

Job Description: Housing IDVA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor)

Job Title:	Housing IDVA
Responsible to:	Community and Colocations Manager
Contract:	Permanent
Grade/Salary:	£26,000 - £30,500 per annum based on experience
Pension:	Workplace pension
Working hours:	35 hours per week with some on-call cover required
Work location:	Based at the ADVANCE Hammersmith office and co-located at Westminster Housing Solutions.

*This post is open to **female applicants only** as this is deemed a genuine occupational requirement under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010.*

Advance is committed to equality and diversity and strongly encourages applications from women with disabilities, from BME backgrounds and the LBT community, as these groups are currently under-represented in our organisation.

Job Summary:

Advance delivers nationally accredited, quality marked services in Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea. We work within a coordinated partnership response to violence against women and girls in these three boroughs as part of the Angelou Partnership, within the partnership Advance provides independent domestic violence advocacy and support for women, children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. Advance also have a Community & Co-located Project where Independent Domestic Violence Advocates work alongside partnership agencies to provide onsite Domestic Abuse within Children's Social Care, Housing, at the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court and in the Community Safety Unit with the Police.

The Housing IDVA will work within a dynamic, fast paced, crisis intervention, advocacy and support service to ensure the voice of survivors informs every stage of the process specialising in working with clients for whom housing, and risk of tenancy breakdown is a factor. They will work within the team to make proactive contact and provide high quality advocacy and support based upon a client led needs and risk assessment to women from age 13, focusing on working with those aged 18 and over who access the domestic abuse service. They will advise women on criminal justice and civil remedies and related matters, support women to attend court where necessary, and coordinate the provision of multi-agency support. Part of the role will be to establish positive, proactive and innovative working relationships with housing services and partner agencies within the Angelou Partnership. The post holder will work in the Tri Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea under the guidance of the Team Manager. The post holder will hold a caseload of survivors and will also be required to work as part of Advance's duty team on a rota basis which will involve completing intake assessments and providing crisis intervention support.

The post holder will have an excellent understanding of domestic violence and its effects on women and children and of best practice within the domestic abuse and Housing sectors. As an experienced domestic violence advocate who has worked with complex and multiple needs, the post holder will be skilled in risk management and safety planning, remaining calm in a crisis and in handling sensitive information on a daily basis. Experience of direct work with female survivors of domestic violence, of supporting women with housing needs, and of working within safeguarding procedures

is essential for this post, as is the need to adopt and promote a strong partnership approach to service provision.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Ensure effective access to the service for women and girls across the Angelou Partnerships services and encourage their engagement with the service, through multi agency working and service flexibility.
2. Work with housing service providers and the local council to introduce the service and encourage practitioners to identify domestic violence, respond appropriately and refer to the service. This will include being co-located within housing services four days a week and offering briefings and information to upskill housing workers and improve their response to domestic abuse.
3. Hold a caseload and work within the team to conduct comprehensive assessments of needs and risk for women experiencing domestic violence, carry out short- and longer-term risk management, safety planning and support; and identify and refer to services appropriate to their needs, including attendance at specialist/dedicated courts and MARAC as required.
4. Develop and deliver support plans that include delivery of high-quality face to face or telephone crisis intervention, information, advocacy and support, in respect to criminal and civil remedies, housing, health, welfare rights, children's legislation and other appropriate interventions.
5. Advise women of their rights and options for seeking help and support from other agencies, making referrals and co-ordinating the provision of multi-agency support where necessary, and proactively advocate ensuring barriers to accessing support and protection are minimised.
6. Proactively assess the needs and safety of any children that women using the service may have, ensure that any risks/needs identified are addressed directly with the woman, and take appropriate action to safeguard them.
7. Proactively assess the needs and safety of women at risk giving due regard to Adult at Risk policies and procedures.
8. Participate in multi-agency conferences in respect of children and adults at risk as required, providing reports and undertaking actions as necessary.
9. If a client is involved in the criminal justice system as a witness, provide them with information, advocacy and support as cases progress through the criminal justice system, supporting them to apply for special measures and to give impact statements, and maximise their safety to help them give best evidence, accompanying women to court where necessary

10. Work with the Director, Team Manager and Data Insights Analyst to ensure all monitoring and evaluation for the project is accurate and fully maintained, and keep managers informed of any issues and successes.
11. Ensure that agreed case recording and monitoring systems are kept up to date and secure, and write internal and external reports where required, including for safeguarding conferences, team meetings, managers and others.
12. Participate in multi-agency working and focus groups when requested to do so, and follow through on agreed appropriate actions that arise from these.
13. Work effectively as a member of the Advance Domestic Violence team and in close collaboration with Angelou Partner services, Minerva keyworkers and substance misuse teams.
14. Provide a 24 hour service to survivors, in collaboration with team members as part of a rota system.
15. Work in partnership with housing staff and provide institutional advocacy to maximise positive outcomes and use the appropriate reporting mechanisms to highlight persistent or recurring issues that arise.

