

# Refuge



**For women and children.  
Against domestic violence.**



**Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)  
Applicant Information Pack**

## **Introduction from the CEO**

Thank you for your interest in working for Refuge.

We have a diverse team of incredible people who work together to provide an inclusive approach to ensure that every woman who needs support when facing domestic abuse, receives it.

We do this through a combination of frontline services offering immediate safety and support to women and their children. We also lead vital work to influence and change policies and practices that impact women and girls and use public engagement and campaigning to help change societal attitudes and norms.

We know that domestic abuse will never end until it is recognised by society as the crime that it is, and there is an understanding that it is underpinned by misogyny. We will not stop until we are able to challenge and shift harmful societal attitudes as well as drive policy and practice change that is needed to end Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). It is only then that women and children will be free to live their lives in safety, with control over their choices and without fear.

Whatever your role at Refuge, you will have the opportunity to grow and develop as part of an amazing diverse and inclusive team of inspirational and talented people who provide vital and specialist services to women and children when their lives are in crisis. This is not always easy work, but it is essential, it is lifesaving, and it is life changing. So, whether you work directly with clients, behind the scenes, or represent Refuge to the outside world, you will be an integral part of what we do.

We look forward to receiving your application.

**Gemma Sherrington**  
CEO





We want kind and empathic people to work at Refuge, who believe in equality, diversity, and inclusion, are experts in their area of knowledge, want to make a positive difference and improve the lives of the survivors and children we support.

We are looking for two skilled, values driven IDVAs who are committed to challenging inequality, reducing harm, and improving safety for adults and children affected by domestic abuse. You will bring relevant professional experience, strong skills in assessment, engagement, safety planning and communication, and the ability to work safely in complex and high risk situations. We are seeking people who can hold clear boundaries and accountability while offering empathy, curiosity and respect. You will work in a trauma informed, survivor centred and strengths based way, recognising each survivor as the expert in their own life. You will understand how gendered power, oppression and structural barriers shape survivors' experiences, and you will be confident applying these principles in your practice.

This post is restricted to women due to the nature of the role. The Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 applies.

**Salary**

£25,857.12 per annum

**Employment term:**

Full Time, 12 month fixed term

**Location:**

Warwickshire

**Closing Date**

9:00am on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

**Interview Date**

31st March 2026

## **Employment Terms**

### **Salary**

The annual full-time salary for this role is £25,857.12 per annum

Refuge is an accredited Living Wage Employer. This means that every member of staff working here will earn a real Living Wage. The real Living Wage is higher than the government's minimum, or National Living Wage, and is an independently calculated hourly rate of pay that is based on the actual cost of living. We voluntarily choose to pay the real Living Wage because we believe that a hard day's work deserves a fair day's pay.

### **Days and hours of work**

The contracted hours of work are, from Monday to Friday. This is exclusive of an unpaid lunch hour for every full day worked. The working pattern is 9am – 5.30pm Monday – Friday.

Flexibility on how the hours are spread across the week within these times.

### **Probation**

All appointments are subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, further details will be provided when an offer of employment is made. The probation period for this post is 6 months.

### **Annual Leave**

Annual leave allowance is 28 days per annum plus public holidays, rising to 30 days following completion of five years' service at the start of the annual leave year. Annual leave for part-time roles is pro rata.

### **Pension**

Refuge operates a qualifying salary sacrifice pension scheme with Aegon.

### **Employee Benefits**

Refuge offers a variety of exciting opportunities to learn, develop and grow in your career. We recognise the value everyone brings to the organisation in achieving our aims, and we are dedicated to developing and rewarding our staff.

