



Job Pack

Early Warning System Officer

Thank you for your interest in this role. In this pack please find:

- Information about CPAG and about the role
- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Job description
- Person specification
- Application form

To apply, please return the application form, taking particular care to provide full details of how you meet the person specification.

Please send your application to recruitment@cpag.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 9am Monday 9 September 2024
Interview will be held on: Week commencing 16 September 2024 (online)

If you require further information or need us to make any adjustments to enable you to participate in the selection process, please contact recruitment@cpag.org.uk.

Some examples of adjustments that have been offered to candidates include:

- changing the time or location of interviews
- providing interview questions in written format
- providing interview questions in advance of the interview
- a sign language interpreter
- additional time in timed tests, interviews or other assessment activities
- advice about assistive technology

This is not an exhaustive list and we will consider any adjustments that you might need.

RECRUITMENT MONITORING

In the interests of monitoring our recruitment procedures we would be grateful if you complete our recruitment monitoring form at the end of the application form.

The form should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete and will not form part of the selection process.



Job Pack

Early Warning System Officer

About CPAG

Child Poverty Action Group works on behalf of the more than one in four children in the UK growing up in poverty. It doesn't have to be like this. We use our understanding of what causes poverty and the impact it has on children's lives to campaign for policies that will prevent and solve poverty – for good. We provide training, advice and information to make sure hard-up families get the financial support they need. We also carry out high profile legal work to establish and protect families' rights.

Our vision

Our vision is of a society free of child poverty, where all children can enjoy a childhood free of financial hardship and have a fair chance in life to reach their full potential.

Our mission

Our mission is to promote action to prevent and end poverty among children and families with children in the UK.

Our beliefs

CPAG policy positions have stood the test of time for six decades. We hold that child poverty is relative to the society families live in and is characterised by a lack of resources. It is neither necessary nor inevitable and is responsive to policy action. Policy solutions should focus on adequate incomes, prioritise prevention rather than relief, and means-testing should be avoided wherever possible. When governments adopt our solutions, child poverty falls.

Our values

- Ambitious – child poverty isn't inevitable, and we won't stop until no child grows up in financial hardship.
- Voice – our work is informed by the voices of children and families
- Evidence based – we advocate solutions to child poverty based on the evidence
- Leadership – we are the leading advocates for children and families in poverty in the UK
- Independent – we are not afraid to speak out

Our theory of change

- By promoting our values, we advance the public and political will for a society free of child poverty
- By developing evidence-based solutions, we encourage policymakers and practitioners to act to prevent and end child poverty
- By campaigning, we work towards social and political change that will keep families from poverty
- By developing and sharing our social security expertise, we help maximise families' resources and inform our evidence for change.

What We Do

Policy and campaigning

We seek to achieve positive outcomes through our high-profile campaigning work – using evidence to influence government and media. We publish research and information on the causes and effects of child

poverty (including briefing materials on our website - cpag.org.uk) and seek radical and practical solutions. Our journal *Poverty*, published three times a year, carries articles and features to inform and stimulate debate on poverty, its causes and consequences, and the action required to tackle it.

Rights and Advice

We provide expert advice, training and information to welfare rights advisers, lawyers and others on all aspects of the social security and tax credit systems. Our staff in London and Glasgow respond to around 7,300 queries a year from advisers. Our bi-monthly *Welfare Rights Bulletin* keeps them up-to-date on new legislation and developments. During the year we reached 12,300 beneficiaries through our training, conferences and seminars. Through carefully selected test cases, we challenge unjust legislation, unfair or discriminatory decisions.

Publishing and Resources

CPAG publishes the major handbooks used by thousands of advisers, community workers, lawyers and members of the public. The *Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook* gives full coverage of all aspects of social security and tax credits. We publish handbooks and resources on housing benefit, child support, fuel rights, debt advice, benefits for migrants, council tax, student support and personal finance. AskCPAG is our platform for advisers to access up-to-date information and tools to navigate the complexities of the social security system. For more information, visit askcpag.org.uk.

There are currently two offices from which this work is undertaken, the main office being in London and CPAG in Scotland, located in Glasgow. There is a recognised union to which most permanent staff belong.

Background to the Post

This is an exciting opportunity to take responsibility for CPAG's high profile, [Early Warning System](#) (EWS). Our analysis of case studies and evidence submitted to the EWS helps us to understand the impact of changes to the benefit system and design and promote solutions which protect the welfare of children and their families.

