

# Job Description

## Benefits Adviser/Caseworker



**Accountable to:** Chief Executive

**Responsible for:** Delivery of Benefit advice services and the supervision of any Benefits advice work that might be carried out from time to time by other members of staff or volunteers

**Contract:** Permanent, subject to on-going funding

**Salary:** £29,000 per annum (including ILW)

**Hours:** 35 hours per week (full-time)

**Annual Leave:** 25 days plus Bank and Public Holidays

### Summary of Post

- To provide a full Benefits advice and casework service to clients, and be responsible for the oversight and supervision of Benefits work generally within the Centre
- To ensure that relevant performance and quality standards are achieved and maintained and that any relevant funder requirements are met on an ongoing basis

### Duties of Post

#### 1. Casework/advice and advocacy

- To deliver and maintain a specialist Benefits advice service covering the full range of benefits advice topics and provide advice and information to assist clients in relation to problems within the areas of Benefits and income maximisation generally
- To maintain an active caseload that enables individuals experiencing difficulty with Benefits become aware of and exercise their rights in law so as to improve their circumstances
- To carry out follow-up casework, including research where necessary
- To manage referrals from internal staff and external agencies within a designated procedure and to ensure this work meets relevant quality standards
- To meet targets as set by the Chief Executive and any applicable funder

- Prepare and present cases to the appropriate bodies including, statutory, tribunals or courts as appropriate or facilitate this presentation through third parties/agents
- Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case and refer to other advisers internally or external specialist agencies or solicitors as appropriate
- Provide advice and assistance to other staff and volunteers across the whole range of Benefits advice issues
- Ensure that all casework and any other work-related activities conform to the procedures and policies as set out in the Centre's Office Manual, any applicable quality standards and the Staff Handbook
- After training, use the Centre's electronic case management system (Advice Pro) to maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, and statistical monitoring and report preparation
- Work in close partnership with other staff, teams and volunteers at the Centre.

## **2. Supervision**

- Provide supervision to any other staff or volunteers who, from time to time, might be engaged in providing Benefits advice
- Where appropriate, review the work of other staff and volunteers to ensure it meets relevant quality assurance standards
- Provide technical legal support and act as consultant on Benefits issues to other advisers within the Centre where necessary
- Monitor and regularly review quality of work from case records/file notes
- Develop and maintain standards of service delivery

## **3. Social policy**

- Assist with social policy work by providing information about client circumstances
- Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to the Chief Executive and/or Council of Management
- Monitor service provision to ensure that it reaches the widest possible client group
- Alert other staff and volunteers to local and national issues
- Record outcomes as required by the Centre

#### **4. Professional development**

- Undertake training and learning to keep abreast of changes in the law and to continue own training development
- Keep up-to-date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to Benefits advice and undertake appropriate training
- Read relevant publications
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the Chief Executive
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings/management team meetings as appropriate
- Assist with initiatives for the improvement of services

#### **5. Administration**

- Self-administering, though you are encouraged to utilise any volunteers that may be available to assist with administrative activities
- Review and make recommendations for improvements to Centre systems
- Contribute to the maintenance of local information systems
- Ensure compliance with funder requirements across cases
- Use Information Technology for statistical recording, record keeping and document production
- Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to the Centre's work and undertake appropriate training
- Maintain close liaison with relevant external agencies
- Maintain a library of relevant reference materials and case law

#### **6. Public relations**

- Liaise with statutory and non-statutory organisations and represent the Centre to outside bodies as appropriate
- Act professionally and responsibly in your capacity as a representative of Brixton Advice Centre, having a mind to the importance of good relations with others at all times and the importance of maintaining positive brand perceptions

## **7. 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
- Occasionally be prepared to work outside of work hours in order to deliver any specific work-related objective eg attendance at meetings
- Demonstrate commitment to the Centre's equality and diversity policy and other aims and policies of the Centre eg information assurance and confidentiality
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues