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**Domestic Violence Support Worker (Refuge)**

**Job Description**

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| Job Title | Domestic Violence Support Worker (Refuge) |
| **Grade** | Scale 5 – NJC scale £23,111 (to be reviewed). |
| **Responsible to** | Refuge Team Leader |
| **Hours** | 35 Hours per week |

The Refuge Services are managed by Leeds Women’s Aid as the lead partner in the Leeds Domestic Violence Service (LDVS) Consortium. This service provides emergency accommodation and support to women and children or men affected by domestic violence and abuse.

LDVS is a service delivered by Leeds Women’s Aid (LWA), Behind Closed Doors (BCD), and Women’s Health Matters.

# Purpose of Job

To provide a high level of support to an identified number of women who have come to live, short term, in one of Leeds Domestic Violence Service refuges or safe houses as a result of the violence and abuse they have experienced. Also, to provide an intensive housing management service to residents living in the refuges and safe houses.

# Responsibilities

1. To provide support to a number of service users who have come to live in one of the refuges/ safe houses.
2. To assess people coming in to the refuge and safe houses, using LWA’s risk and needs assessment procedures.
3. To structure that support within a support plan that will be “driven” by the service user as they identifies their support needs.
4. To work closely with external agencies to meet the service users support needs where their needs are specialist e.g. substance use, self-harm, safeguarding, disability issues etc.
5. Review risk, needs and support planning on a regular basis
6. To work closely with the Children’s Support Workers where children are involved, to identify any specific support needs that a woman may have in relation to parenting or child contact for example.
7. To sign-post service users to specialist solicitors to enable them to use the criminal and civil law to protect herself and her children as well as a wide range of other agencies as required.
8. To ensure important matters are communicated effectively and appropriately.
9. To enable service users to claim welfare benefits to maximise their income, including housing benefit.
10. To issue licence/ tenancy agreements to service users, together with other relevant documentation and ensure that they understand their responsibilities and rights.
11. To collect the weekly charge for living in the refuge/ safe houses directly from service users.
12. To implement the rent arrears procedure if necessary.
13. To facilitate house meetings and service user consultations in order to manage dynamics that may arise as a result of the shared living arrangements within the refuges.
14. To involve service users in their support as well as the wider functioning of LWA
15. To ensure that physical standards are maintained in the house(s) by operating the maintenance system and purchasing any renewals or furniture.
16. To undertake health and safety and fire safety checks in the house(s).
17. To deal with any breaches of the licence/ tenancy agreement following LWA procedures. In the case of serious breaches, to take the matter to your line manager.
18. To enable a service user to work towards a permanent housing solution.
19. To maintain confidential records and monitoring systems.
20. To clean units between lets so that they are clean and welcoming to new service users.
21. To work flexibly within agreed working patterns including participating in rota for out of hours bleep cover.
22. To work within LDVS policies and procedures at all time, paying particular attention to confidentiality and health and safety.
23. To embrace anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of this role.
24. To work at all times in a non-directive, non-judgmental and empowering way with women who live in our refuges.
25. To undertake any training or development opportunities provided by LWA.
26. Provide support and guidance to other LWA staff to develop their skills, understanding and awareness of supporting women, children and men who have experience of domestic violence.
27. To work with respect and in partnership with colleagues within and external to LWA.
28. To work with LWA managers to develop new projects.
29. To carry out any other duties that areas reasonably required by LWA.

###### Physical Conditions

The post will be based in offices in Leeds.

##### Economic Conditions

Starting salary National Joint Council (NJC) Scale 5 £23,111 – to be reviewed

**Requirements:**

Must be female (E) *(Exempt under the Equality Act 2010 Schedule 9, Part 1)*

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT WORKER (REFUGE)**

**Knowledge**

* An understanding of the impact of domestic violence on women, children and men. (E)
* An understanding of the responsibilities of statutory agencies towards women, children and men experiencing domestic violence. (E)
* An understanding of the barriers faced by those from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences including black and minority ethnic women, people with disabilities and LGBT+ people affected by domestic violence. (E)
* A working knowledge of the benefits system, housing rights and legal rights relating to domestic violence. (E)
* A basic understanding of mental health, substance use and complex needs. (E)
* An understanding of safeguarding in relation to children & young people and vulnerable adults. (E)

**Skills**

* Ability to form good relationships with service users whilst working within professional boundaries. (E)
* Ability to communicate effectively with a broad range of people. (E)
* Excellent advocacy skills. (E)
* Proven ability to work on own initiative (E)
* Numeracy and literacy. (E)
* Report writing skills. (E)
* Good technological skills including the ability to use electronic databases and software, and being able to present the information clearly. (E)

**Experience**

* Experience of working with survivors of domestic violence. (E)
* Experience of working within supported housing. (E)
* Experience of undertaking structured support work with service users. (E)
* Experience of working collaboratively with other agencies. (E)

**Qualifications**

* A suitable qualification in the social/ health care field, in supported housing management etc. (D)

**Other**

* Values must be consistent with those of LWA. (E)
* Commitment to upholding LWA’s policies and procedures. (E)
* Commitment to working positively with diversity. (E)
* Willingness to work flexibly. (E)
* Hold a full current driving licence. (D)
* Ability to speak a second community language (D)

**LAST REVIEWED JUNE 2018**