This is an important period of change for the social security system and the EWS will be key to supporting CPAG's response.

The EWS officer will maintain our bank of case studies, highlighting problems in the social security system, recording new submissions, and encouraging further submissions from the advice community and others. This will require an expert understanding of social security and excellent communications skills to promote submissions to the project and to disseminate project findings.

The EWS officer will work closely with staff in the policy team to ensure that EWS evidence is used to inform policy and practice and will contribute to written briefings and reports and take part in meetings with officials.

The EWS officer will also contribute to the delivery of CPAG's second-tier advice service through our advice line, training, writing content for our web pages, e-bulletins and contributing to publications.

Terms and conditions of employment

- Job title:** Early Warning System Officer
- Contract:** 12 month fixed-term contract
- Location:** You will be based in London but you may be able to agree a pattern of regular remote working with your line manager.
- Salary:** Band C £40,553 - £44,821 (pro rata)– It is expected that new joiners will start at the beginning of the salary range. Progression through the salary range will be based on performance and achievement of objectives.
- Hours:** 21 hours per week. Normal working hours are 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (including a one-hour unpaid lunch break). Overtime is not payable, but CPAG operates a ‘core hours’ and flexi/TOIL (Time Off In Lieu) policy.
- Annual leave:** 30 days a year annual leave (plus additional 4 days during the Christmas/New Year period).
- Other benefits:** Interest free travel loan, automatic enrolment into CPAG’s nominated Group Personal Pension Scheme, income protection insurance and ‘death in service’ provision, and a range of leave entitlements for family and other reasons and other wellbeing benefits (details are on the attached sheet).

There is a six-month probation period for this post.

CPAG’s commitment to equal opportunities

Everyone has the right to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect and to live free from discrimination. We recognise there is an organisational responsibility to tackle inequality and encourage diversity in respect of both the work we undertake and the people we employ and also that every employee of the organisation has personal responsibility to abide by and promote the policy.

CPAG recognises that discrimination can occur and will promote anti-discriminatory practices for people who may be discriminated against on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, belief, gender, class, HIV & AIDS, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, people who are gay, lesbian or transgender, people who have dependents or people who are using mental health services.

We are proud to be an organisation that is not afraid to point out injustice and inequality and have policies in place that recognise the importance of equality and diversity. However, we know as an organisation that there is always room for improvement. We acknowledge the problem with racial diversity within the charity sector and we are committed to taking action to change this. In trying to achieve social change, greater fairness and equality, we must also hold ourselves to account. We want to build a diverse group of talented people working towards our shared vision.

To this end we have set up an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) group to advise on and help lead this work. Championed by our Board and leadership, we aim for EDI to be embedded throughout our organisation and strategy. We are committed to making change where it is needed and look forward to being part of a sector that prioritises diversity and equality.

We are prepared to invest resource, to where possible recruit for potential rather than seek perfection and recognise the need for a better understanding of racial and other biases in order to reflect the communities

we work in. We continue to value the insights brought to the organisation through lived experience. CPAG needs to be a safe place to work, to challenge and feel safe to have uncomfortable conversations.

CPAG is a great place to work

Ensuring access to high quality fair work, especially for parents and carers, is critical to our goal of ending child poverty. There is a recognised trade union that staff are encouraged to join. All staff have a personal development plan agreed with their manager, and the organisation budgets to support training and development needs.

CPAG have been an accredited Living Wage employer since 2012. The real Living Wage is the only rate calculated according to the costs of living. It provides a voluntary benchmark for employers that wish to ensure their staff earn a wage they can live on, not just the government minimum.

We understand that people have different needs and aim to support our team so that they are able to manage work and home responsibilities effectively. Enabling our team to balance work and their personal life in ways that benefit everyone is in line with our values and enables people to contribute to their best ability. We regard flexible working as important and we try to accommodate flexible working practices where possible and practical. Many of our staff work flexibly in many different ways, including part-time or hybrid, and requests can be made from day one. This means we would be happy to discuss alternative working hours, days and patterns, and any additional needs or requirements.

