

Job description and person specification

Generalist Adviser Refugee Resource outreach project

Terms: Fixed term contract to 31st March 2020

Hours: 10 hours per week, ideally Thursdays for the appointments at Refugee Resource and Mondays for the shorter session but this is negotiable.

Salary: £25,463-£26,470 pro rata

Benefits: up to 5% matched contribution pension, 28 days holiday plus bank holidays pro rata

Location: Refugee Resource, Marston Street and Citizens Advice, St Aldates

Responsible to: Head of Services

Context of role:

This post is funded for one year as part of a partnership between Citizens Advice Oxford and Refugee Resource. It will provide an outreach service at Refugee Resource's premises in east Oxford, offering an appointment-based service. This post will not be expected to deal with immigration queries beyond level OISC1 (general help) which is the basic level of queries which all local Citizens Advice have clearance to handle. The desired project outcome over the year is to help 40 refugees – including in-depth casework – and report on improved opportunities and increased access to services, financial benefits and entitlements through advice/advocacy. This post will work alongside counselling, mentoring/coaching and women's service staff and volunteers at Refugee Resource to assist in enabling better life chances and improved health and well being for clients.

Role purpose: to provide an effective and efficient generalist advice service to Refugee Resource clients within the aims, policies and principles of the CA service.

Duties and Responsibilities

Information and advice giving

- Interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills in order to allow clients to explain their problem(s) and empower them to set their own priorities.
- Use the Citizens Advice Information System to find, interpret and communicate the relevant information.

- Research and explore options and implications so that clients can make informed decisions.
- Act for the client where necessary by negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning.
- Liaise and negotiate with other statutory and voluntary organisations to progress the client's case and ensure they receive all assistance available.
- Signpost and refer internally and externally as appropriate in order to link clients into additional relevant support
- Ensure that all work conforms to the office systems and procedures
- Maintain detailed case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation.

Research and Campaigns

- Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances.
- Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to bureau management.
- Alert other staff to local and national issues.
- Alert clients to social policy options.

Professional development

- Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training.
- Read relevant publications.
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings/management team meetings as appropriate.
- Assist with Service initiatives for the improvement of services.

Administration

- Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
- Ensure that all work conforms to the bureau's systems and procedures.
- Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases.
- Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to bureau work and undertake appropriate training.

Other duties and responsibilities

- Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
- Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the CAB service.

- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.

Person specification

1. At least two years' experience of advice work
2. Ability to work sensitively with a diverse range of clients
3. An understanding of the issues involved in interviewing clients, particularly clients for whom English is not their main language, and who may be experiencing stress and anxiety
4. Good professional boundaries and emotional resilience when faced with complex and potentially life threatening situations
5. An ordered approach to casework and an ability to follow set procedures concerning casework and file management etc.
6. Ability to use IT in the provision of advice and the preparation of reports and submissions.
7. Good oral communication skills with particular emphasis on negotiation and representation skills on the telephone.
8. Ability to communicate effectively in writing with particular emphasis on negotiation and representation skills and on preparing grant applications, reviews, reports and correspondence.
9. Numeracy skills required to understand statistics and check calculations.
10. Ability to monitor and maintain own work to comply to set standards.
11. An understanding of and commitment to the Aims and Principles of the Citizens Advice service including the services Equal Opportunities policies.
12. Ability to work independently without close supervision, to prioritise own work, meet deadlines whilst contributing to the wider Citizens Advice team.
13. Experience in providing advice in a wide range of area such as welfare benefits, housing, employment, consumer etc.
14. Understanding the practical needs and issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers
15. Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision in particular in relation to refugees and asylum seekers and/or those with long term service provision.

Please return the completed application form to recruitment@cab-oxford.org.uk
midday Monday 25th March

In accordance with Citizens Advice Oxford policy we will ask the successful candidate to be screened by the DBS. However, a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your being able to take up the job