

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

Casework Coordinator

Closing Date: 9am on Monday 2nd September 2024

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1. Background Information on Detention Action

Detention Action is a small organisation with a big impact. Since 1993, we have worked to improve the welfare of people in detention centres and tirelessly campaign alongside our beneficiaries to reduce the use of immigration detention. We work on the frontline with people in immigration detention, as well as challenging injustice in asylum, detention and deportation systems in the UK.

We have 15 full-time staff who work together with around 60 volunteers. Our work is divided into three main areas: Campaigns, Casework and our Community Support Project. Our Campaigns team works to reform immigration detention policy and practice, drawing on evidence obtained from our frontline work and working together with our two lived-experience networks, Allies for Justice (AFJ) and Families for Justice (FFJ). AFJ is a group for people with lived experience of navigating the asylum, detention or deportation systems. FFJ is made up of mums, wives, partners and daughters who have gone through the experience of having a family member face deportation.

We continue to campaign for the introduction of a time-limit on immigration detention. Over the past year, we campaigned against the introduction of the Illegal Migration Act. Previously, we campaigned for an end to the Detained Fast Track asylum process, successfully bringing a strategic legal challenge which led to the suspension of the process in 2015 and we continue to campaign against the re-introduction of fast-track processes. In 2020, we brought several prominent legal challenges, preventing the removal of those due to be deported on a charter flight to Jamaica in February. In 2022, we brought a challenge to stop the government's attempt to remove people to Rwanda.

Our Casework team provides emotional and practical support to people detained in immigration removal centres and prisons through in-person visitors and a casework service which is accessible through a free-phone



helpline. We also provide holistic and accessible advice and support on-site at removal centres and prisons by holding regular advice workshops.

Since 2014, we have been running the Community Support Project, an alternative to detention scheme that works with people who have experienced or are at risk of long-term detention. The team provides tailored support to each participant to achieve their goals.

We are an equal opportunities, disability confident and living wage employer. We want our staff team where possible to reflect those we support and the wider community that we are part of. We welcome and encourage applications from people from all backgrounds, including those from minority groups that are underrepresented in the workplace. We strongly encourage those with lived experience of the asylum, deportation and/or immigration detention systems to apply.

About the Casework Team

The Casework team is made up of five members of full time staff; four Casework Coordinators who are managed by the Casework Manager.

We provide support and advice to people in detention in Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre in London, and in prisons around the UK. Heathrow is the largest detention centre in Europe; around 1000 people can be detained at Heathrow at any one time. People in detention can have complex needs, often arising from indefinite detention and / or mental health issues, which can be barriers to accessing services and defending their rights.

There are three main strands to Detention Action's work supporting people in detention. Firstly, the core of Detention Action's work has always been to provide emotional and practical support to people detained through one-to-one visits. These visits are made by volunteer visitors, recruited, trained and supervised by the Casework staff team.

Secondly, Detention Action provides casework and emotional support to people in detention from the office (or remotely), accessible through a Freephone service. Detention Action undertakes general casework for people detained, including referrals to legal representatives and other specialist organisations and assistance with communicating with these agencies. We also work closely with solicitors on strategic litigation where it is necessary to defend the rights of people in detention. We do not provide immigration advice.

Thirdly, Detention Action provides holistic and accessible advice and support on-site in the detention centre by holding regular advice workshops, as well as workshops in prison in England and Wales, which allow people in detention to develop trust relationships with Detention Action through face-to-face contact and ongoing work on their diverse needs.



2. Overview of the Role

Job title:	Casework Coordinator
Managed by:	Casework Manager
Length of contract:	12 month fixed-term contract with a strong possibility of extension. You must have the right to work in the UK for at least the contract length.
Hours:	<p>This post is offered on a full-time basis (35 hours per week Monday to Friday). However, we will also consider candidates who want to work part-time.</p> <p>There may be occasional evening work and (rarely) weekend commitments.</p>
Salary:	£32,240 per annum (pro rata if part-time)
Place of work:	<p>We currently operate a hybrid-working model and expect staff to come into our office in East London (E2) at least one day each week.</p> <p>You must be based in the UK and able to travel to the office at your own expense.</p>
Benefits:	<p>5.5% employer pension contributions;</p> <p>25 days of leave per year (pro rata), plus public holidays;</p> <p>Full organisational induction and support;</p> <p>Generous working arrangement policies to promote staff well-being, including parental leave, flexible working and public engagement considerations.</p>
Learning and development:	All staff benefit from opportunities for professional development through training. We also offer clinical supervision to all staff.



3. Job Description

Working as part of the Casework team, our successful candidate will be responsible, both directly and through working with volunteers, for casework and emotional support for people detained under immigration powers.

This is an exciting and rewarding opportunity for a passionate individual with casework experience, looking to join us in defending the rights of people in detention at a critical time for our organisation and the wider immigration and human rights sector.

