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**Merseyside Law Centre**

**Job Description**

**Job Title:**  **Social Welfare Caseworker (for the over 65 age group)**

**PRINCIPAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Team Work and Service Development**

* To work with the Welfare Team Lead to help establish and develop this over 65 social welfare advice and representation project
* Maintain an up to date knowledge of developments in the welfare rights field
* To attend and contribute to staff meetings. To attend and actively participate in other meetings as required.
* To network and liaise with external agencies as agreed.

**Advice and representation**

* Manage a caseload across the field of welfare rights including appeals to the first tier tribunal
* To ensure that all advice, assistance and representation is in compliance with the requirements of the SQM and other relevant quality standards.
* To maintain accurate and up to date client records and files.
* Keeping up-to-date with relevant changes in legislation and case law
* Interviewing and advising clients, at their home, face to face, by telephone and email
* To undertake all aspects of casework. This includes legal research, advising and legal representation through all stages of welfare applications and appeals.

**Administration**

* Maintaining case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, monitoring and reporting
* To be administratively self servicing

**Professional Development**

* To attend regular support and supervision, performance and appraisal meetings.
* To keep up-to-date and to meet identified learning and development needs as appropriate, maintaining professional standards and remaining accredited at appropriate level

**General**

* To be self-servicing, including typing own documents, copying, and maintaining computerised records.
* To follow the MLC process for incurring and paying disbursements
* Produce bi-monthly report for the Director and Trustee in conjunction with the Welfare Rights Lead.
* Supporting own and team’s wellbeing and encourage a positive working environment.
* To ensure that the Equality and Diversity policy of the Law Centre is adhered to when carrying out your duties.
* To take referrals and arrange client appointments according to MLC practice
* To attend team meetings, training sessions and casework meetings.
* To carry out all duties with due regard to equality principles and to challenge discrimination
* To uphold and promote the Aims and Principles of Merseyside Law Centre
* To adhere to MLC’s code of conduct

**Please address all items in the person specification below**

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Essential requirements**

1. 2 years experience of welfare rights casework including appeal representation
2. At least 2 years recent, professional experience in a legal or advice setting
3. Experience of carrying out benefit checks, assist in completing DWP benefit application forms, deal with mandatory reconsideration and appeals when necessary.
4. Ability to travel readily within Knowsley and Liverpool to carry out home visits.
5. Ability to adhere effectively to lone working policies and procedures and undertake safe lone-working.
6. Legal and policy expertise in welfare rights law and advice
7. Some knowledge of Housing issues (threats of eviction, possession notices)
8. Experience of managing a complex caseload
9. Experience of interpreting legislation and giving legal guidance and advice on home visits, face-to-face, over the telephone and by email
10. Ability to use online and written resources to research relevant law
11. Understanding of changes in relevant legislation and the effects of these on our clients
12. Understanding of the issues facing sick, disabled and vulnerable clients
13. Ability to work under pressure, to prioritise and to meet deadlines
14. Excellent communication skills
15. Willingness to contribute to the income generation practices of the Law Centre
16. A commitment to the aims, principles and policies of Merseyside Law Centre and a commitment to Access to Justice
17. Ability to use IT effectively including case management systems
18. Ability to provide appropriate professional support around welfare benefits issues to other team members – both paid staff and volunteers.

**Desirable requirements**

1. 5 years experience of welfare rights casework including appeal representation
2. Experience of working with the over 65 age group
3. A car and clean driving licence
4. Ability to understand Debt issues and co-ordinate with our Debt worker

**Other**

This post is subject to Disclosure and Barring and any other relevant employment checks.