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*CHAS has a vision of society where all members*

*of the community have a place they can call home*

**Job description**

Job title: Housing Advice Caseworker

Location: CHAS (Bristol) Housing Advice Service, The Assisi Centre, BS5 0RE

Accountable to: Partnership and Development Manager

Hours and leave: 21 hours per week (with potential to increase, subject to funding)  
 25 days + Bank Holidays (pro rata)

Benefits: Employer pension, Cycle to Work scheme, Employee Assistance

Programme

Salary: £24,500- £28,000 (pro rata) dependent on experience

Contract: Fixed term for 12 months (with the possibility of extension subject to

funding)

**About CHAS:** CHAS is a local housing and homelessness charity, based within the community. We provide advice, advocacy and support to anyone in housing need, with a focus on the most marginalised.

**Role Summary**: You will provide specialised housing advice and advocacy on a range of issues including landlord and tenant disputes, housing related benefits and rehousing. As well as providing legal advice, you will offer the support and encouragement needed to motivate and empower clients to resolve their own housing issues.

This role will have a particular focus on delivering a newly funded partnership project to promote better energy performance ratings in private sector tenancies. During this 12 month pilot the post holder will work closely with project partners to increase the knowledge of tenants’ rights and responsibilities through information sessions and casework.

**Context:** CHAS is going through a period of sustainable growth to meet the increasing need for homelessness and housing advice in Bristol. This is a new role within CHAS, funded in part by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). This partnership project will be delivered by CHAS, Shelter, Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and Bristol City Council (BCC)

**Personal Outlook:** The post-holder is required to be self-motivated with strong communication and organisation skills, able to work as part of a team and manage their own workload.

**We’re keen to have a staff team which is representative of the community we serve and also welcome applications from people with life experience of housing and homelessness issues to help us to shape and develop our service.**

**Responsibilities**

1. Provide a Housing Advice Service (telephone, email, appointments & home visits where necessary) on housing & homelessness matters, to individuals and agencies.
2. Triage telephone and email enquiries, assessing the nature of the query, urgency and most appropriate pathway.
3. Handle enquiries and carry a caseload of clients, providing information, advice, practical help, advocacy and appropriate onward referrals.
4. Work closely with partner agencies; referring clients for specialist advice and joint-working to progress cases.
5. Work with the Partnership and Development Manager and project partners to shape and deliver the Energy Performance Certificate project.
6. Offer a client-centred, holistic approach to promote the best outcome for the client.
7. Maintain records of enquiries and casework, using case monitoring software and database.
8. Undertake training to maintain up-to-date knowledge of legal changes and practice, improve personal skills and knowledge required for the role.
9. Work alongside volunteers and trustees of the charity.
10. Engage with and contribute to the development of the advice service as the charity grows.
11. To work within CHAS (Bristol) policies and procedures, including equal opportunities, health and safety and confidentiality.

**Person Specification**

While we aim to recruit someone with detailed knowledge of housing rights and law, if you meet the other essential criteria training would be available for the right candidate.

**C**- Certificate  **A** – Application **I-** Interview **T-** Test

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Essential | Desirable | Measured |
| Education | * Education to degree level, or equivalent relevant qualification, or substantial training and experience in a relevant role | X |  | A/C |
| * Evidence of continuing professional development and training | X |  | A/C |
| Experience | * Recent experience of at least 2 years providing advice, support and casework on housing or related issues | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Experience of working with vulnerable people | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Proven experience of working under pressure and achieving individual targets | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Experience of delivering presentations and/or training workshops to groups |  | X | A/I |
|  | * Experience of providing advice at a specialist level (e.g. advocacy at court or tribunal) |  | X | A/I |
|  | * Experience of training and/or supporting volunteers |  | X | A |
|  | * Recent experience of providing advice, support and casework in debt, financial capability and/or welfare benefits |  | X | A/I |
| Knowledge/ Understanding | * Knowledge and understanding of homelessness and housing issues | X |  | A/I/ T |
|  | * Up to date knowledge of housing legislation and recent case law | X |  | A/I/ T |
|  | * Understanding of the advice and voluntary sector | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Knowledge of complex legal issues related to housing and homelessness, welfare benefits or financial capability and debt issues |  | X | A |
| Skills & Abilities | * Ability to assess, identify and prioritise client problems, identify and present potential solutions and develop appropriate casework plans and strategies. | X |  | A/I/ T |
|  | * Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to liaise effectively and positively with a wide range of individuals and organisations | X |  | A/I/T |
|  | * Proficient in computer skills e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Experience of using electronic case management systems | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Ability to maintain accurate case and statistical records, maintaining security and confidentiality at all times | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Attention to detail | X |  | A/I |
| Personal Qualities | * Able to work both as part of a team and on own initiative, prioritising and managing own workload and time to meet targets and deadlines | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Enthusiastic, flexible and confident approach to work | X |  | A/I |
|  | * Commitment to the aims of CHAS (Bristol) | X |  | A/I |