

# Job Description and Person Specification

## Welfare Benefits Advisor

A Lambeth to be proud of



**Job Title: Welfare Benefits Advisor- Every Pound Counts**

**Department: Adult Social Care**

**Grade: SO2**

**Reports to: Welfare Benefit Supervisor or Welfare Benefit Team Manager**

**Responsible for: N/A**

## **Job Purpose**

- Promote positive change by helping vulnerable residents access their correct welfare benefit entitlements.
- Carry out assessment of advice needs and deliver effective specialist benefit advice casework.
- Make professional judgements in the context of relevant legal and policy frameworks to support vulnerable residents to maximise benefit income.

### About the Service

Every Pound Counts is Lambeth Council's Welfare Rights Advice Service for vulnerable residents. The service aims to reduce income inequality by maximising benefits, providing benefits advice to enhance the quality of life of residents who have serious long term health conditions or disabilities.

## **Responsibilities**

In the role you will:

- Advise on entitlement to the full range of benefit and tax credits, including claim processes, backdating, appeal rights and discretionary payments.
- Support front line health and social care staff to resolve their clients' queries.
- To provide casework support to ensure benefit claims are awarded correctly including assisting with appeals.
- To maintain detailed case notes and to ensure that further work is actioned when due and appropriate follow up actions taken (for example, co-ordinating referrals to partner organisations for support with appeals)
- Use data from Council Systems as well as from the client to make informed decisions about benefits needing maximised.
- Work with people with care and support needs in ways that help them make informed decisions.
- Provide information about how maximising benefits may affect Fairer Charging assessments.

## Lambeth b-Plain

- Recognise and act on safeguarding concerns, whilst carrying out effective work in more complex cases, for example those where the person with care and support needs avoids, withdraws from, or refuses contact or assistance , or where there is mounting concerns or escalating risk
- Participate in a duty rota for the assessing referrals and managing telephone duty.
- Have communication with, and negotiations with, appropriate third parties, such as the DWP, the Tribunals Service, and other statutory bodies, housing associations, private landlords and tribunals as appropriate.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of relevant legislation, guidance and case law.
- Effectively support people to access other welfare law services.
- Build effective working relationships with the professionals who send referrals and other stakeholders across networks, communities, and agencies.
- Contribute to the investigation and resolution of complaints, Member's Enquiries or Local Government Ombudsman enquiries, and play a part as needed in identifying and acting on the lessons learned from these.
- Work flexibly in undertaking the duties and responsibilities of this job, and participate as required in groups and task teams, some of which may involve working across disciplines, or with colleagues from across the Council and partner organisations.
- Take responsibility appropriate to the post for tackling inequality, and for promoting diversity and inclusion.
- Carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post with full regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and any other council policies and good practice and guidelines, and for all work to be carried out in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post with full regard to other relevant council policies and procedures, good practice, and guidelines, and adhere to the code of conduct.
- Undertake other duties within the post's scope of responsibilities that might be reasonably requested from time to time.

## SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

- This post requires the post holder to be flexible in terms of place of work as the service will be delivered from multiple locations including in council offices, people's homes, and various outreach locations in the community.
- This post is subject to a DBS check at the enhanced level.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<p>It is essential that in you can meet the following requirements for the role and be able to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in each of the short-listing criteria marked Application (A).</p> <p>You should expect that all areas listed below will be assessed as part of the interview and assessment process should you be shortlisted.</p> <p>If you are applying under the Disability Confident scheme, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in the areas marked with “Ticks” (✓) on the person specification when you complete the application form.</p>			<b>Shortlisting Criteria</b>
<b><i>For link/career graded post, please mark knowledge, experience, and behaviours clearly for each grade.</i></b>			
<b>Key Knowledge</b>	K1	Knowledge of the Welfare Benefits system, including legacy benefits and Universal Credit. Understanding of the impact of Welfare Reform.	✓A
	K2	Knowledge of support services for clients with significant health problems and disabilities, alongside an understanding of the links between income poverty and ill health	✓A
	K3	Knowledge of using IT products including Office 365 and online case management systems.	✓A
	K4	Broad knowledge of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018, the Care Act 2014, the Children’s Act 1989.	
	K5	Knowledge of how local authorities are structured and their responsibilities, particularly in the areas of Housing and Council Tax Benefits, Housing and Social Services provision for adults.	
<b>Relevant Experience</b>	E1	Experience of providing specialist welfare rights advice.	✓A
	E2	Experience of lodging appeals and representing claimants at tribunal.	
	E3	Experience of managing a complex case load.	✓A
	E4	Experience of recording advice on digital case management recording systems. Technical skills and ability to create and upload word documents.	

