support the young people CH serves to achieve the best possible outcomes.

About Covenant House Illinois

Founded in 2017, Covenant House Illinois (CHIL) has provided more than 20,000 nights of shelter to youth in need. In 2021, CHIL expanded its impact by opening a new, state-of-the-art campus.

At the heart of CHIL's mission is a commitment to providing sanctuary and support for young people ages 18–24 who are experiencing homelessness and disconnection. CHIL welcomes each young person with unconditional love, striving to meet their immediate needs while helping them build a path toward long-term stability and independence.

In 2024, CHIL served 375 young people through its Drop-In Center, provided 62,000 meals, and served 96 young people through its residential programs. Operating an Interim and Transitional Housing Program, Street Outreach and Aftercare Program and an array of wrap around services that are trauma-informed and youth voice informed, CHIL is a leading provider for youth services.



CHIL’s vision is a world where every young person has a safe place to sleep and the opportunity to thrive. Guided by this vision, CHIL’s [FY24–FY26 strategic plan](#) focuses on deepening its impact through three major initiatives:

- **Expanding capacity** by completing the final phase of campus development, including 19 new beds of transitional housing.
- **Innovating care** through a new program model that supports a specific, high-need population—driven by data and driven by youth voice.
- **Creating stability** by developing a new permanent housing initiative and launching related planning and fundraising processes.



CHIL is more than a shelter—it’s a community committed to healing, hope, and transformation. CHIL partners with young people, honoring their resilience and nurturing their potential.

Looking Ahead

CHIL continues to grow and evolve its programs, services and capabilities to meet the increased demand to address systemic barriers that hinder young people’s ability to thrive.

THE MISSION OF COVENANT HOUSE ILLINOIS
IS TO OFFER YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS AN AFFIRMING COMMUNITY,
ABSOLUTE RESPECT, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE,
AND A PATHWAY TO LASTING
INDEPENDENCE.

With less than 10 years in the Chicago region and a long-term vision for further expansion in the coming years, CHIL has established itself as a trusted and safe environment where young people feel respected and welcomed.

CHIL’s next Chief Program Officer will play a key role in addressing the unique needs of young people experiencing homelessness by enhancing all programmatic efforts across the organization. The Chief Program Officer will also implement the new program model in alignment with CHIL’s goals and mission, ensuring high quality and measurable outcomes.



CHIL

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Interim Shelter

Our 37-bed short-term housing program offers holistic, trauma-informed care tailored to youths' unique goals. Youth receive clinical case management and wraparound services in a low-barrier environment. We support them in accessing community resources, achieving their goals, and securing stable housing.

Transitional Living Program

Our 19-bed transitional living program, Rights of Passage (ROP), offers up to two years of housing in a structured, supportive setting. Residents build life skills, save income, and strengthen self-sufficiency while receiving tailored support for mental health and personal growth.

Employment and Education

We offer workforce training, support, and job placement services on-site, along with access to educational resources. Youth can visit as often as needed while working toward brighter futures, gaining valuable skills, building self-sufficiency, and receiving the support they need to succeed in their careers and beyond.

Case Management

We provide a safe, supportive environment where youth are guided by a dedicated team of professionals. Clinical case managers work closely with each young person to help them achieve goals in well-being, education, employment, and housing, ultimately leading to long-term stable housing.

Youth Development Center (YDC)

Also known as the YDC, our drop-in center provides food, showers, laundry, personal storage, case management, and access to employment, education, and life skills services. It's a safe and welcoming space where youth can rest and receive support, with no referral needed to visit.

Street Outreach & Aftercare (SOAP)

SOAP connects Chicago's unhoused youth to services through outreach and community partnerships. Once youth secure housing, our Outreach & Aftercare Case Manager provides six months of follow-up support, connecting them to essential services and helping them transition to independent living.

Additional Services

Warm Meals
Laundry & Shower Facilities
Mental Health Services
Workforce & Education Support

Life Skills Training
Personal Storage
Clothing Closet
Recreational Activities

Learn more about CHIL | covenanthouseil.org/

The Opportunity

Covenant House Illinois is seeking a Chief Program Officer (CPO) with a unique combination of trauma-informed expertise, program strategy and collaborative leadership skills.

Reporting to the CEO, the CPO is a member of the senior executive team, influencing and guiding the overall goals, strategy, and decision-making of the organization. In this role, the CPO will also foster a positive, inclusive, and team-oriented workplace culture that values open communication and continuous improvement. The position also functions as the Child Protection Officer, responsible for Praesidium Compliance.

With a deep commitment to empowering youth, the CPO will support the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and provide leadership, management, and vision necessary to ensure that CHIL has the most qualified personnel and the best systems in place to effectively sustain and grow the organization, ensuring programmatic oversight, financial strength, and operating efficiency.

The CPO will collaborate with leadership and management to develop and implement plans for the programmatic, fund development and operational infrastructure of systems, processes, and personnel designed to accommodate the objectives of CHIL for the current and planned growth.

The CPO will be responsible for oversight and support to recruit, train, retain and empower a high-performing program management team. They will directly supervise the Director of Clinical & Supportive Services and the Director of Residential Programs.



In collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Chief Development Officer, and two direct reports, the CPO's key leadership responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

Executive Leadership | Oversee and champion continuous quality improvement and program execution by integrating feedback loops, training systems, and metrics-driven performance reviews and program evaluation. Drive CHIL to achieve and surpass business/strategic goals pertaining to both annual KPI's as well as long-term strategic plan initiatives and objectives.

