

Job Description

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| Post: | Refuge Worker |
| Shift: | Day Shift – Rolling 3-week shift pattern |
| Location: | Knowsley, Merseyside |
| Responsible to: | Refuge Manager |
| Hours: | 25.7 per week |
| Salary: | £17,979.52+ 6% pension contribution |

Purpose

The postholder is to assist in the provision of a safe temporary accommodation service for women and children, who are homeless as a direct result of domestic abuse, offering practical and emotional help and support.

Key Responsibilities

1. To ensure that each woman or family has the opportunity to evaluate the impact that their experience has had on them and establish what their own personal goals are for the future.
2. To support women in resettlement, assessing risk, and applying for housing with the relevant local authority. Helping women to prepare for the move back into the community and ensuring they are fully equipped and confident in maintaining their new tenancy.

Specific Duties

Refuge Support

1. To take on the Key Worker role for women residing in refuge whilst working effectively as part of a team to ensure the individual needs of each woman are met throughout her stay in refuge.
2. To complete initial referrals and risk assessment, ensuring that all relevant information is collected prior to accommodation being offered. To review risk assessments at regular intervals or when triggered by incident or professional judgement.

3. To carry out needs assessments in collaboration with women in refuge ensuring the process is service user led. Complete relevant support plan with person centred actions identified.
4. To support maximisation of income for women/families in refuge, ensuring prompt take up of housing and any other benefits.
5. To welcome new arrivals showing them around the premises, settling into accommodation, providing information packs, explaining house rules, signing of documentation e.g., residents licence agreement and being able to answer any queries and to deal with concerns.
6. To ensure that accurate and up to date records are kept of contact with women or children/young people including, topics discussed, support offered, any referral made to external agencies or any relevant changes in circumstances or level of risk. To forward information as requested in the required format to the Refuge Manager.
7. To arrange regular house meetings and seek feedback, keeping clear minutes and records of all comments and concerns, and outcomes in conjunction with the refuge manager.
8. To work collaboratively with local statutory and voluntary organisations to ensure women and families receive the best possible advice and benefit from a holistic service tailored to their individual needs.
9. To attend meetings with other staff, women/families or external agencies as required by the Refuge Manager ensuring that The First Step is represented in a professional manner at all times. Provide feedback in the relevant format ensuring all relevant parties are kept up to date and records are accurate.
10. To provide practical advice and assistance in applying for homeless status and helping women to secure suitable alternative accommodation as soon as is practicable. Supporting women throughout their stay in refuge in gaining confidence and preparing to move back into the community.
11. To make referrals to and liaise with relevant partner agencies in relation to housing and move on including the High Priority Panel, Furnished Tenancy Team and others.
12. To liaise with previous landlords where necessary, supporting women to terminate old tenancies and produce references for new housing providers as required.

13. To communicate immediately with the Refuge Manager any breaches of security, house rules or licence agreements especially where there is a concern about safety.

Building Management

1. To ensure Refuge is well maintained with all defects and maintenance issues are reported and all health and safety requirements are fully met.
2. To ensure that any equipment used or provided at Refuge is in working order and any repairs reported.

Health and Safety

1. To be responsible for the implementation of the Health & Safety Policy as far as it affects them, colleagues and any others who may be affected by their work. To monitor the effectiveness of the health and safety arrangements and systems to ensure appropriate improvements are made where necessary.
2. To take responsibility for ensuring security of the building is maintained at all times, adhering to relevant policies at all times, i.e., Lone Working and Confidentiality.

Equality and Diversity

1. To be aware of the cultural and any additional needs of women and children using the refuge. Ensuring the service is available to all.
2. Actively promote the provision of equity and access by The First Step and promote non-discriminatory practices in all areas of work.

General Duties

1. To participate in the on-call rota to ensure effective out of hours coverage of the service.
2. To help ensure effective staff cover at times of illness or annual leave.
3. To attend any meetings or training either internal or external as requested by the Refuge Manager.
4. Ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the Safeguarding Lead within refuge or if unavailable to another The First Step Safeguarding lead ensuring compliance with The First Step's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
5. To adhere to all The First Step policies and procedures including Confidentiality and Data Protection and contribute to their review and development as required.

6. To attend line management sessions as requested and to provide information on client work, service delivery and organisational issues to the line manager.
7. To implement decisions agreed in line management meetings.

