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**Homeless Prevention Officer (specialist)**

**Reports to: Senior Homeless Prevention Officer**

**Working environment: Hybrid – office and home working to meet business needs**

**Working hours: Full time, 37 hours over a 5-day week**

**Contract type: Fixed term**

**Purpose of role**

Providing proactive support and advice to individuals and families at risk of homelessness; providing targeted support and assistance to refugees at risk of homelessness. The role involves preventing homelessness through early intervention, identifying housing solutions, and working with external agencies to ensure individuals receive the necessary support to sustain their accommodation. The officer will also work in partnership with other agencies to ensure that refugees have access to appropriate housing, support services, and resources to help them achieve long-term stability.

**Key result areas:**

* Persons at risk of homelessness are supported to maintain existing accommodation or access alternative suitable accommodation
* Ensuring persons from abroad are provided with appropriate housing related support and assistance

**Main responsibilities**

**Homeless Prevention:**

* Identify refugees who are at risk of homelessness and offer tailored support to prevent their homelessness.
* Develop and implement prevention strategies in partnership with refugees, housing providers, and relevant support services.
* Provide advice and guidance on tenancy rights, welfare benefits, housing options, and access to community services.

**Case Management:**

* Manage a caseload of individuals and families at risk of homelessness, providing tailored advice, support, and intervention to prevent eviction and homelessness.
* Assess individuals' needs through detailed interviews and home visits where necessary.
* Develop and implement personalised homelessness prevention plans.

**Support and Advocacy:**

* Offer advocacy and representation to refugees who face challenges in accessing housing or support services.
* Assist refugees in applying for housing, grants, and welfare benefits as needed.
* Provide emotional and practical support to refugees as they navigate housing options and settlement processes.

**Collaboration and Referral:**

* Work in collaboration with local authorities, housing associations, and third-sector organisations to identify available housing options and resources.
* Refer refugees to specialist support services (e.g., legal advice, mental health support, welfare services) where necessary.
* Promote integration by helping refugees access language classes, employment opportunities, and community networks.

**Advice and Guidance:**

* Provide clients with information regarding housing options, tenancy rights, and responsibilities.
* Advise on benefits entitlement and how to apply for financial support or crisis funding.
* Offer guidance on budgeting, debt management, and maintaining tenancies.

**Referral and Partnership Working:**

* Collaborate with social services, mental health teams, probation services, and other agencies to address underlying causes of homelessness.
* Make referrals to relevant services for further support, such as domestic violence support, mental health services, addiction treatment, and financial advice.
* Maintain strong relationships with landlords, housing associations, and private sector providers to facilitate successful outcomes for clients.

**Housing Solutions:**

* Identify suitable temporary and permanent accommodation options for individuals facing homelessness.
* Liaise with private landlords, social housing providers, and other housing agencies to secure alternative housing options.
* Assist clients with the application process for social or affordable housing.

**Crisis Management:**

* Respond to emergency housing situations and assist in arranging temporary accommodation where required.
* Provide advocacy and support during crisis situations, including negotiating with landlords and housing providers.

**Record Keeping and Reporting:**

* Maintain accurate and up-to-date case files, recording all client interactions, actions, and decisions.
* Complete required paperwork and reports to comply with legal and procedural requirements.
* Contribute to monitoring and reporting on homelessness prevention outcomes to senior managers and elected Members.

**Training and Development:**

* Stay informed about relevant policies, legislation, and best practices related to homelessness, refugees, and housing law.
* Participate in relevant training and professional development opportunities to improve service delivery

**The above may change subject to consultation with the post holder.**

**This job description sets out the duties and responsibilities of the job at the time when it was drawn up. Such duties and responsibilities may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot in themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the job.**

**Person Specification**

1. **Experience/ Knowledge**

**Essential**

* 1. Experience working in a customer-facing role, particularly within housing, social services, or a related field
  2. Knowledge of housing law, homelessness legislation, and welfare benefits.
  3. Experience in case management or working with vulnerable individuals or families

**Desirable**

* 1. Experience of working in a multi-agency setting
  2. Knowledge of local housing providers and support services

1. **Qualifications & Skills**

**Essential**

* 1. Strong communication skills, with the ability to build rapport with clients from diverse backgrounds and communicate complex information clearly.
  2. Excellent problem-solving skills and the ability to think creatively to find housing solutions.
  3. Ability to work under pressure and manage a caseload effectively.
  4. Strong organisational skills and attention to detail.
  5. Ability to maintain professional boundaries while dealing with sensitive and challenging situations.
  6. Proficiency in using IT systems and case management software

**Desirable**

* 1. A relevant qualification in housing or a related field
  2. Ability to use data analysis and reporting tools for outcome measurement

1. **Personal Qualities and Attributes**
   1. Empathetic, compassionate, and non-judgmental approach to working with individuals in crisis.
   2. Motivated by a commitment to social justice and preventing homelessness.
   3. Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
   4. Strong interpersonal skills and a collaborative approach to working with colleagues and external partners.
   5. Resilient and adaptable, with the ability to manage challenging situations and emotional stress.
   6. Creative and proactive approach to problem-solving

The following criteria will be tested at interview stage and does not need to be evidenced in an application form, CV or covering letter

1. **Agreed Behaviours Framework**
   1. Putting Great Yarmouth first
   2. Effective and open communication
   3. Respecting others
   4. Working together
   5. Embracing change
   6. Taking personal responsibility
2. **Additional requirements**
   1. Basic DBS Check