

## **WELFARE BENEFITS VOLUNTEER**

### **VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION**

#### **ACTIVITIES YOU ARE LIKELY TO BE INVOLVED IN**

Training will be given for this role which will involve one or both of the following:

##### **Dealing with initial enquiries:**

- Gathering initial information from online enquiries
- Researching the client's issue
- Identifying further relevant questions and gathering information from the client by phone
- Identifying non-benefits issues and signposting to other services internally and externally
- Booking appointments and associated admin
- Assisting the Welfare Benefits Specialists generally

##### **Disability benefit form-filling:**

- Gathering detailed information about a client's health condition(s)
- Developing a thorough understanding of the regulations and case law that sit behind these health assessments
- Completing the forms and advising clients on their entitlement

Please note, for Disability Form-Filling, we take a detailed and legalistic approach to this work, much more so than many other advice organisations. You are likely to be using the regulations and case law to help clients achieve awards first-time around, but you will also be working in such a way as to give your clients the best chances of success if they need to challenge decisions. In those cases, there may also be opportunities to develop written and oral advocacy skills through mandatory reconsiderations and appeals to the First-tier Tribunal.

#### **THE KINDS OF SKILLS YOU MAY HAVE THAT COULD BE HELPFUL**

- Research skills
- Ability to process large amounts of written information
- Ability to identify key facts and apply your research to those facts
- Attention to detail
- Ability to establish a rapport with a diverse range of people
- Good organisational skills
- A willingness to experiment with different approaches to advice
- Appreciation of the importance of confidentiality
- Sufficient self-awareness to recognise your own biases and prejudices
- Strong IT skills
- Strong levels of literacy and numeracy

## **AMOUNT OF TIME YOU SHOULD EXPECT TO SPEND VOLUNTEERING**

To get the most of volunteering at the Centre we would expect you to be available for at least one full day (or two half days) a week for at least six months. It is unlikely that shorter placements will be appropriate.

You will need to be able to attend our offices in-person at: 167 Railton Road London SE24 0LU.

## **WHO YOU WILL BE WORKING WITH**

You will be working in a small team under the supervision of our Welfare Benefits Specialist Caseworkers and other members of the team.

## **WHAT TRAINING IS PROVIDED**

No prior experience of welfare benefits advice is needed. You will receive an initial induction into the organisation followed by a hands-on training through involvement, under supervision, with live issues as appropriate to your level of development and ability.

Further learning will take place in the role as you encounter different types of cases and explore various advice strategies. You will be fully supported in all cases.

Please note, we are a busy advice service whose primary objective is to provide services to members of the public. We need committed people who are prepared to give the time we need in order for us to make best use of the limited resources we have available.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applications should be made through the Brixton Advice Centre website:

<https://brixtonadvice.org.uk/volunteering/>

## **SELECTION AND AVAILABILITY OF PLACES**

The selection process includes an application form and interview.

We regret that we cannot offer volunteering opportunities to everyone. We base our selection decisions firstly on the extent to which you meet the criteria outlined above. Priority will be given to those who live, work, or study in the London Borough of Lambeth.

## **RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK**

There are no right to work checks for this volunteering opportunity. However, you should satisfy yourself that your immigration status allows you to volunteer.

In general, you will be allowed to volunteer if you have one (or more) of the following:

- British or Irish nationality
- EU/EEA nationality and Settled Status
- EU/EEA nationality and Pre-settled Status
- Refugee status or humanitarian protection
- (including those awaiting the outcome of an application or appeal)
- Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)
- A visa status that allows volunteering

You may be in breach of immigration conditions if you volunteer without one of these statuses. We recommend you seek immigration advice if you are at all unsure.