

Job Title: Whole Housing IDVA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor)

Service/Division: VAWG Services

Reports to: Manager - Housing

Direct reports: None

*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 Housing IDVA will work within a dynamic, fast paced, crisis intervention, advocacy, and support service to ensure the voice of survivors informs every stage of the process. You will specialise in working with clients for whom housing, and risk of tenancy breakdown is a factor. You will work within the team to make proactive contact and provide high quality advocacy and support based upon a client led needs and risk assessment to women, focusing on working with those aged 18 and over who access the domestic abuse service. You 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.

The Whole Housing IDVA will have an excellent understanding of domestic abuse and its effects on women and children and of best practice within the domestic abuse and Housing sectors. As an experienced domestic abuse advocate who has worked with complex and multiple needs, you will be skilled in risk management and safety planning, remaining calm in a crisis and in handling sensitive information on a daily basis. Experience of direct work with female survivors of domestic abuse, of supporting women with housing needs, and of working within safeguarding procedures is essential for this post, as is the need to adopt and promote a strong partnership approach to service provision.

Key responsibilities and duties

- Work with housing service providers and the local council to introduce the service and encourage practitioners to identify domestic abuse, respond appropriately and refer to the service. This will include being co-located within housing services and offering briefings and information to upskill housing workers and improve their response to domestic abuse.
- Hold a caseload and work within the team to conduct comprehensive assessments of needs and risk for women experiencing domestic abuse, carry out short- and longer-term risk management, safety planning and support; and identify and refer to services appropriate to their needs, including attendance at specialist/dedicated courts and MARAC as required.
- Develop and deliver 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.
- Advise women 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 ensuring 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.
- Participate in multi-agency conferences in respect of children and adults at risk as required, providing reports, and undertaking actions as necessary.
- Work with the Managers and Data 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.
- Work effectively as a member of the Advance Domestic Abuse team and in close collaboration with partners and Advance staff including Advance domestic abuse and criminal justice teams
- Work in partnership with housing staff and provide institutional advocacy to maximise positive outcomes and use the appropriate reporting mechanisms to highlight persistent or recurring issues that arise.
- Be responsible for your own personal learning development and keep up to date on research, relevant legislation, policy and practice, and other literature relevant to the role.
- Participate in supervision, training and meetings as required, and assist in the development of services in line with agreed development plans.

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.

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.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: Whole Housing IDVA Person Specification

E = Essential and D = Desirable

KNOWLEDGE AND QUALIFICATIONS		
1.	A relevant qualification or training, for example in domestic abuse, criminal justice, law, social work, substance misuse or related area.	D
2.	A thorough understanding of violence against women and girls with a particular focus on the dynamics of domestic violence (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
3.	An excellent understanding of the criminal justice system and relevant legislation with particular regard to legal and civil options, housing, benefits, matrimonial and children.	E
4.	Thorough knowledge of safeguarding practice, procedures and legislation.	E
5.	Specific knowledge and understanding of the housing system and options available	E
EXPERIENCE		
6.	Strong experience of supporting women who have experienced domestic abuse, forced marriage or 'honour-based violence'.	E
7.	Experience of risk and needs assessment, safety and support planning, particularly with clients with complex/multiple needs.	E
8.	Experience of partnership working and of maintaining excellent working relationships with a range of stakeholders.	D
9.	Experience of working with housing agencies or in a housing setting.	D
TECHNICAL/WORK BASED SKILLS		
10.	Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate well with a wide range of people of all ages and backgrounds.	E
11.	Excellent risk assessment, support and advocacy skills and the ability to advocate successfully using evidence and professional experience.	D
12.	Ability to network, influence, problem solve and apply solution focused approaches to increase access and safety and facilitate positive outcomes for women and children.	D
13.	Ability to work well within a team and responsibly on your own initiative, and of maintaining professional boundaries with clients and partner agencies.	E
14.	Flexible, proactive approach and a good ability to prioritise work.	E
15.	Good crisis management skills and the ability to work effectively under pressure and to deadlines.	E
16.	Good data collection, monitoring and IT skills, including word processing and using databases and spreadsheets.	D
17.	Good report writing skills, including preparing reports for courts, case conference and information for Multi agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS).	D
GENERAL		
18.	Committed to Advance's charity ethos and key values which are Listen and Support, Empower, Innovate, Collaborate, Quality and Accountability	E