**Job Description- Advice and Guidance Worker**

**Hours: 16 hours per week.**

**Workdays: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday**

**Gross Salary: £11,400pa Fixed Term Contract.**

**Contract renewable (if funding) every April.**

**Probation period: 2 months**

**PURPOSE OF THE POSITION**

As an Adult Advice and Guidance worker you will help clients clarify options about their future by offering information, advice and guidance on benefits, housing, health, budgeting and debt solutions, residency, education, training, and work opportunities. You will frequently work with people in times of transition brought about by factors such as redundancy, health changes, or a desire or need to change career. Work will often focus on hard to reach or marginalised groups including unemployed, those in poverty, disabled people, members of the EU Community, refugees, substance dependent individuals, the homeless and people with few educational qualifications.

**SCOPE**

As part of a team within the Church setting, you will focus on enabling clients to move forward in their personal development, financial capability, residential status, education, and training. The position sits within the organisation’s Support Services under the Central Administration and Support Services Manager and works alongside the reception and administration team in daily operations of the Support Centre.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Adult guidance workers may work with individuals or groups in a variety of settings.

Tasks typically involve:

* providing clients with information and advice in person, via email or telephone or online video conferencing platforms
* conducting short and extended advice-desk appointments, online and face-to-face, requiring a high level of people skills to help clients interpret information and choose the most appropriate course of action,
* using a variety of assessment tools to help clients identify, clarify, and assess their needs,
* building up and maintaining industry awareness on benefits, residential status, debt solutions and budgeting, education, training, and the labour market in order to signpost clients to the information they need,
* offering a range of other support to clients, such as supported use of IT facilities, to enable them to identify and take up employment opportunities,
* referring clients to other agencies as necessary, such as government agencies, learning and training providers or specialist organisations, and advocating on their behalf when necessary,
* meeting targets and gathering and analysing internal and external data and reporting to the Support Services Manager,
* developing and maintaining a network of contacts with other Advice Providers, the Sandwell Consortium partners, the Job Centre, Black Country Women’s Aid, local GP’s, Hope into Action, other relevant agencies,
* undertaking administrative tasks, such as creating and maintaining client records on Advice Pro’,
* working with training providers, ‘Back to work’ initiatives, employability courses (inc. our own),
* working with Support Services Manager to promote the Support Centre Services to the community,
* working with the Support Services Manager to ensure the Support Centre’s activities are competitive with and learn from good practice demonstrated in other comparable organisations,
* promote equality and value diversity including: (a) actively acting as a role model in own behaviour and fostering a non-discriminatory culture; (b) actively applying internal processes in a fair and equal way.

The work is challenging and varied with duties that range from advice-desk appointments, assessing problems and inputting data on Advice Pro, mediating on a client's behalf and some advocacy work. Other responsibilities include:

* maintaining records and information systems,
* interpreting legislation and researching cases,
* keeping up to date with all new current legislation,
* attending all training offered by Sandwell Consortium,
* engaging with Welfare Rights for quarterly monitoring meetings onsite or online,
* attending the regular Advice Providers Network meetings

Referral and liaison with other relevant organisations are key features of the work.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

(The unavoidable, externally imposed conditions under which the work must be performed, and which create hardship for the volunteer including the frequency and duration of occurrence of physical demands, environmental conditions, demands on one’s senses and metal demands.)

***Physical Demands***

(The nature of physical effort leading to physical fatigue)

An Advice and Guidance worker may have to spend long hours sitting and using office equipment and computers, which can cause muscle strain. An Advice and Guidance worker may also have to do some light lifting of supplies and materials from time to time.

***Environmental Conditions***

(The nature of adverse environmental conditions affecting the volunteer)

The office will often be a busy facility. An Advice and Guidance worker may have to manage several projects at one time and may be interrupted frequently to meet the needs and requests of members and clients. An Advice and Guidance worker may find the environment to be busy, noisy and will need excellent organisational and time and stress management skills to complete the required tasks.

***Sensory Demands***

(The nature of demands on the Clients senses)

Sensory demands include use of the computer, which may cause eyestrain and occasional headaches. The office may be noisy and busy making it difficult for the Advice and Guidance worker to concentrate.

Advice workers help people who are often in crisis situations, with complex problems. This can make the work stressful and emotionally demanding, but at the same time rewarding when resolution to their problems or a way forward can be found.

**Person Specification**

Qualifications

* Advice and Guidance Level 3 is required
* Significant related experience in advice and guidance work

Skills

* IT skills, including Microsoft Excel, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Teams
* Excellent team working skills
* Demonstrable and proven experience of problem solving and developing innovative solutions.
* Excellent project development and management skills and the ability to set goals and priorities
* Excellent verbal and written communication skills and the ability to adapt to a diverse range of client groups
* Ability to remain calm under pressure and use initiative to resolve problems and work independently to manage own work programme
* Ability to travel regularly within Sandwell and work occasional out of hours including weekends

Experience

* Experience working in advice and guidance
* Experience working in a busy office, managing multiple projects
* Experience managing own workload and handling stressful and emotionally demanding situations
* Experience representing your organisation in professional settings
* Experience helping people in crisis situations, with complex problems

**A Criminal Records Check will be required for this position.**