We offer all our employees a competitive benefits package including:

- Competitive salary
- Clinical supervision for all staff
- Confidential support and advice service via an employee assistance programme available 24 hours a day which provides support on a range of work and personal issues
- Enhanced sick pay leave which increases with length of service
- Excellent sector leading maternity, adoption, parental and paternity pay and leave
- Generous life cover scheme valued at three times individuals' salary and covers death in service subject to insurers approval
- Eye care e-Voucher scheme
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Discounted membership with PureGym
- Opportunity to join our wide range of Equality Network Groups
- Access to free Will writing service
- The ability to apply for flexible working from day one. There will be space to discuss flexible working at interview
- Interest free loans to purchase season tickets for travel to work and/or to pay

deposits to secure rented accommodation, and for professional qualifications

### **Training and Learning**

We are committed to supporting a culture that enables all staff to achieve their full potential by providing a range of professional and personal development opportunities including access to a wide range of e-learning resources.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Independent Domestic Violence Advocate – Drive programme</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	Service Delivery
<b>Reports to</b>	Deputy Service Manager
<b>Location</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Working hours</b>	37.5 hours per week
<b>Working pattern</b>	9.00am – 5.30pm, Monday – Friday
<b>Contract</b>	12 months fixed term with extension subject to funding

### **Role Outline**

The Drive Programme is a nationally recognised, evidence based intervention that works with individuals who pose the highest risk of causing serious harm in intimate or family relationships. The programme combines intensive perpetrator case management with a coordinated multi-agency response. Survivor safety, choice and empowerment are at the centre of all activity.

The Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) plays a vital safeguarding and advocacy role within Drive model. As the IDVA, you will offer specialist, survivor led support, including safety planning, risk identification and ongoing advocacy for victims and survivors linked to Drive cases. You will ensure that survivors' voices, needs and wellbeing remain central to system decisions — especially where survivors may have been unheard or marginalised.

You will work alongside Drive Case Managers, statutory partners and specialist services while maintaining professional independence and a clear focus on survivor safety and empowerment. Your work will contribute to risk reduction, improved safety outcomes and a stronger, more accountable multi-agency response across Warwickshire.

The role will be part of increasing the ability of partner agencies to recognize, reject and respond appropriately and safely to all forms of gender-based violence (including domestic violence, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honor-based violence).