General duties:

16. At all times protect the safety and security of the Advance, service users, staff, volunteers and buildings, and the confidentiality of records and other information in line with general data protection requirements.
17. Proactively assess the needs and safety of children and women to ensure that any risks/needs identified are addressed, having full regard to Advance's Safeguarding Children's policy and Safeguarding Adults at Risk policy and complying with the Local Safeguarding Children and Adults requirements.
18. Be responsible for personal learning development and keep up to date on research, relevant legislation, policy and practice, and other literature relevant to the project.
19. Participate in supervision, training and meetings as required and work as a member of the team to ensure effective delivery of service and individual work plans.
20. Ensure the effective implementation of Advance's Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity and other policies and procedures and uphold the core values of Advance.
21. Uphold the right of women, children and young people, advocating vigorously for them while offering protective strategies, and appropriate safe services.
22. Work across teams and undertake such other duties, appropriate to the grade and character of the work, as may reasonable be expected.

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time when it was drawn up and will be reviewed from time to time. Duties 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 of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

Housing IDVA Person Specification

A = Application Form I = Interview

KNOWLEDGE AND QUALIFICATIONS:

1.	A relevant qualification or training, for example in domestic violence, criminal justice, law, social work, substance misuse or related area.	A
2.	A thorough understanding of violence against women and girls with a particular focus on the dynamics of domestic violence (physical, emotional and sexual violence, so-called 'honour-based violence', forced marriage, stalking and harassment) and its impact on women, children, families and communities.	A/I
3.	An excellent understanding of the criminal justice system and relevant legislation with particular regard to legal and civil options, housing, benefits, matrimonial and children.	A/I
4.	Thorough knowledge of safeguarding practice, procedures and legislation.	A/I
5.	Specific knowledge and understanding of the housing system and options available	A/I

EXPERIENCE:

6.	Strong experience of supporting women who have experienced domestic violence, forced marriage or 'honour-based violence'.	A
7.	Experience of risk and needs assessment, safety and support planning, particularly with clients with complex/multiple needs.	A/I
8.	Experience of partnership working and of maintaining excellent working relationships with a range of stakeholders.	A/I
9.	Experience of working with housing agencies or in a housing setting.	A/I

SKILLS:

10.	Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate well with a wide range of people of all ages and backgrounds.	A/I
11.	Excellent risk assessment, support and advocacy skills and the ability to advocate successfully using evidence and professional experience.	A/I
12.	Ability to network, influence, problem solve and apply solution focused approaches to increase access and safety and facilitate positive outcomes for women and children.	A/I
13.	Ability to work well within a team and responsibly on your own initiative, and of maintaining professional boundaries with clients and partner agencies.	A/I
14.	Flexible, proactive approach and a good ability to prioritise work.	A/I
15.	Good crisis management skills and the ability to work effectively under pressure and to deadlines.	A/I
16.	Good data collection, monitoring and IT skills, including word processing and using databases and spreadsheets.	A/I

17.	Good report writing skills, including preparing reports for courts, case conference and information for Multi agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS).	A/I
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GENERAL:

18.	Ability to work co-operatively with colleagues, in statutory and non-statutory agencies;	A/I
19.	Clear boundaries and a willingness to accept line management and make effective use of supervision;	A/I
20.	A good understanding of the importance of confidentiality and anti-discriminatory practice; safe practice and health and safety procedures;	A/I
21.	A good understanding of cultural issues and equal opportunities;	A/I
22.	A firm commitment to women, children's and young people's rights and to work within Advance's framework and its core values;	A/I
23.	Willingness to carry out the policies and procedures of Advance, and to work to agreed guidelines and codes of conduct.	A/I

Please note that any offer of employment will be made subject to references and confirmation of the right to work in the UK and satisfactory enhanced DBS check

Updated February 2020