

JOB DESCRIPTION

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

BACKGROUND:

Ashiana started operating in 1989 and specialises in helping young women, aged 16 - 35 years, from South Asian, Middle Eastern & Iranian communities who are at risk of domestic violence and sexual violence.

OUR SERVICES:

Ashiana runs three refuges with a total of 21 bed-spaces; specifically for women aged 16-35 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. Within these refuges we designate a number of bedspaces for women with no recourse to public funds. We offer an advice and support service to women and girls 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.

PRIMARY TASK:

The post holder will be responsible alongside the Management Committee, Senior Management team and other workers for the effective running of the Network; in accordance with the Management Policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of South Asian, Middle Eastern and Iranian women who have been made homeless as a result of physical, sexual, emotional or mental abuse.

- To be responsible for Advocating and advising women and girls who are experiencing, or have experienced domestic violence but are not in refuge accommodation
- To lead on and advise the Advice team on complex high risk cases
- To be responsible and lead the volunteer programme at Ashiana to ensure that we have a number of volunteer to support the different services at Ashiana Network

- ❑ The Post holder will be the first point of contact in regards to high risk cases and support the Advice team in the absence of the Senior Management Team
- ❑ The post holder will be expected to be sensitive and aware of BAMER cultural and community needs in all aspects of their duties and responsibilities

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❑ To be responsible for managing the Advice Team alongside the Senior Management Team
- ❑ To be responsible for establishing and maintaining contacts with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ❑ To ensure that relevant organisations are aware of the provision offered by Ashiana, and to raise the profile of Ashiana's outreach services in the community by producing and distributing publicity materials
- ❑ To lead and be responsible for the management of the volunteer programme, including recruiting, inducting, training and managing all volunteers for Advice & Housing Services
- ❑ To advocate and support women through the criminal justice system and immigration systems
- ❑ To be responsible for attending and presenting high risk cases at the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. To be point of contact within the organisation for all MARAC cases. To lead and advise the organisation in relation to Waltham Forest MARAC
- ❑ To be the first point of contact in regards to high risk cases and advise staff within the organisation in the absence of Senior Management Team
- ❑ To raise domestic violence/abuse issues, particularly with regard to BAMER women and girls in relevant targeted boroughs across London as well as other areas of the UK

CASE WORK:

- ❑ To be responsible for co-ordinating work within advocacy and support on behalf of the Network
- ❑ To undertake specific direct face to face work with women and girls in the community
- ❑ To provide support, advice and advocacy services to primarily BAMER women and girls in relevant boroughs who are experiencing problems with their families, partners etc. but for whom safe housing is unnecessary, undesirable or inappropriate
- ❑ To work sensitively with vulnerable women and girls and act as an advocate for them, making others aware of their particular needs
- ❑ To attend relevant case conferences and meetings held by statutory agencies
- ❑ To keep accurate hard copy and computerised files, records and data pertaining to individuals and overall service
- ❑ To be aware of and responsible for being involved for bringing own training needs to the attention of the Housing/Advice Services Manager as part of supervision and personal development
- ❑ To maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to Ashiana Network and the Women and Girls we work with
- ❑ To ensure the active promotion of and implementation of Ashiana's Equality & Diversity Policy
- ❑ To work within the policies of Ashiana including Equal opportunities and Health and Safety

AGENCIES:

- ❑ To establish and maintain contact with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies and organisations inside and outside Waltham Forest
- ❑ To form a professional relationship with clients to enable them to develop their own self-awareness, confidence, responsibility and independence
- ❑ To deliver presentations to external agencies
- ❑ To support and where appropriate, accompany residents to the Housing Department, Department of Work and Pensions, Solicitors, and Courts

- ❑ To ensure that the necessary advice and support is available to clients on their housing, legal, financial and where appropriate, marital situation and be able to provide support to the Advice team and mentor new members of the Advice team
- ❑ To develop a team work approach in every aspect of the service and across the organisation

GENERAL DUTIES:

- ❑ To prepare regular written reports for the Management Committee as and when requested by the Director and Senior Management Team
- ❑ To set up and maintain information, record keeping and monitoring systems in line with agreed practices and procedures
- ❑ To attend staff meetings, supervision sessions and contribute to the effective management of the Network
- ❑ To maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to the Network and its users
- ❑ To attend training as and when required
- ❑ To observe Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety and other policies
- ❑ To carry out any other duties commensurate with the objectives of the post as requested by the Management Committee and Senior Management Team

Please note that this list is indicative of the key responsibilities of this role but is by no means exhaustive. Ashiana is an organisation responding to complex and challenging issues and a 'Can do' attitude and flexibility to take on other related tasks is essential. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

Employee's Name:

Signature of Employee:

Signature of Director:

Person Specification

POST: Senior Specialist Advice Worker

Education & Qualifications

- Minimum 5 GCSEs (A-C passes) or equivalent, including English and Maths **-(Essential)**

EXPERIENCE

Essential

- At least 5 years' experience of working within an environment providing Advice and Advocacy
- Two years experience of managing and supervising two or more staff and or volunteers
- A minimum of two years' experience of working with young people including work with BAMER women and girls
- Experience of advice and support work
- Extensive knowledge of the immigration system and NRPF including EEA nationals
- Experience of delivering presentations
- Experience of working with complex high risk domestic violence cases
- Experience of preparing monitoring reports for funders
- Knowledge of legislations relevant to violence against women and girls and in particular, harmful practices
- Knowledge of statutory social work legislation including Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004
- Understanding of public policy issues concerning provision for victims of domestic violence
- Knowledge of how local authorities and housing associations work
- Knowledge of welfare benefits
- Sound understanding of equal opportunities in practice

Desirable

- Experience of working with young South Asian women survivors of sexual abuse
- Experience of working in a women only Network
- Experience of fund-raising

SKILLS & ABILITY

Essential

- An ability to plan and develop own workload, work under pressure and motivate others to meet targets
- Good verbal and written skills, interpersonal skills, including the ability to negotiate at a variety of levels in a range of statutory and voluntary organisations
- An ability to lead and work as part of a small team
- An ability to take direction and also to work on own initiative
- An ability to speak at least 1 other language
- To be able to form quick and effective working relationships with clients, partner agencies and other professionals
- Ability to work on ones own initiative

KNOWLEDGE

Desirable

- Experience of working in a women only project or a multicultural setting
- An understanding of the issues effecting women, particularly BME women
- An understanding of the impact of discrimination on the lives of BME women

- 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 Ashiana's services
- An understanding of the aims and objectives of Ashiana and a commitment to its core values

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, if applicable
- 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

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- To attend regular supervision and appraisal meetings
- To keep up to date and to meet identified learning and development needs as appropriate, maintaining professional standards and remaining accredited at appropriate level

TEAM WORK & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- To attend and contribute to staff meetings
- To attend and actively participate in other meetings as required, and to take an active role in the planning and development of the Service
- To network and liaise with external agencies as agreed

CIRCUMSTANCES

Essential

- The post requires occasional evening and weekend work