	E5	Experience of providing effective dispute resolution to resolve complaints about poor administration of benefits, including; challenging decisions, preparing written submissions for appeal tribunals.	A
	E6	Experience of working with vulnerable people and with a range of accessibility needs.	A
	E7	Experience of building key relationships with internal and external partners.	

Core Values and Behaviours	<b>Equity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to the views of others and ask for their opinions making sure that everyone in my team inputs into the things that matter.</li> <li>• Ensure fairness and justice is at the heart of my decision making and support to my team and others.</li> <li>• Take time to build trust, building the respect of our stakeholders and ensuring as a team we take accountability for doing what we agree to do.</li> <li>• Develop others and ensure we work as <b>one team for Lambeth</b>, encouraging everyone to play their part</li> <li>• Take positive action to ensure <b>everyone</b> in my team has opportunities to <b>learn and grow</b> at work</li> <li>• Encourage everyone to <b>be themselves</b> at work and value who they are</li> <li>• I am inclusive and actively <b>celebrate diversity</b>, recognising everyone in my team as individuals.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Kindness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat each member of my team with <b>respect and dignity</b> just as I would want for myself.</li> <li>• <b>Encourage</b> each member of my team to do their very best work and am available to them to provide support and guidance.</li> <li>• Personalise my support to each team members and look out for them, lending a hand wherever I can</li> <li>• Encourage everyone to try and learn from mistakes and use integrity to take action with my team to put things right together</li> <li>• Work with empathy seeking to understand each and every member of team, their unique perspective and circumstances and ensure everyone is heard</li> <li>• Take the time to communicate, being honest, open and genuine and taking the time to get to know team members as individuals.</li> <li>• Show compassion and patience recognising that everyone in the team has unique experience and celebrating the great work they do for Lambeth.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look after the health and wellbeing of my team members and encourage open and regular discussions about the issues that impact on them, working together to find solutions.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Accountability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I encourage and support my team to do the right thing even when it's tough and we communicate our decisions in a timely way</li> <li>• I ensure my team and employees take individual and collective accountability for performance and delivery, making sure that they have clear plans and performance objectives.</li> <li>• I ensure my team plan ahead, getting the basics right and take swift action when problems arise</li> <li>• I encourage my team to be risk aware and ensuring that our decisions and actions are informed and understood and communicated to others.</li> <li>• I provide regular, timely and constructive feedback to my team members on their performance and behaviours and act quickly when performance is not on track.</li> <li>• I share my learning, knowledge and skills with others thorough coaching and mentoring and encourage others to do the same.</li> <li>• I ensure that my team and I put residents, communities, customers and their needs at the centre of everything we do.</li> <li>• I encourage my team to learn and grow and ask questions to find the information they need to do their jobs</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Ambition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am proud of our borough and my team and encourage everyone in the team to aim for the highest possible standards of excellence in everything we do.</li> <li>• Encourage my team to be flexible and try new things when it's appropriate to do so and tell me what could be improved.</li> <li>• Promote a one team for Lambeth approach reaching out to our stakeholders to face our challenges together</li> <li>• Encourage and support my team to be courageous for our residents and communities and stop at nothing to ensure they have the best possible outcomes</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I make time for the team to Innovate and look for creative ways to do things better, being curious about possibilities.</li> <li>• Positively challenge and encourage the team to collaborate and look for solutions together across service and team boundaries.</li> <li>• Make time for my team to grow and develop taking advantage of opportunities to learn from each other and others. We plan our learning and career growth.</li> </ul>	
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