Key responsibilities will include:

- Undertaking casework and providing both practical and emotional support for people in detention, particularly those with complex needs;
- Working with Casework colleagues to coordinate casework and emotional support for people in detention, including developing expertise and new areas of casework in response to the needs of people in detention;
- Running drop-in workshops at Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) and prisons around the UK frequently, up to twice a week;
- Working with Casework colleagues to build and maintain relationships with relevant external stakeholders, particularly IRC staff, legal professionals and other NGOs, and sharing expertise externally;
- Monitoring practical, legal and policy changes relevant to people in detention and the impact they have on Detention Action's casework;
- Developing a specialist lead area within the Casework team, to complement the work of colleagues;
- Sharing expertise from casework to inform other areas of Detention Action's work including policy, advocacy and communications and the development and implementation of other projects;
- Working with Casework colleagues to recruit and manage volunteers in a range of roles to support people in detention, providing ongoing supervision, training and development;
- Being responsible for your own administrative tasks and contributing to the smooth running of the Casework service.

The job description sets out the duties that exist at the moment. Duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the role or the level of responsibility.



4. Person Specification

Essential criteria:

1. Experience of casework and advocacy for asylum-seekers, undocumented migrants and / or people detained under immigration powers;
2. Demonstrable understanding of good practice in one-to-one casework with people at increased risk of harm;
3. Proven ability to work in a team in a stressful and pressurised environment;
4. Understanding of the impact of immigration detention on mental health;
5. General understanding of the issues affecting asylum-seekers and other migrants in the criminal justice system;
6. Good understanding of the asylum system and the difficulties experienced by people who have claimed asylum and other migrants in the UK, including in immigration detention;
7. Proven ability to organise and prioritise a busy workload;
8. Excellent communication and listening skills, including the ability to communicate with a wide range of people;
9. A high standard of written and spoken English;
10. Computer literacy, including good typing, database and internet skills;
11. Ability to conduct all duties in a manner that is non-judgmental and respects differences;
12. Commitment to Detention Action's vision, purpose and values, and to act in a manner consistent with these.

Desirable criteria:

14. Lived experience of immigration detention, hostile immigration systems (such as the asylum system), either directly or indirectly through family members who have been subjected to detention and/or deportation;
15. Experience of working with people affected by mental health issues;



16. Demonstrable knowledge of good practice in volunteer management;
17. Experience of designing and delivering training;
18. Knowledge of another language(s), in particular Albanian, Arabic, Farsi, French, Hindi, Mandarin, Pashtu, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Romanian, Sorani, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu or Vietnamese.



5. How to Apply

To apply for this role, please submit your **CV** (no longer than three pages) and a **Cover Letter** through the CharityJob portal by 9am (GMT/UK time) on 2 September 2024.

We will not consider incomplete applications. **Please read the following instructions carefully before applying.**

Your Cover Letter should list all of the essential criteria and demonstrate how you meet each of these, as well as, where relevant, how you meet any of the desirable criteria.

We recognise that skills and knowledge are gained outside of formal work experience, so please use any voluntary, school, university or life experience to tell us about yourself. Please also include any other information about your skills, knowledge, experience or values outside of our specified criteria which you think demonstrates your ability to carry out the role.

We operate an anonymous shortlisting process. Prior to shortlisting, your name and personal details will be redacted and the shortlisting panel will not have access to these details.

Please do not include the following details in your CV or Cover Letter:

- Current or past salary;
- Age or date of birth;
- Photo;
- National Insurance or other identifying numbers;
- Names of any school or university attended; and
- Grades/marks.

We do not require the names of referees at the shortlisting stage but will ask for the names and contact details of at least two recent professional (workplace or academic) referees prior to making any offer of employment.

We recognise that it may sometimes be difficult for refugees to safely provide references and we are therefore happy to discuss individual circumstances with candidates in this position if they are selected for an interview, which may include providing one professional and one character reference.



6. Recruitment Process and Timeline

The recruitment process and timeline for this role will be:

- Monday 2nd September 2024 – applications close at 9am (GMT/UK time)
- By Friday 6th September 2024 – shortlisted candidates invited to interview
- Week commencing 9th September 2024 (most likely 12th and 13th September) – first interviews take place
 - Candidates will be asked to complete a task prior to the interview, details of which will be provided to each candidate one week before their interview date.
- Week commencing 16th September 2024 (most likely 19th and 20th September) – second interview will take place
- By 25th September 2024 – offer made to successful candidate
- On or before 1 November 2024 – proposed start date (or later, depending on notice requirements)

We will endeavour to follow the above process and timetable but changes in circumstances may mean we are not able to do so. We will advise applicants of any changes to the timetable and process.

Interviews will take place online and will be with a small panel drawn from our staff, volunteers, trustees and lived experience networks. We will provide further information about panellists ahead of interviews taking place.

Help completing your application

We will meet any reasonable adjustments to allow you to participate in this recruitment so please inform us of any requirements as soon as possible by emailing recruitment@detentionaction.org.uk or calling 020 7062 4211 (option 2).

Please note that, in the interests of fairness to all candidates, we are not able to discuss your suitability for the role or to provide any tips on applying.

