



JOB DESCRIPTION

CASEWORKER

(12 month contract, subject to extension)

Salary scale: £29,364 - £30,852 pa, pro rata
New employees normally start at bottom of the band

Responsible to: Casework and Advocacy Manager

Responsible for: Volunteers

Action for RefugeeAction for Refugees in Lewisham (AFRIL) is a small and dynamic local charity providing holistic services to asylum seekers, vulnerable migrants, and refugees in South East London and beyond. We support people to lift themselves out of poverty and rebuild their lives in the heart of our community. We provide both crisis support to meet immediate need, and longer-term, flexible programmes to tackle the underlying issues that lead to crisis. Our work is grounded in the values of professionalism, inclusivity, and solidarity. Our clients are at the heart of what we do and our approach is one of co-production and empowerment.

AFRIL delivers four core services:

- The Casework and Advocacy Service, providing AQS accredited advice and complex casework in housing, asylum support, community care, welfare benefits and related matters. We deliver a community arm of the legal PAP project with Deighton Pierce Glynn Solicitors and have an immigration representation project in partnership with Southwark Law Centre.
- Rainbow Club Supplementary School, improving educational attainment through weekly supplementary education in English and Maths, arts, music and sports activities to primary age refugee and migrant children.
- Helping Hands Food Bank - fortnightly food vouchers, fresh food, toiletries and essential household items. Small grants and destitution support.
- Allotment of Refuge - an integrated community of food growers improving health, wellbeing and climate resilience from a large plot on the Lewisham/Southwark border. Harvest goes into our Food Bank.

AFRIL also engages in local policy and influencing work to improve policies and services for our client group, and where appropriate litigation. We are a steering

group member of the Lewisham Migration Forum; Lewisham Refugee and Asylum Safeguarding Partnership; and work with the GLA and local authorities on their sanctuary work. We have a monthly Member's Forum that is led by our clients and acts as a place to build connections, gain knowledge and skills, and input into AFRIL's services and development.

For more information about our work see: <https://www.afril.org.uk/>

Job Title: Caseworker

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JOB PURPOSE

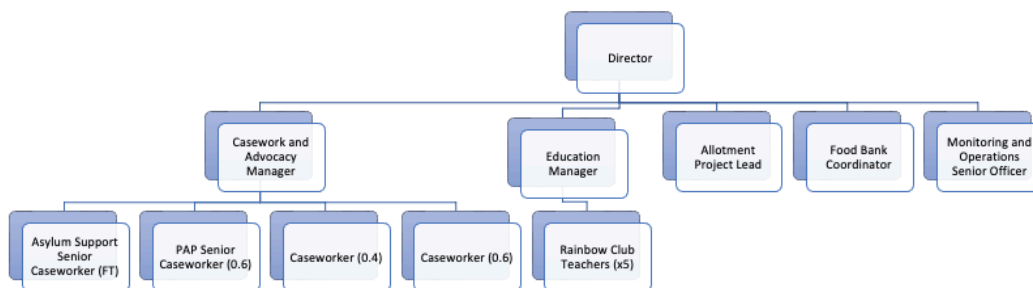
- **Casework:** To provide generalist and specialist advice, advocacy and complex casework to asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) in person and by telephone. Hold a caseload of clients. Supporting people to move away from poverty and isolation and achieve their optimum level of independence.
- **Outreach:** To deliver outreach advice in community settings together with other AFRIL caseworkers. Locations have included a family hub, local community centre and asylum hotels.
- **Monitoring:** Record all advice and casework actions taken on our CRM (AdvicePro), in line with best practice, data protection and AQS standards. Contribute to identifying casework and policy trends.
- **Partnerships:** Represent AFRIL professionally to external stakeholders and delivery partners, in particular Citizens Advice Lewisham, in a casework and referral context.
- **Team:** As part of our small but growing casework team, to respond to telephone and email enquiries offering initial advice and assessment, and take on urgent follow up casework for vulnerable clients when necessary. To supervise advice volunteers where applicable.

