

BRANCAB

WELFARE BENEFITS CASEWORKER- DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Purpose

To assist clients with welfare benefit appeals. Where appropriate, assistance will be given to enable clients to represent themselves through conducting interviews with the client, helping them to prepare their case, helping them to gather supporting evidence, drafting a submission in support of the case and preparing them for their hearing. . Where the client is unable to represent themselves it may also extend to representation at tribunal.

To provide welfare benefits advice face to face, by telephone, email and webchat to maximise income including form filling where required, emergency drop ins and negotiation with third parties.

To enhance awareness and knowledge within BRANCAB and among frontline staff in other agencies of the welfare benefits system and how to access specialist support.

Duties

Advice Work

- Provide advice on matters relating to welfare benefits, local authority entitlements and grants to mitigate the financial impact on client circumstances.
- Act for client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning including negotiation with 3rd parties as appropriate.
- Provide advice through multi channels (telephone, email and webchat) in agreement with line manager when face to face may not be appropriate.
- Ensure income maximisation through the take up of appropriate welfare benefits and refer to other services within BRANCAB to provide a holistic package of support to other issues (e.g. debt, fuel poverty) that may be present.
- Help clients to prepare their case and present it to the appropriate statutory bodies as appropriate.
- Refer clients with other issues to partner agencies when appropriate.
- Conduct home/outreach visits as agreed by line manager.
- Provide welfare benefits support and assistance to other team members.
- Available to deal with walk-in benefits emergencies.
- Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation.
- Ensure that all work conforms to the bureau's systems and procedures including relevant Quality Standards.

Research and Campaigns

- Assist with research and campaigns work by creating evidence forms where an unfair policy or practice is identified and supporting research and campaigns work identified by the team or wider service
- Identify trends and recurrent issues that warrant social policy awareness and analysis.
- Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to bureau management.
- Alert staff of local and national developments.

Professional Development

- Keep abreast of legislation, case law, policies and procedure relating to welfare benefits and undertake appropriate training.
- Read relevant publications.
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings and training sessions as agreed with line manager.
- Prepare for and attend supervision sessions and regular team meetings.
- Assist with continuous service improvement and development.
- Enhance the knowledge and awareness of welfare benefits within BRANCAB and among frontline workers in partner agencies through communication, training and regular engagement.

Administration

- Use CA Casebook system for statistical recording and record keeping.
- Manage diary via appointments, key dates and referrals.
- Ensure that necessary paperwork is fully completed, signed and dated with relevant consents obtained.
- Ensure that GDPR and confidentiality principles are adhered to when managing and storing client information

General

- Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure effective delivery and development of the service.
- Demonstrate commitment to the aims, policies and values of BRANCAB.
- Demonstrate commitment to equal opportunities and health and safety.

Person specification

	Criteria	Essential	Desirable
1	Knowledge and Experience of Welfare Benefits Advice Work	✓	
2	Excellent communication and negotiation skills that can be expressed through written, face to face and telephone channels.	✓	
3	Proven ability to organise, prioritise and multi-task a varied workload with minimal supervision particularly when remote working or conducting outreach.	✓	
4	Understand the issues involved when interviewing clients.	✓	
5	Numerate to the level required in tasks allocated.	✓	
6	Detailed knowledge of using computerised systems.	✓	
7	Ability to be flexible within the working day to ensure emergencies are addressed.	✓	
8	Ordered approach to work and ability and willingness to follow procedures with attention to detail.	✓	
9	Strong IT skills and a commitment to promoting paperless systems wherever possible.	✓	
10	Flexibility and willingness to work as part of a team.	✓	
11	Good interpersonal skills with the ability to foster effective working relationships and deliver training sessions to groups of professionals.	✓	
12	Adaptable to change.	✓	
13	Understanding why confidentiality is important and applying it in the workplace	✓	
14	Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the service and its equal opportunities policies	✓	
15	Ability to travel across the County		✓

In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy we may require the successful candidate to be screened by the DBS. However, a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your being able to take up the job.