

Job Description

Job Title	Housing Solutions Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (Women's) Officer
Directorate	Neighbourhoods and Housing
Service Area	Housing Solutions
Grade	6
Competency Level	2
Salary	£34,314 - £38,626
Job Type	Hybrid
Location	Cunard Building
Disclosure and barring service (DBS)	Enhanced DBS
Job Evaluation Ref No	A9355

Job Purpose

To provide intensive case management support and investigative assessments to female prison leavers within the pre-release stage of their sentence to obtain a priority or non-priority need outcome at the earliest opportunity.

To take a pro-active gender-specific, holistic and multi-agency approach to support prison leavers to access the correct accommodation pathways to meet their needs and achieve the best possible outcomes.

This role is not a typical Housing Options position and will require the post holder to work within the secure estate and women's centre, build relationships and networks within the criminal justice sector to ensure that the Housing needs of pre-release inmates are explored at the first available opportunity and thorough assessments and plans that meet the needs of individuals are put in place.

Directly Responsible For:

Not applicable

Directly Responsible To:

Housing Solutions Complex Case Team Leader

Main Areas of Responsibility:

- To have the ability to understand and interpret housing legislation to make effective and informed decisions on a case-by-case basis
- To conduct curious and empathic initial assessments and ongoing reviews of clients' options and opportunities by creating Personal Housing Plans appropriate to the needs of the client and identifying vulnerabilities efficiently and effectively
- To collaborate with other services within the prison to evidence prisoner vulnerabilities i.e. Healthcare, Mental Health, Resettlement Team, DARS, OMU
- To work with other services, in particular probation, prison and women's services, to identify at-risk households and target interventions giving onward

support based on need and completing referrals to relevant services when required

- To engage vulnerable and complex female clients and manage their expectations in a compassionate way taking a gender specific approach to homelessness, considering factors that have impacted their lives, child removal, sex work, domestic abuse, exploitation etc
- To have an awareness of risk and use probation risk assessments to ensure any accommodation placements are appropriate and safe for the client, staff and the public
- To understand safeguarding requirements and be able to follow prison safeguarding procedures if necessary i.e. opening an ACCT
- To prevent homelessness through negotiation and liaison with landlords / housing providers / housing benefit departments / DWP
- Engage with private rented sector and social landlords to prevent evictions where possible, and support tenants to take legal actions where they are threatened with illegal harassment or illegal eviction
- To provide effective short-term interventions and case work services for clients to address their housing issues by either preventing homelessness; improving their housing situation, or to access and sustain a range of housing options; which also includes addressing wider support needs through sign posting or referrals
- To prevent homelessness by maximising clients' income to enable them to afford rental payments, taking advantage of a priority access to Welfare Rights to help maximise money and benefit advice on release from custody.
- Work with social housing landlords to support positive move-on and negotiate arrangements to improve access to social housing for homeless households in the CJS who might otherwise be denied access.
- Deliver protective, supportive and needs led plans and review in line with case management standards

- To ensure that residents take advantage of a priority access to Welfare Rights to help maximise money and debt advice on release from custody
- To assist clients to register for Property Pool Plus, if suitable, to help access social housing
- To work collaboratively with Prison and Probation staff to ensure the right accommodation pathway is selected for each individual
- To be able to work flexibly and responsively, recognising the tight timescales within the Criminal Justice System are not movable and prioritising and managing workloads accordingly
- To attend internal and external meetings including, Team Meetings, Prison Release Meetings and Probation meetings, give updates and work collaboratively with agencies involved in these meetings to ensure that the best outcome possible is achieved
- The post is customer facing therefore you must have the ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English.
- To ensure that clients' feedback is recorded and where appropriate, acted upon, including supporting clients seeking to make a complaint through the formal complaints process and helping clients see the progress they are making
- Use of IT systems to record client casework, including using the Mainstay IT system and Abritas IT system as well as any additional prison systems e.g., PNomis. Ensuring up to date, good quality monitoring information and contribution to writing reports
- Maintain accurate records of all assessments, plans, actions, reviews, court reports, decisions, learning portfolios and outcomes using the Councils systems
- Actively contribute to building a collaborative, inclusive, and professional team culture