Context: AFRIL's Casework and Advocacy Service is a busy and effective service, providing critical advice and casework to some of the most vulnerable families and individuals in South East London and beyond. ASQ accredited (Casework Level) with legal support and file reviews from Southwark Law Centre, we deliver advice and casework from our offices in the Leemore Centre in central Lewisham, remotely, and at outreach locations including local asylum hotels and family hubs. We have a PAP project in partnership with Deighton Pierce Glynn Solicitors and draft pre action protocol letters in house. We provide substantial second tier support to other charities and community groups, and are a leading voice on asylum hotel

maximisation. We have an Immigration Project funded by Trust for London with an experienced immigration solicitor employed by Southwark Law Centre who represents AFRIL clients regardless of eligibility for legal aid.

As a Caseworker in this supportive, dynamic and effective team, we are looking for someone with good interpersonal and team working skills, together with a working knowledge of the policy and legislative framework that governs the entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds. Someone with a can do attitude, good boundaries and the motivation to learn and excel. We provide training and development support, supporting our staff to flourish. The post holder will work in partnership with external organisations in the course of their work, and in particular to take referrals from and provide second tier advice to Citizens Advice Lewisham with whom we have an holistic immigration project funded by the Local Authority. The postholder will attend an outreach advice surgery with their colleagues every few weeks, providing advice and follow up casework to asylum seekers in Lewisham. We are looking for someone with good legal knowledge and the ability to use it effectively in casework - willing to complete the DPG PAP project training. AFRIL is not currently registered with OISC - our immigration project is delivered by a solicitor from Southwark Law Centre. We are, however, looking for someone who would be willing to complete OISC training through AFRIL in the coming year.

AFRIL Structure



AFRIL is an equal opportunities employer. We are a diverse staff team and particularly encourage applications from BAME candidates, LGBTQ+ candidates and those with lived experience of asylum/irregular migration. We welcome applications from candidates of all ages and are committed to supporting qualified people to re-enter the workplace after periods of unemployment for example because of homemaking, redundancy, mental health or previous immigration restrictions. Our office is on the first floor of a community centre. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to support our staff to flourish.

The post holder must have an existing right to work in the UK.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Personal

- 1.1 Reflect the vision, mission and values of AFRIL in your work.
- 1.2 Work within the organisation's policies and procedures at all times.
- 1.3 Work collaboratively and constructively within a small team.

2. Service delivery

- 2.1 Welcome and introduce service users into the AFRIL's Casework and Advocacy Service explaining the charity's services, scope, policies and boundaries.
- 2.2 Manage one-off enquiries via self-referral, referral, and where applicable outreach sessions with initial advice and support.
- 2.3 Undertake generalist and specialist advice and advocacy in matters relating to asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants such as asylum support, housing, welfare rights, community care, access to healthcare etc.
- 2.4 Undertake holistic assessments of needs and co-produce work plans with clients.
- 2.5 Manage a small caseload and work with other staff members to hand over urgent actions where applicable.
- 2.6 Identify and refer complex cases or issues to appropriate specialist providers for example solicitors, and support client engagement where appropriate through ongoing support and co-working.
- 2.7 To keep clear and accurate records of advice, casework and outcomes using Advice Pro, AFRIL's electronic database system, ensuring confidentiality and data protection standards are complied with at all times.
- 2.8 To liaise and co-work professionally with external agencies and delivery partners.
- 2.9 To keep abreast of developments in legislation, case law and policy relevant to the work of the advice service and engage proactively in professional development.
- 2.10 To identify, respond and escalate safeguarding concerns as per AFRIL's Safeguarding Policy.

3. Contribution to organisational and service development

- 3.1 Identify and communicate trends in your work that may be indicative of systemic issues to the Casework and Advocacy Manager.
- 3.2 Contribute where appropriate to the monitoring and evaluation of the Advice Service.
- 3.3 Engage constructively in support and supervision sessions and file review processes. To participate in staff meetings, training and team development meetings as required.