### **Key Accountabilities**

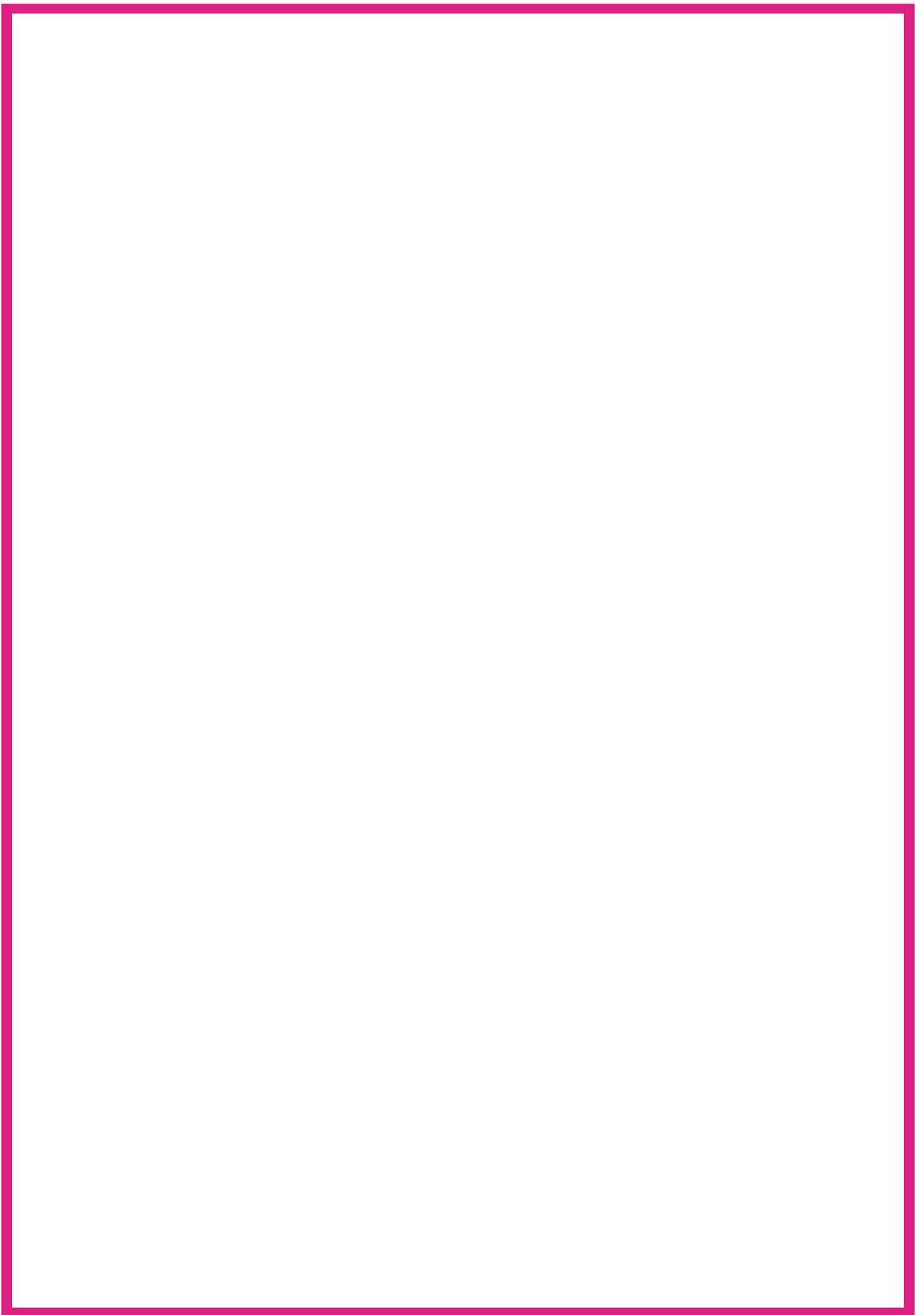
- Providing practical and emotional support to people experiencing domestic abuse, applying the principles of effective casework when supporting survivors of gender-based violence and their children and to advocate for survivors to ensure their needs are met.
- Establishing the risks to and the needs of survivors of gender-based violence, identifying and prioritizing those at the highest risk.
- Developing and delivering individual support and risk management plans to address the risk of harm to survivors of gender-based violence and their children, working directly with all key agency partners to ensure that their plans are coordinated through the Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC)
- Advocating, both verbally and in writing, in a range of settings including in civil and criminal proceedings and with criminal justice professionals.
- Working in partnership with other agencies, including participation at the MARAC, and to contribute to the design of interventions and action plans which protect survivors and their children, whilst maintaining an independent role on behalf of the survivors, keeping their safety and their voice central to the plans.
- Being an ambassador for Refuge, working in partnership with other agencies to ensure an effective, coordinated community response to survivors of gender-based violence and their children.
- Ensuring that any issues in relation to safeguarding children or adults at risk are brought to the immediate attention of the VAWG Service Manager, or if unavailable another manager.

- Recognizing, respecting and addressing the needs of service-users who face particular barriers when seeking help to access the advocacy service, including those from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, LGBT communities, disabled people and other hard to reach groups.
- Supporting the empowerment of survivors, assisting them to recognize the dynamics of gender-based abuse present in their own situation, and to help them regain control of their lives.
- Delivering presentations and informal training to external agencies to increase local understanding of gender-based violence.
- Carrying out periodic and regular case reviews in liaison with the line manager, to review ongoing risk and needs, using the outcomes to inform action planning.
- Reporting any problems/difficulties/complaints to the line manager and participate in follow up investigations as required.
- Working within Refuge's quality management system following all policies and procedures
- Ensuring that the views and experiences of service-users and agencies are sought actively, recorded carefully, and inform the development of the service.
- Developing and maintaining positive, collaborative working relationships with other Refuge staff.
- Enhancing personal capability by undertaking continuous personal development activity and maintaining up to date knowledge.
- Ensuring that the confidentiality and security of information is maintained in accordance with our Confidentiality, Data Protection, IT and Security policies.
- Promoting sustainable working practices and reducing the environmental impact of Refuge's work.
- Demonstrating an understanding of and commitment to Refuge's values and to equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.