Supervision and Management Responsibility:

- No supervision or line manager responsibility

Budget and Financial Responsibility:

- Being fully accountable for managing the council's resources well and complying with statutory requirements. This includes managing time, avoiding unnecessary waste, reuse and recycle resources to reduce personal impact

Social Value Responsibility:

- Drive for social value through all activities, ensuring wider social, economic and environmental benefits for the council, residents and communities

Physical Demands of the Job:

- This post is a combination of office work and field work. It will involve sitting for long periods of time and a requirement to travel to meet service needs

Corporate Responsibility:

- Contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan and Housing strategies
- Delivering and promoting excellent customer service, externally and internally
- Commitment to customer excellence by dealing with customer feedback, including complaints, and learning from feedback in the drive for continuous improvement
- Making the council a great place to work, living the council's values, actively engaging in regular communications including team meetings, undertaking training as required and being responsible for managing own performance

- Develop the City Council's commitment to equal opportunities and to promote non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of work undertaken
- To ensure that all work functions are undertaken in accordance with health and safety legislation, codes of practice and the City Council's safety plan

Competency Framework:

We operate a competency framework, a set of core behaviours which define how we are expected to approach our work, how we perform in certain situations and how we treat each other. Each competency details the standards of behaviours and skills required by all staff and this in turn supports delivery of our aim and our council plans linking them together with our values.

The post holder will be required to demonstrate the ability to perform at the following competency level **2**.

This job description is not intended to be either prescriptive or exhaustive. It is issued as a framework to outline the main areas of responsibility. You will be expected to carry out any other duties that may reasonably be required in line with your main duties and changing priorities of the organisation.

Person Specification

Assessment methods used: I = Interview, P = Presentation, A = Application, E = Exercise, T = Test, AC = Assessment Centre

Qualification and training

Essential

- 5 GCSE's (or equivalent) grades A-C / 9-4, or relevant experience around housing advice, homeless prevention or homeless assessment (A)

Experience

Essential

- Experience of working with vulnerable people in multi-agency settings (A/I)
- Experience of managing a caseload and working with complex clients (A/I)

Desirable

- Criminal Justice Qualification or relevant experience
- Experience of identifying risk levels, vulnerability and needs
- Experience in general administration
- Experience of Criminal Justice System and relevant pathways

Skills/Abilities

Essential

- Knowledge and understanding of the current Homelessness Legislation (A/I)
- Knowledge of the Criminal Justice System (A/I)
- Understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures (A/I)
- Knowledge of Trauma Informed practices and a person-centred approach (A/I)
- Ability to develop a good working relationship with colleagues and partners to deliver a co-ordinated response (A/I)
- Ability to demonstrate a high level of empathy across a range of clients, be non-judgemental and build trust (A/I)
- Good communication skills, written and verbal (A/I)
- Ability to work as part of a team and ability to work unsupervised, using own initiative (A/I)
- Ability to interpret housing and homelessness policies and procedures and apply them within situations (A/I)
- Computer literate with the ability to accurately record statements and findings (A/I)
- Ability to plan and manage conflicting priorities, manage deadlines and organise own workload (A/I)
- Ability to build relationships with external/internal agencies (A/I)
- Good interview skills, able to investigate in a sensitive manner (A/I)
- Ability to manage time and prioritise work to meet deadlines (A/I)
- Ability to organise own workload (A/I)
- Ability to make decisions as to when and how duties are to be carried out and respond independently to unanticipated problems and situations (A/I)

Desirable

- Able to negotiate and work assertively, yet in a sensitive manner, with those who are homeless and involved in the CJS to ensure they achieve realistic understanding of their situation

Commitment

Desirable

- An understanding of and a personal commitment to the Vision and Values of Liverpool City Council
- Commitment to continuous professional development and staying updated on legislative changes

Other

Essential

- Willingness to travel as needed and work from community/partner spaces (A)
- This post will require the successful applicant to complete Enhanced Level 1 Vetting to enable them to access the prison, successful vetting will be a requirement of the role (A)
- Full Driving Licence (A)

Desirable

- This Knowledge of information management and governance protocols including General Data Protection Principles (GDPR)