3.4 Share responsibility for good risk management practices - identify and escalate health and safety and safeguarding risks as appropriate.

3.5 Provide cover for colleagues as required and assist in the induction and training of new staff and volunteers as appropriate.

3.6 Provide information or short reports about their work as required.

3.6 Undertake all duties in accordance with relevant legislation and AFRIL's policies, with particular reference to the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy, GDPR and Health & Safety policies, and Advice Quality Standard requirements.

3.7 Any other duties that are compatible with the nature and grading of the post.

This job description is intended as a guide to the scope of the job only and is not an exhaustive list of duties.

Terms and conditions:

Hours: 21 hours per week to include a Monday and Wednesday.

The postholder may on occasion be required to work a Saturday or evening for which time off in lieu will be given.

This is a **12 month fixed term contract** subject to extension.

Salary: £29,364 - £30,852 pa, pro rata. New employees normally start at the bottom of the band.

Location: This post is based at AFRIL's office at the Leemore Community Centre in central Lewisham. Post induction, there is the option of working from home one day a week. We have a flexible working policy and are open to conversations with individual staff about their flexible working needs.

Benefits: 5% employer pension contributions, access to a 24/7 employee assistance programme. Training and development budget. Employee wellbeing support delivered by a clinical provider. Commitment to flexible working. Annual salary review.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Below is a list of qualities and experience required for this post. Shortlisting will be done on the basis of this specification. Experience can be in a professional, volunteer or home capacity, in the UK or overseas.

	Essential	Desirable
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Knowledge		
An understanding of the issues affecting asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds.	X	
A working knowledge of the legal rights and entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants, and the roles of statutory and non-statutory agencies.	X	
Knowledge of the asylum support framework	X	
Knowledge of the London area and available services for our client group.		X
An understanding of the principles of safeguarding	X	
Experience		
At least 6 months experience of delivering one to one casework to the public relating to housing, welfare benefits, community care or asylum support including assessment, action planning and follow up casework.	X	
Experience of providing support to colleagues or volunteers.		X
Experience of working within a service delivery setting and following organisational policies.	X	
Experience of working with refugees, asylum seekers or vulnerable migrants.	X	
Skills, abilities and attributes	Essential	Desirable
Honesty, reliability, confidence and strong problem-solving abilities.	X	
Ability to provide sensitive, safe and appropriate advice and support on an empowerment model to distressed people in vulnerable situations and manage volunteers to do so.	X	
The ability to deliver advice and support in community settings and an understanding of health and safety and safeguarding in this context.	X	

Excellent written and verbal communication skills, to be able to communicate accurately and effectively with a range of stakeholders, including professionally through interpreters.	X	
An enabling approach to working with clients who might be distressed and/or have limited or no English.	X	
Excellent listening skills and the ability to empathise and empower as well as maintain boundaries.	X	
Good IT skills including word processing software, email, internet, zoom and use of a case management database and an understanding of the importance of data protection and IT security.	X	
Ability to speak a language widely spoken by refugees and vulnerable migrants.		X
Ability to work flexibly and constructively as part of a small team.	X	
A reflective attitude to own work and a commitment to continuing professional development.	X	
An understanding of and commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and equal opportunities, especially in the context of direct service provision.	X	
A commitment to AFRIIL's vision and values and an ability to put them into practice.	X	

This job description is intended as a guide to the scope of the job only and is not an exhaustive list of duties. Post holders will be required to undertake other tasks commensurate with the nature and grading of the post. This job description will be reviewed as/when required.

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit your CV along with a cover letter on CharityJob – no more than two sides of A4 – detailing why you are interested in this role and how you meet the person specification.

For queries or to arrange an informal discussion about the role, please contact info@afril.org.uk

Recruitment timetable

Applications close at 9am on Monday 2nd September

We aim to contact shortlisted candidates the week commencing 9th September

Interviews will take place in person between 16th-18th September