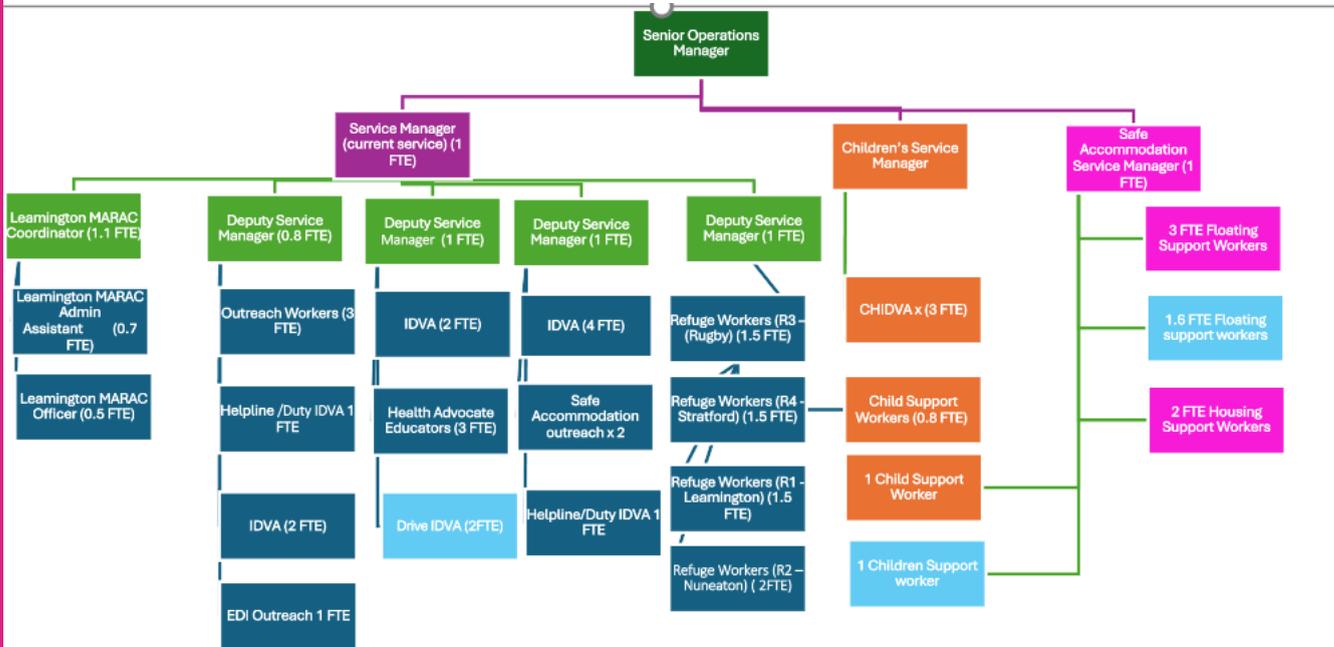
This post is restricted to women due to the nature of the role. The Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 applies.

We are committed to safeguarding therefore we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As part of this commitment, we undertake basic disclosure checks (DBS) in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice for all roles. We undertake an enhanced DBS check for our roles working directly with survivors.

It is essential to the development of Refuge's service delivery that the post holder can respond flexibly to changes in the requirements of this post. This job description is therefore a guide and not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities the post holder may have over time.



## Team Structure Chart



### **Who Are We Looking For?**

For us it is important that you are passionate, committed and care about the work Refuge undertakes. Not all roles require previous experience in the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) sector. You may be able to bring relevant experience from another industry or transferable skills from a different type of role or volunteering/community experience.

For us, a role description is a useful guide. But please don't discount yourself if you feel you don't meet all the criteria and believe you have the potential. Above all we value individuals who are committed to working hard but looking after yourself, flourish in an inclusive environment and want to make a positive difference to the communities we support.



