

ADVOCATE WORKER

JOB DESCRIPTION

The logo for GROWTH is a blue speech bubble shape pointing downwards and to the right, containing the word "GROWTH" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

Job Title	GrowTH Advocate Worker
Wage	£29,250 pro rata and basic pension
Contract	Permanent
Annual Leave	25 days (plus Bank Holidays), pro rata
Line Manager	Support & Housing Manager
Location	Poplar, Tower Hamlets, E14 0EA
Working hours	Monday to Friday: Usual shifts 9am – 5pm but occasionally an 8am - 4pm will be necessary. 35 hours per week. Occasional on call (phone only) required also.

ABOUT GROWTH

GrowTH is a non-denominational Christian charity in Tower Hamlets, partnering with local churches to support homeless people through shelter, resettlement and housing. We provide practical care, community and pathways to independence, while offering guests the opportunity to encounter God's love and explore the Christian faith if they wish.

We are looking for a self-motivated Advocate Worker who is passionate about getting alongside our guests, advocating on their behalf and helping them access more permanent accommodation and the support they need.

OVERVIEW OF JOB ROLE

1. Assisting a rolling caseload of guests to secure more permanent housing.
2. Supporting the safe and effective running of the emergency night shelter.
3. Ensuring guests have the opportunity to explore the Christian faith, if they wish.
4. Participating in the wider work of GrowTH.

DUTIES OF JOB ROLE

1. Advocacy and resettlement support

- Supporting an agreed rolling caseload of homeless men and women to secure more permanent housing, with caseload size reviewed with the line manager.
- Welcoming new guests to the shelter and ensuring they understand the rules and structure.
- Supporting guests from a wide variety of backgrounds, working sensitively with their individual needs and circumstances.
- Meeting with guests to understand why they are homeless and what obstacles to resettlement exist.
- Producing and regularly reviewing a personalised resettlement plan with each guest. This may include acquiring identification, applying for benefits, opening bank accounts, applying for housing, liaising with the council and other housing providers, and accessing specialist immigration and legal advice.
- Assisting guests in accessing other support services as needed, including mental health and substance misuse support.
- Advocating on guests' behalf and thinking creatively to overcome resettlement obstacles.
- Maintaining accurate, up-to-date case records and recording progress against agreed plans.
- Developing and maintaining a working knowledge of the benefits system.

2. Supporting the safe and effective running of the night shelter

- Managing relationships with local referral agencies and taking daily referrals for the shelter.
- Managing referrals and risk assessments of homeless men and women.
- Liaising with lead volunteers for the safe and smooth running of the night shelter.
- Monitoring the running of the shelter to ensure the values and policies of GrowTH are maintained.
- Providing telephone-only on-call cover for night shelter volunteers, responding appropriately to incidents or disruption and escalating concerns in line with GrowTH procedures.

3. Ensuring guests have the opportunity to explore the Christian faith

- Praying daily for the guests in the night shelter.
- Sensitively and appropriately initiating conversations about faith and spiritual needs with guests, respecting each person's wishes and beliefs.
- Encouraging volunteers to be open about their faith, and managing introductory Christianity courses and Bible studies.
- Assisting guests who wish to do so in accessing local church communities, including Sunday services.

4. Safe practice and contributing to GrowTH

- Reporting safeguarding concerns and incidents promptly, following GrowTH's policies and escalation procedures.
- Maintaining confidentiality and appropriate professional boundaries in all work with guests.
- Assisting with the smooth running of the GrowTH homelessness Hub.
- As part of a small charity, assisting with other reasonable or ad hoc tasks, as needed.

ROLE REQUIREMENTS

- Flexibility with working hours, including occasional early shifts as set out above.
- Participation in the night shelter on-call rota, covering evenings and throughout the night. This is telephone-only cover and does not require attendance at the shelter. Overnight calls will only be made in an absolute emergency requiring immediate staff input.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential criteria

Personal faith and values

- A committed member of a local church.
- An understanding and practice of evangelical Christian belief, with a lifestyle and conduct compatible with those beliefs.
- Experience of sensitively sharing faith with marginalised adults.
- An understanding of Jesus' compassion for those without home, hope and help.
- Faith that God can transform, heal and save any person, regardless of their current situation.
- A passion to see cycles of homelessness broken.

Skills

- Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to listen, get alongside and motivate guests and local church volunteers.
- Administrative and organisational skills, including the ability to prioritise tasks and manage competing demands.
- Good written and oral communication skills.
- Competent computer and internet user, including Microsoft Word and Excel.

Personal requirements

- An understanding of what it means to be an advocate: working passionately to further the cause of another.
- Ability to take initiative and work unsupervised at times.
- Ability to think creatively and solve problems.
- Flexibility, patience and the ability to remain calm in difficult circumstances.
- Punctuality and reliability.
- Ability to treat all guests with equal dignity and allocate support fairly according to their needs and circumstances.
- Commitment to safeguarding, confidentiality and appropriate professional boundaries.

Desirable criteria

- Experience of interacting with and supporting marginalised adults.
- Experience of managing or leading volunteers in the Church.