



Job Description and Person Specification

Role: Senior Caseworker

Reporting To: Service Manager.

Hours: 24 hours per week until 31 March 2024, with the option to increase those hours from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Salary: £30,000.00 - £32,000.00 pro rata.

Start Date: 1 July 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Contract Type: Fixed term until 31 March 2025.

This post is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

About Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

Merton CIL is a user-led Deaf and Disabled people's organisation based in the London Borough of Merton. We are run and controlled by and for Deaf and Disabled people. We support Deaf and Disabled people across the full spectrum of impairment including physical and sensory impairments, long term health conditions, learning difficulties and neurodiversity.

We work hard to address the marginalisation of Deaf and Disabled people and make a real difference in Merton and the wider community. We want a society where Deaf and Disabled people achieve full equality and inclusion. We work within the social model of disability and to an independence charter, co-designed with Deaf and Disabled people to ensure we can influence key issues affecting our lives in many ways.

We provide a holistic service, with all work feeding into our three aims:

1. Promoting Independence and Inclusion.
2. Identifying and Challenging Discrimination.
3. Achieving Change Locally.

You can find out more about Merton CIL by watching this short film:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecTQIfU4Doo>

About the Information & Advice service

We provide free information and advice to Deaf and Disabled people living in Merton in the following areas: welfare benefits, social care, concessionary travel, grant applications, health and housing. Our work is accredited by the Advice Quality Standard (AQS).

About the role

The post-holder will work across all areas and build core skills in quality assurance, training, coaching and developing others.

We will support the post-holder through on-the-job coaching, development, supervision and training opportunities, and a range of employee benefits.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

1. To provide Deaf and Disabled People in Merton with accurate information, advice, guidance and representation in their own homes and other settings, including welfare benefit tribunals.
2. To carry an advice caseload.
3. To work across a range of advice topics including:- welfare benefits, social care, concessionary travel, grant applications, health and housing.
4. To prioritise and manage cases in line with quality standards.
5. To keep accurate and detailed records of enquiries received and advice and/or support given.
6. To research and to keep informed of new legislation and changes to existing law and policy on issues affecting disabled people.
7. To be responsible for the implementation of monitoring and evaluation procedures and to support applications for funding.
8. To support quality assurance by undertaking Supervisor File Reviews, by reviewing and revising key policies and procedures and by contributing to annual service reviews (e.g., complaints, referrals and signposting).
9. To support the Service Manager in the training and development of Trainee Caseworkers.
10. To develop and lead a small team of IAG volunteers (this is on hold at the current time, but opportunities for doing this may arise after April 2024).

11. To deputise for the Service Manager where requested.
12. To identify social policy issues and undertake social policy work as required, working alongside the Policy and Strategy Manager.
13. To prepare for, attend and contribute to supervision sessions.
14. To raise and follow up safeguarding concerns under the supervision of the Service Manager.
15. Where appropriate, to refer people to other services in line with our policies, including other Merton CIL services.
16. To keep up to date on what is offered by other agencies and promote collaborative working relationships with associated agencies within the Borough.
17. To ensure appropriate public promotion of the service and to contribute to the design and updating of publicity materials for the service.
18. To carry out the duties of the post within an equal opportunities framework and adhere to all Merton CIL's policies and guidelines including our Values and Independence Charter.
19. To undertake such duties as from time to time may reasonably be required.
20. This job description reflects the requirements of the post at the time of writing. The needs and circumstances may change over time and therefore the Job Description may need to be reviewed in the light of any such changes which may occur.

Person Specification

Essential

1. A Deaf or Disabled person or a person living with a long-term health condition.
2. Two or more years' experience of giving quality assured advice to the public on a one-to-one basis in at least two of the following three areas: Welfare Benefits, Community Care, Housing.
3. Excellent research and analytical skills.
4. Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to explain and summarise complex rules and information in simple terms.
5. Effective advocacy and negotiating skills.
6. Ability to enable people to resolve their problems.
7. Experience of effectively managing work and dealing with situations which can be of a challenging or distressing nature.
8. Ability to be flexible and responsive to change.

9. Willingness to learn and develop.
10. Ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
11. Knowledge and experience of quality assurance systems and how to implement them (e.g., Supervisor File Reviews).
12. Experience and/or knowledge of how to give critical feedback.
13. Ability to handle with discretion information which may be confidential or sensitive.
14. Strong IT skills (including Word, Excel, Outlook) and ability to use electronic monitoring to keep records of casework.
15. Committed to working to the Social Model of Disability.
16. Must have a strong personal commitment to supporting people across the spectrum of disability or health issues and supporting people from a variety of ethnic and social groups.

Desirable

- Experience of delivering training.
- Experience of contributing to Policy and Procedure reviews.
- Experience of working in outreach locations and/or providing a home-visiting service.
- Experience of a user controlled and led organisation.
- An understanding of the Merton voluntary sector and local authority structures.

Merton CIL is committed to equality, diversity and reflecting the communities we serve. We particularly welcome applications from Deaf or Disabled people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

If you require additional support completing this application due to an access need, please get in touch on 0203 397 3119.

Please apply with:

- A completed application form
- A completed monitoring form

to info@mertoncil.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 5.00pm on Monday 12 June

Candidates invited to interview will be informed by 5.00pm on Friday 16 June

Planned interview date: week commencing Monday 19 June

Start date: 1 July 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.