## Person Specification

### Experience, Knowledge & Qualifications

- Good standard of general education or equivalent experience.
- In depth knowledge and understanding of the issues facing survivors who have experienced domestic violence and abuse and/or sexual violence.
- An understanding of the impact of multiple, intersecting oppressions (e.g., sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism, etc) and the consequent barriers for some survivors of domestic abuse to accessing services.
- Knowledge of options for and rights of survivors experiencing DVA and proven ability to use in casework, including knowledge of relevant legislation relating to DVA.
- Knowledge and understanding of trauma and trauma symptoms.
- At least two years' experience of working within the DVA sector (desirable).
- Experience of conducting needs and risk assessments.
- Experience of providing needs-led support to clients with a variety of support needs.
- Experience of building and maintaining partnerships with other agencies.
- Experience of delivering training to professionals
- Degree level education or similar/relevant professional qualifications.
- Formal / informal training in a range of gender violence issues.

### Skills

- Ability to work under pressure.
- Ability to plan own workload, to manage time effectively and to deal with changing and competing demands.
- Ability to think creatively and show initiative.
- Ability to communicate sensitively with survivors who may be distressed.
- Ability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries when working with survivors who are experiencing crisis.
- Ability to communicate effectively with a range of professionals.
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills including report writing and presentation, and including excellent spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- Ability to maintain effective administrative and monitoring systems.
- Proficient in word-processing, spreadsheets, and databases, preferably using Microsoft Windows.
- Ability to build effective relationships, both internally and externally, showing sensitivity for others' viewpoints and valuing diversity.
- Ability to work proactively and effectively as part of a team to deliver results, supporting others as required.

### Personal Qualities

- An interest in and commitment to the long-term success and development of Refuge.
- Acts as a role model for the organisation with integrity and a demonstrable commitment to upholding professional standards.
- Demonstrates passion and approaches all work in an enthusiastic way.
- Commitment to follow the policies, procedures and philosophical principles of Refuge and a strong commitment to feminism, empowerment, support and equality which underpin all of the work undertaken by Refuge.

## An Inclusive Workplace for All

- Our vision is to have a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve; therefore, we actively encourage and welcome applications from candidates of diverse cultures, perspectives and lived experiences.
- We are committed to challenging the inequalities of society and will continue to learn and grow as an organization to ensure that we provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.
- We understand that people have personal lives, and these can sometimes impact on their time and availability. We will be as flexible as we possibly can be in terms of supporting staff to balance their work and their personal lives. If you need flexibility within your working hours, working pattern or location then do let us know and if the role and team can support that request, we will do what we can to support you.
- We are proud to have been awarded Disability Confident Employer. Refuge is aware that individuals with disabilities, or long-term health conditions or are D/deaf or neurodivergent are underrepresented in the sector. Refuge is committed to doing what we can to support our employees.
- We committed to paying a competitive salary for the sector because we want to help break the poverty cycle and reduce social economic barriers to those working within the sector. This is reflected in our commitment to the Show the Salary pledge and #Nongraduateswelcome and being an Accredited Living Wage employer.
- We understand that individuals who are Black, Asian and ethnically diverse are often underrepresented within the sector therefore we have signed up to the VAWG Anti-Racism charter, we have an EDI Steering Group and equality, diversity and inclusion training.
- We have created a [Respect Charter](#) to complement our values to support our EEDI journey in creating an inclusive and respectful environment both within Refuge and beyond.
- Furthermore, we have seven Employee Network Groups providing a safe space for staff to share their lived experiences and to challenge us as an organization to do better.