3-Week Rolling Shift Pattern

| WK | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday | Hrs |
|-----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----|
| WK1 | 08.00-15.00 | 08.00-15.00 | 08.00-15.00 | 08.00-15.00 | 08.00-17.00 | OFF | OFF | 32 |
| WK2 | 12.00-20.00 | OFF | OFF | OFF | OFF | 08.00-18.00 | 09.00-18.00 | 24 |
| WK3 | OFF | 12.00-20.00 | 12.00-20.00 | 12.00-20.00 | OFF | OFF | OFF | 21 |

3 Week Rolling Rota

Weekly hours equate to 25.7 hrs.

One Hour Unpaid Lunch Break

General

The person appointed will be expected to work flexibly and the exact nature of the duties described above is subject to periodic review and is liable to change. The job description is a representative document. Other reasonably similar duties may be allocated from time to time commensurate with the general character of the post and its grading. All staff are responsible for the implementation of the Health & Safety Policy as far as it affects them, colleagues and others who may be affected by their work. Since confidential information is involved with the duties of this post, the post holder will be required to exercise discretion at all times and to observe relevant codes of practice and legislation in relation to data protection and personal information.

This post is **exempt** from the provisions of Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. You are therefore **not** entitled to withhold information about convictions which for any other purposes are 'spent' under the provisions of the ACT and any failures to disclose such convictions could result in dismissal or disciplinary action by The First Step. Any information given will be completely confidential and will be considered only in relation to the positions to which the Order applies.

Principal Terms & Conditions

- Salary paid monthly.
- Employer pension contribution of 6%.
- 25.7 hours per week.
- Business mileage allowance of 45p per mile.
- 25 days annual holiday pro rata for part time plus statutory bank holidays.
- 365-day access to an Employee Assistance Programme.

Refuge Worker – Person Specification

This person specification states the essential experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes which the selection panel will use to draw up a shortlist of applicants to be interviewed. When filling out your application form, please think carefully about how you can demonstrate that you meet each of the criteria in the person specification and give examples wherever you can. It is insufficient simply to repeat what it says in the person specification. **We are aware that we are asking for a wide range of skills and experience and will consider applications from people who would be prepared to build their experience, skills, and knowledge to acquire what is required.**

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| Criteria |
| Education/Qualifications |
| Essential |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the effects and impact of domestic abuse. • Experience of working with vulnerable groups. |
| Desirable |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s Aid or CAADA accredited training. • First Aid Training. |
| Criteria |

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| Experience |
| Essential |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of the benefits system • Experience of using databases, spreadsheets, and word processing preferably Microsoft Office. • Experience of recording and documenting information in client files and for monitoring and statistical purposes • Experience of interagency working and developing effective working relationships with partner agencies • Experience of working in a residential setting/refuge/women’s advice centre or other relevant agency. |
| Desirable |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two direct years’ experience of providing emotional and practical support to women or other vulnerable groups. |
| Criteria |
| Abilities/Skills/Knowledge |
| Essential |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the nature of domestic abuse and its effects on women and children. • An understanding of why men use abusive behaviours towards women in relationships. • An understanding of risk factors for victim/survivors of domestic abuse. • The ability to develop appropriate, professional, supportive relationships with abused women and their children, maintaining professional boundaries with users of the service, staff etc. • Experience of risk assessment and support planning. • A good understanding of safeguarding children and adults’ policies and procedures. • Demonstrable ability to work effectively within a team setting and within a line management structure. • The ability to work within a residential setting and to work on own initiative with minimal supervision. |

- The ability to provide respectful, non-judgemental, non-directive and confidential support to women. With the ability to encourage women to take control of their lives and set realistic objectives and goals.
- The ability to undertake effective casework management with evidence of a methodical and well organised approach to work.
- Ability to work flexibly and positively within a demanding environment.
- A commitment to follow the policies, procedures and philosophical principles of The First Step and be committed to empowerment, support, and equality.
- An understanding of the additional possible needs of women from BME communities
- Skills in group work or the ability to develop these skills

Desirable

- Working knowledge of Child Protection and the processes involved.
- Up to date knowledge of housing, criminal, civil and welfare rights legislation relating to domestic violence.

Criteria

Personal/Attitudes/Qualities

Essential

- Non-judgmental approach to clients and other professionals.
- Flexible attitude to day-to-day tasks and be able to move from one task to another easily.
- Reliable and punctual.
- Courteous and professional manner at all times.

Desirable

- N/A

Criteria

General

Essential

- Candidates must satisfy the interview panel that they have an objective distance from any personal experience of violence/abuse.

The 
FIRST **TO FREEDOM FROM**
STEP **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

- This post is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions Order) 1975. It will be necessary for an Enhanced Disclosure to be made to the Disclosure & Barring Service for details of any previous criminal convictions.
- Section 7(2)(d) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 applies to this post.
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