Programmatic Leadership | Oversee the development and implementation of evidence-based models, policies, standards, practices and security measures to enhance program design and service delivery and ensure integration of wraparound services, including mental health and employment pathways, in alignment with national best practices.

Administrative Leadership | Work in partnership with the Chief Operating and Impact Officer to support facility management and operations functions, including in coordination with program directors with a focus on residential facilities on and off-site.

Finance Leadership | Partner with the CEO, Director of Finance, and others on the leadership team to develop the annual program plan, assess fiscal needs and requirements, develop program and agency budgets, and manage expenditures.



Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will be a thoughtful and emotionally intelligent leader to help guide the organization through a period of strategic evolution and growth. The ideal candidate will bring an enterprise-wide mindset, a collaborative approach, and the ability to strengthen cross-functional leadership.

The strongest candidates will possess the following professional and personal qualities, skills, and characteristics:

Passion for the Mission

The CPO will be a mission-focused, strategic, and process-minded leader with a proven track record of motivating and managing a diverse workforce in human services. They will bring an innate desire to empower and serve young people. The ideal leader will have an unwavering commitment CHIL's mission and to centering youth voice in program development.

Expertise in Program Development & Management

The CPO will bring demonstrated success in project management, programmatic development and implementation, personnel management, budget and resource development, partnership engagement, grant and contract management, and programmatic compliance. In conjunction with the Quality Improvement team, this leader will have the ability to determine outcomes/outputs and yearly projections for programs.

Change Management

A strategic problem solver, the CPO will be data driven and metrics focused, often utilizing data and analytics to inform program enhancements, improvement and strategy. They will also ensure there are policies and procedures to guide the work of the programs team. The ideal candidate will be flexible and able to manage multi-disciplinary teams engaging in simultaneous tasks. This leader will have effectively worked within an ambiguous, fast-moving environment, while driving toward clarity and solutions; demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities, problem solving, and guiding investment in people and systems.

Effective Communicator & Relationship Builder

An effective listener, the CPO will demonstrate a proactive, positive, open, and effective communication style. The CPO will also provide leadership in the development of inter-team communication and cohesiveness, sustaining a culture of accountability and psychological safety to help support staff during organizational growth. They will be responsive to emergencies and work with CHIL leadership and/or appropriate team members to resolve issues in a timely manner. This leader will establish rapport across CHIL and cultivate relationships at all levels of the organization.

Collaborative Leader of Teams, Strategy and Operations

The CPO will have demonstrated success in collaborating with leadership and management to develop and implement plans for the programmatic, fund development and operational infrastructure of systems, processes, and personnel designed to accommodate the objectives of CHIL.

In addition, strong candidates will offer:

- Master's degree in social services, public administration, non-profit leadership, or related, preferred.
- 10+ years of progressive experience in programs, public administration, non-profit leadership/management, and/or other related fields.
- 5+ years of supervisory and leadership experience required with demonstrated competency in program development and oversight.
- Illinois clinical license is a plus but not required. (i.e., Licensed Clinical Social Worker, or Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor.
- Advanced proficiency with relevant technologies including Microsoft Office, Excel, and web-based data systems such as Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

CHIL's Statement of Inclusion

Our doors are open to youth and staff regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

CHIL's Definition of Diversity

Understanding that diversity means many different things to many different people, Covenant House Illinois defines it broadly to be inclusive of many different elements of human groups, but to focus particularly on: Racial and ethnic groups, Gender Identity and Expression, Sexual Orientation (LGBTQ+ populations), and People with Disabilities. Our objectives are to improve equity (promoting justice, impartiality, and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources) and increase inclusion (ensuring diverse individuals can fully participate in agency decision-making processes).

Compensation, Benefits & Work Conditions

Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. The salary range for this role is \$130,000 - \$150,000 with a generous benefits package.

This is a full-time and an on-site work environment in Chicago, Illinois.

- Ability to work a flexible schedule as required including non-traditional hours, weekends, and holidays.
- Ability to work standing, walking, and/or sitting a minimum of eight hours per day/shift.
- Ability to drive agency or personal vehicles to transport items and/or persons.
- Valid Illinois Driver's License with acceptable driving record.
- Ability to travel as needed for training or to fulfill job requirements.
- Light lifting.
- Performs all duties as assigned.
- Annual tuberculin test is required.

Full inoculation with COVID-19 vaccination is required.

*Because every young person deserves
a safe place to sleep.*

Contact

DSG | Koya has been exclusively retained for this engagement, which is being led by Tiara D. Muse. Submit a compelling letter of interest and resume by [filling out our Talent Profile](#). All inquiries are strictly confidential.

DSG | Koya is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

About DSG | Koya

DSG | Koya, a DSG Global company, is the nation's premier search firm dedicated to mission-driven leadership. Since its founding in 2004, DSG | Koya has had an exclusive focus on mission-driven clients and was founded on the belief that the right leader can transform an organization and have a deep and measurable impact on our world. DSG | Koya works with nonprofits & NGOs, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

DSG Global is consistently recognized by Forbes on its top 10 list of "America's Best Executive Recruiting Firms" and is an industry leader in recruiting transformational leaders for a changing world. The firm is deliberately different in its approach, with best-in-class teams who have decades of experience in cultivating inclusive leaders, understanding the dimensions of diversity, and building equitable teams.

Learn more about DSG | Koya via the [firm's website](#).