



Job Title:	Domestic Abuse Housing Advocate
Service/Division:	Services – DA/VAWG
Reporting to:	Team Manager
Direct reports:	None
Salary:	£26,000 - £32,000
Hours:	35 hours (some working from home up to 2 days)
Location:	Hammersmith/Finsbury Park
Contract Type:	Permanent

*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 diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities, BAME and LBT communities.

Job Summary

The Domestic Abuse Housing Advocate will work within a dynamic, fast paced team to provide intervention, advocacy and support that empowers women and ensures that the voice of survivors informs every stage of their journey towards improved safety. The successful candidate will work with service users across risk and will carry a case load of service users who hold social tenancies with the local authority or a housing association. You will be required to coordinate the provision of multi-agency support which focuses on working with domestic abuse survivors to maintain their tenancies and prevent homelessness. You will have an excellent understanding of domestic abuse and its effects on survivors and their children and of best practice within the domestic abuse and Housing sectors. You will be skilled in risk management and safety planning, remaining calm in a crisis and in handling sensitive information on a daily basis. You will work within a well-established and supportive team to provide high quality advocacy and support based upon a service user led needs and risk assessment. 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.

Key Responsibilities and Duties

Ensure effective access for survivors and encourage their engagement with the service, through proactive contact and assessment for a high volume of referrals.

Work within the team to conduct comprehensive assessments of needs and risk for survivors experiencing domestic violence, carry out short risk management, safety planning and support; and identify and refer to services appropriate to their needs.

Initiate and manage 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.

Safeguard cases by referring to Social Care and MARAC where appropriate and monitoring and ensuring that duty cases sent to program managers for allocation

Advise survivors 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 to ensure barriers to accessing support and protection are minimised.

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.

Proactively assess the needs and safety of women at risk giving due regard to Adult at Risk policies and procedures.

Work with Managers and Data and 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.

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.

Participate in multi-agency working and focus groups when requested to do so and follow through on agreed appropriate actions that arise from these.

General duties:

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 data protection requirements.

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.

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.

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.

Work across teams and undertake such other duties, appropriate to the grade and character of the work, as may reasonably 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.

General Information

Performance and Quality: Ensure all work undertaken is aligned to the service/division's annual plan and that all policies, processes and guidance notes are up to date and in line with best practice/current legislation.

Policies and procedure: 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.

Equality and diversity: Advance aims to create and sustain an inclusive work environment which provides equality of opportunity for everyone and reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. The postholder is required to uphold the Equality and Diversity policy and comply with the code of conduct which sets out our standards of behaviour towards those who use our services or work within them.

Confidentiality: The post holder must ensure that any information relating to employees, service users, and volunteers (future, current and past) is treated in strictest confidence and must be discussed only within the confines of the work setting with the appropriate members of the team or manager.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION:

E= Essential and D = Desirable

KNOWLEDGE AND QUALIFICATIONS	
A relevant qualification or training, for example in domestic abuse, criminal justice, law, social work, substance misuse or related area.	D
A thorough understanding of violence against women and girls with a particular focus on the dynamics of domestic abuse (physical, emotional and sexual violence, so-called 'honour-based violence', forced marriage, stalking and harassment) and its impact on women, children, families and communities.	E
An excellent understanding of relevant legislation with particular regard to legal and civil options, housing, benefits, matrimonial and children.	E
A good knowledge of safeguarding practice, procedures and legislation.	E
Specific knowledge and understanding of the housing system and options available	E
EXPERIENCE	
Strong experience of supporting women who have experienced domestic abuse in all it's forms, transferrable skills or a feminist degree/Masters or PHD	E
Experience of risk and needs assessment, safety and support planning, particularly with clients with complex/multiple needs.	E
Experience of crisis management and successfully managing high numbers of calls/ caseloads.	E
Experience of partnership working and of maintaining excellent working relationships with a range of stakeholders as well as the ability to network, influence, problem solve and apply solution focused approaches to increase access and safety and facilitate positive outcomes for women and children.	E

TECHNICAL/WORK BASED SKILLS	
Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate well with a wide range of people of all ages and backgrounds.	E
Excellent risk assessment, support and advocacy skills and the ability to advocate successfully using evidence and professional experience.	E
Ability to work well within a team and responsibly on your own initiative, and of maintaining professional boundaries with clients and partner agencies.	E
Flexible, proactive approach and a good ability to prioritise work.	E
Good data collection, monitoring and IT skills, including word processing and using databases and spreadsheets.	E
Good report writing skills, including preparing reports for courts, case conference and information for Multi agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS).	D
GENERAL SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES	
Committed to Advance's charity ethos and key values which are listen and support, Empower, Innovate, Collaborate, Quality and Accountability	E
Clear boundaries and a willingness to accept line management and make effective use of supervision.	E
A good understanding of the importance of confidentiality and anti-discriminatory practice, safe practice and health and safety procedures.	E
A good understanding of cultural issues and equal opportunities.	E
A firm commitment to women, children's and young people's rights and to work within Advance's framework and its core values.	E
Willingness to carry out the policies and procedures of Advance and to work to agreed guidelines and codes of conduct.	E
The ability to deal in a mature manner with sensitive subject matter and reflect Advance's 2023-26 strategy.	E
The ability to be a self-starter and use your expertise to contribute to the strategic direction of the organisation.	E

Advance is committed to safeguarding and creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm and expects all staff, including volunteers to share this commitment. We believe all individuals have the right to live their life free from violence and abuse and the right to feel and be safe. We have a suite of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice guidance, accessible to all staff, which promotes safeguarding and safer working practices across all our services and activities. When we recruit staff, we follow rigorous safer recruitment practices, this involves carrying out pre-employment checks including references, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, and identity checks. We ensure all staff undertake mandatory safeguarding training relevant to their role and responsibilities, to empower them to be competent and feel confident in recognising and responding appropriately to safeguarding issues and promote wellbeing.