Additional Information on Terms and Conditions of Employment

- 30 days annual leave
- 4 additional days paid leave during the office Christmas closure
- 9 bank holidays (English & Welsh bank holidays + 2nd of January Scottish bank holiday)
- 26 weeks paid maternity leave and 13 weeks of maternity leave at the current rate of SMP
- Shared Parental Leave
- 6 weeks paid leave for staff whose partner has or adopts a baby
- 6 weeks paid paternity leave including a maximum of 2 weeks statutory paternity pay
- 13 weeks unpaid parental leave for parents or guardians of children up to age 16 (18 weeks for parents or guardians of disabled children)
- 10 days paid leave for staff members who have to care for a dependent
- 5 days paid leave for urgent domestic reasons
- 5 days paid leave for staff who carry out public duties
- 10 days paid study leave subject to agreement by CPAG
- An unpaid career break of up to 6 months available to staff after 2 years' service
- Time off in lieu, flexible working options and flexitime to allow staff to work flexibly
- Access to Employee Assistance Programme and BUPA Healthy Minds counselling
- Occupational Health Service
- Group Personal Health Insurance
- Flu jab vouchers
- Eye sight tests and vouchers
- Season ticket loan
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Monthly staff socials and regular staff away days and Christmas lunch

Arrangements apply pro rata to part-time staff and basic annual leave dependant on start date and hours and runs from April to March.



Job Description

Welfare Rights Training Development Officer

Title: Early Warning System Officer

Reports To: Head of Advice & Rights

Team: Policy, Rights & Advocacy team

Grade: C

Main purpose of job

- To take the lead role in gathering, analysing and communicating evidence from advisers and others which demonstrates the impact of changes to the benefits system.
- To contribute to CPAG's high quality training, advice and information services and policy and campaigning activity.

Tasks and Responsibilities

- To promote the profile of the Early Warning System, encouraging submissions from welfare rights experts, claimants and the wider advice sector.
- To communicate with the advice community on EWS findings and actions taken by CPAG in response.
- To maintain and manage a database of case studies on problems with the social security system and an online platform for submitting cases.
- To analyse emerging evidence submissions to the EWS, highlighting the implications of social security changes for policy and practice relating to children, young people and the families and communities that support them and identify implications for our own work.
- To be part of a team, producing briefing papers, formal submissions and resources on changes to social security and their impacts.
- To support the training and events team in developing content which reflects adviser need and the sectors understanding of emerging issues and legislative changes.
- To provide expert insight based on EWS evidence for policy and campaigns colleagues, and work with them to influence policy and practice.
- To, as required, provide telephone and email consultancy to advisers on benefit issues.
- To, as required, design, prepare and deliver training, workshops and seminars.

- To write and update information on welfare benefits and their implications for children and families and to contribute to other publications as required, for example through regular ebulletins.
- To ensure evaluation information is gathered from project activity and prepare first draft reports for funders.
- To represent CPAG at appropriate meetings and conferences with voluntary sector colleagues, civil servants, government agencies, etc.
- To keep up to date with trends and changes in social security policy.
- To contribute to the social policy and campaigning work of CPAG.
- To comply with all CPAG’s policies and standard practice, with specific attention to diversity and equality.
- To take on any other reasonable tasks which contribute to achievement of the job purpose and aims of CPAG.

Person Specification – Welfare Rights Training Development Officer

Experience

Essential	Desirable
Experience of welfare rights advice work, including working from legislation and case law	Experience of using welfare rights knowledge and experience to influence policy development
Experience of using spreadsheets and other IT systems to record evidence emerging from welfare rights or other service provision	Experience of writing and delivering training on social security
Experience of networking (developing, maintaining and making use of contacts across a range of professions and organisations)	

Skills/Abilities/Knowledge

Essential	Desirable
Thorough, up to date knowledge of the benefits system	
Ability to analyse benefits legislation and policy for the effect on families with low incomes	
Ability to identify social policy issues arising from provision of expert welfare rights support	
Excellent written and oral communication skills with ability to adapt these to influence and inform different audiences	

Ability to produce high quality information to a publishable standard	
Ability to research and write reports and briefings on social security issues	
Ability to prioritise and manage a demanding and varied workload	
Ability to work independently, as part of a team and in close cooperation with a part-time colleague in a shared role	

Personal qualities

Essential	Desirable
Commitment to CPAG's aims and objectives	
Commitment to CPAG's diversity and equality policy	
Ability to spend occasional nights away from home on business	