

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Employer:</b>	<b>Ashiana Network. A Company limited by guarantee and a registered Charity</b>
<b>Post:</b>	<b>Housing Support &amp; Advice Worker</b>
<b>Reports to:</b>	<b>Housing Services Manager</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>NJC Scale SO1 Point 29 + Outer London Weighting</b>
<b>Working Hours:</b>	<b>35 hours per week Overtime will not be paid. Time off in lieu will be granted for any hours worked in excess.</b>
<b>Annual Leave:</b>	<b>20 days per annum plus public holidays (pro rata).</b>

### **BACKGROUND:**

Ashiana started operating in 1989 and specialises in helping young women, aged 16 - 30 years, from South Asian, Turkish & Iranian communities who are at risk of domestic violence and sexual violence.

### **Our Services:**

Ashiana runs three refuges with a total of 20 bed-spaces; two specifically for women aged 16-25 fleeing forced marriage. This multi award winning project is the only service of its kind in the UK and is highly innovative in terms of addressing an area of significant need not met in other refuge provision. We offer an advice and support service to women who are experiencing domestic violence/sexual violence, enabling them to make informed decisions and exit violent relationships. We provide counselling for women and girls affected by domestic violence and sexual violence. We also deliver an education programme for young people in secondary schools in East London aimed at preventing domestic violence and enabling young people experiencing domestic violence to access appropriate services. We deliver a range of awareness raising workshops for young people in the community and training on domestic violence for professionals in the voluntary and statutory sector. We run a youth project to engage young people between the ages of 13-19 who are disadvantaged or at risk of social exclusion in some form of extra-curricular activities. This is part of a pan-London VGWG (violence against women and girls) consortium and is a London Councils funded post

### **Primary Task**

To be responsible, alongside the Management Committee, the Director, Managers and other workers for the effective running of the Project, in accordance with Management Policy. Ensuring that it meets the needs of young South Asian, Middle Eastern and Iranian women who have been made homeless as a result of physical, sexual, emotional or mental abuse and women resettled by the Project. The post holder will be expected to be sensitive and aware of Asian, Middle Eastern & Iranian cultural and community needs in all aspects of their duties and responsibilities.

- ❑ To be responsible for providing Pan-London Housing advice and case work on housing options to women and girls affected by all forms of VAWG, achieving positive outcomes as per funding requirements.
- ❑ To provide advice and casework to women in our refuges
- ❑ To expand knowledge and best practice around housing and how it relates to VAWG across the organisation and the Ascent Partnership

### **Main Duties-Housing Support**

- ❑ To establish and maintain contact with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies and organisations inside and outside Waltham Forest
- ❑ To be a keyworker to a set number of residents and enable them to set realistic goals and to achieve them
- ❑ To form a professional relationship with service users to enable them to develop their own self awareness, confidence, responsibility and independence
- ❑ To support and where appropriate, accompany residents to the Housing Department, DWP, Solicitors, and Courts etc
- ❑ To share in the consideration of referrals and assessment of prospective service users.
- ❑ To ensure service users are welcomed to the Project and receive appropriate support during their stay
- ❑ To ensure that necessary advice and support is available to service users on their housing, legal, financial and where appropriate, marital situation
- ❑ To encourage service users to consider employment, training and further education options
- ❑ To ensure that the service users participate in the daily running of the Project
- ❑ To encourage service users to think about their future housing needs and assist with nominations and accommodation search
- ❑ To support ex-residents during the period following their resettlement elsewhere from the refuge. This will entail maintaining contact and providing all necessary after-care support
- ❑ To share in the collection of rent, banking, the maintenance of financial records i.e. rent records and other hostel records i.e. referral forms, agreements

### **Main Duties-Advice Work**

- ❑ To deliver excellent standards of housing advice and casework to women who have been affected by all forms of VAWG BY:
- ❑ Delivering housing case work, ensuring that contract requirements are met, defined services standards are maintained and compliance with policies and procedures
- ❑ Working closely with other teams, Ascent partners and services to develop the service and support pathways
- ❑ Positively promoting the Ascent service internally and externally
- ❑ Identifying housing options and pathways across all of London
- ❑ Ensuring the quality of the information and advice given meets the demands of funders, Ascent quality standards, internal and external standards including any quality marks

### **General duties**

- ❑ To maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to Ashiana Network and its service users
- ❑ To ensure that all Ashiana policies and procedures in your work area are adhered to
- ❑ To observe Ashiana's Equality & Diversity & Health & Safety policies and ensure awareness and integration with all communities in the Boroughs of operation
- ❑ To ensure all meetings and training relevant to your role including CPD as necessary to retain status

- ❑ To carry out any other duties in line with the objectives of the post as requested by the management Committee or Senior Managers
- ❑ Attend regular team meetings and other team commitments and meetings as necessary
- ❑ To carry out other tasks as are reasonably required to help the team to deliver its goals and have a flexible approach to work
- ❑ Provide and Support management with information and other detailed reports as and when necessary
- ❑ To attend regular supervision and appraisal meetings

# Person Specification

## **Post: Female Housing Services Worker & Advice Worker**

### **Education & Qualifications**

- University level education-(Desirable)

### **EXPERIENCE**

#### **Essential**

- A minimum of one year experience working women and girls aged 16+.
- Experience of understanding of working with women affected by VAWG
- At least two years experience of working with a housing agency

### **KNOWLEDGE**

#### **Essential**

- A clear understanding of the options available to women who experience VAWG including up to date knowledge of welfare benefits, housing and immigration
- Sound understanding of equal opportunities in practice.
- A clear understanding of the issues facing women affected by VAWG

### **SKILLS & ABILITY**

#### **Essential**

- Ability to plan, prioritise and organise own work load and meet deadlines
- Ability to problem solve and manage conflict
- Ability to work as an effective team member
- Ability to have an element of flexibility and adaptability
- Ability to relate well and communicate clearly and respectfully with a diverse group of people
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Ability to adhere to Ashiana's policies and a commitment to the aims and principles of Ashiana Network
- Ability to monitor and report against project targets & communicate effectively with funders and stakeholders
- Ability to be analytical
- Ability to obtain and process information
- Ability to work competently with Microsoft Office and EXCEL packages
- Ability to form supportive, professional relationships with clients
- Ability to communicate effectively in English, both verbally and in writing
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Ability to work on own initiative
- Ability to learn new skills
- Ability to work as a member of the staff team and within a hierarchical structure.
- Ability to participate in and make use of supervision from the Senior Management Team

#### **Desirable**

- Experience of working with young women survivors of sexual abuse
- Some experience of working in the voluntary sector
- Some experience of fund-raising
- Fluency in at least one of the following languages: Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bengali, Turkish, Farsi

## **Awareness**

- An understanding of the issues effecting young people, particularly BME groups
- An understanding of the impact of discrimination on the lives of BME women and girls
- A commitment to equal opportunities in the provision of the Network's services
- Commitment and understanding of the aims and objectives of the Network
- Experience in planning, developing and delivering advocacy, advice and support services
- Experience of working in the voluntary or community sector
- Experience of multi-disciplinary work including child protection
- Experience of working with the BME women and girls
- Knowledge of child protection legislation
- An understanding of the concept of confidentiality in working at a refuge
- A commitment to and the promotion of equal opportunities in the provision of the Project's services
- An understanding of the aims and objectives of the Project and a commitment to Ashiana's core values

## **CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **Essential**

- The post requires occasional evening and weekend work