These groups are:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- LGBTQI+ Shine
- Anti-Racism
- Allies
- Women's
- Disability and Neurodiversity Matters

## How To Apply

### Key Information and Deadlines

To apply please access our online application form via our website:

<https://refugecareers.ciphr-irecruit.com/Applicants/vacancy>

### Applications must be completed and submitted by 9.00am on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

- If you have any questions or want to discuss the post before applying, please contact us via email to [recruitment@refuge.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@refuge.org.uk)
- You can also find out more information about Refuge at [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)

### Interviews will take place vis MS Teams on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

### Completing your application form

What matters most to us when recruiting new members to join the Refuge team, is the inclusive attitude and relevant experience you will bring to the organisation and the role, and how you will support our values of: *A FEMINIST FORCE FOR GOOD, NEVER SHY AWAY, BUILD IT TOGETHER, SHOW WE CARE, LEARN EVERY DAY*. The full values can be downloaded from our [website](#)

Please note that we do not accept CVs for this job vacancy and all applications must be submitted via our online application form. The application process will require you to complete various sections of the application form. It is important that you complete all sections. Please do indicate N/A (not applicable) should some areas of the form not apply to you.

Your Supporting Statement section of the application form describing your skills and experience against the job description and person specification, will also be used to determine who to invite for an interview. Therefore, please do give clear examples of how your skills and experience are relevant to the job you are applying for, and how and where you have used them. Your Supporting Statement should not exceed a maximum of 800 words.

For example, this can be:

- Relevant experience from your present or previous jobs.
- Skills and experience gained from community or voluntary work, work experience, leisure interests and activities in the home.
- Education and the training you have received.

We would like to thank you in advance for expressing an interest in working for Refuge. We look forward to receiving your application.

### Applications from Refuge Service Users and Survivors

Former Refuge service users and other survivors supporting Refuge in its external work including for fundraising, policy, media and press can apply for all externally advertised job vacancies.

Survivors that are currently using our services cannot apply for Refuge job vacancies. This restriction is for the survivor's safety and to ensure there is no conflict of interest.

A confirmation of a conditional job offer to a former service user will be subject to a risk assessment. Where significant risks to Refuge and other service users cannot be mitigated, we may not be able to make a conditional offer of employment. If successful in securing the role, their data on Impact will be protected.

### **Our commitment to inclusive recruitment**

Our People and Culture team will remove your name, address and date of birth before forwarding your information for shortlisting. Your education is only considered if it is a requirement of the role.

We want Refuge to be an organisation that is reflective of the society we are based in, therefore, we are committed to growing our diverse workforce. The information you provide on the diversity monitoring form is confidential and helps the People and Culture team to understand where you would have seen the role and how we may need to do better in ensuring everyone who wants to work for Refuge is aware of the opportunities as they arise.

### **Other information**

Safeguarding is vital to our work, and we strive to prevent harm and promote and protect the welfare and safety of all adults and children that come in contact with the organisation. We have a collective responsibility to take a do no harm approach by prioritising the safety and wellbeing of survivors and children accessing our services, as well as ensuring a duty of care to our staff and volunteers.

As part of this responsibility, we undertake basic disclosure checks (DBS) for all roles in accordance with the Codes of Practice and in line with our Recruitment of Ex-Offender and Disclosure Barring Services Checks Policy, and for our roles working directly with survivors, at an enhanced level check. Applicants are encouraged to apply for job vacancies, having a spent or unspent conviction will not automatically exclude you from being offered the role. If you are successful in securing the role, we will hold an open and measured discussion about any convictions that might be relevant to the role. Our Recruitment of Ex-Offender and Disclosure Barring Services Checks Policy is available to applicants on request.

### **Data Protection Act**

Refuge is committed to protecting your privacy. Information provided by you in your application form will be kept for the purposes of monitoring. It will be copied for use during the recruitment process. Once the recruitment process is completed, the data will be stored for a maximum of 6 months and then destroyed. If you are the successful candidate, relevant information will be taken from this form and used as part of your human resources record. All personal information that you supply to us as part of your application will be processed in accordance with prevailing UK Data Protection legislation.

By submitting your completed application form you are consenting to your personal data being used and held as described above.

Please ensure that the information you give to us is correct and that you let us know of any changes immediately.

