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**PEEBLES AND DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

**WELFARE BENEFITS ADVISER**

**Job Description**

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| Job Title: | Welfare Benefits Adviser |
| Responsible to: | Bureau Manager |
| Hours per week | 14 hours |
| Location: | Based in Peebles and District CAB and currently working remotely |
| Salary: | £22,884 - £24,844 FTE (£12.57 - £13.65/ Hour) dependent upon experience |
| Closing Date: | Midday, 22 May 2020 |
| Interviews: | Will be carried out remotely |
| Term: | Fixed Term until 31 March 2021 with possible extension dependent upon funding. |

# Summary of main responsibilities

To ensure the provision and development of quality advice, information and representation on statutory UK and Scottish Social Security benefits, and other social welfare matters as appropriate. To carry out advice delivery, casework, appeals and representation work. To provide specialist second tier support to generalist advisers and delivery of welfare benefits training. The post holder will work within the area of Tweeddale in the Scottish Borders to alleviate poverty amongst disadvantaged people, improving life prospects and promoting social inclusion.

# Responsibilities

* Carry out ongoing welfare benefits casework, researching and drafting written submissions and assisting clients at review and at appeal level to prepare for benefit appeals
* Provide representation for clients at Social Security First Tier Tribunals.
* Prepare cases for Upper Tribunals.
* Provide support and guidance on complex cases to CAB staff and volunteers.
* Refer clients on to colleagues or other agencies as appropriate for specialist help with issues that fall outside the remit of the service.
* Keep comprehensive records of casework which meet audit requirements, including use of CASTLE case recording system.
* Be responsible for the recording, collation and reporting of statistical data.
* Keep all records confidential, safe and accessible for future retrieval.
* Extract and compile information for social policy and other reporting purposes.
* Carry out relevant research and/or consultation exercises.
* Assist in developing and gathering evaluation feedback from service users and partners.
* Deliver training where appropriate to generalist advisers.
* Participate in the Scottish Borders Welfare Liaison Group.
* Participate in the bureau’s delivery of the Scottish Government’s Money Talk Team Project and the Universal Credit - Help to Claim Service
* Undertake any other reasonable duties as requested by the Manager.

**Self Management**

* Take responsibility for implementing policies, procedures and protocols of the organisation.
* Take responsibility for personal safety in and out of the office in accordance with the organisation's Safety Procedure.
* Participate in the support, supervision and appraisal process.
* Provide written reports on project progress and for other publications.

**Team work**

* Share relevant information and give support and encouragement to colleagues.
* Participate in meetings as required
* Assist in the development of the organisation as required.

**Personal Development**

* Keep up to date knowledge of Legislation, Policies and case law relevant to post
* Identify own learning needs and participate in identified learning opportunities when required.
* Feedback on learning opportunities.
* Assist with delivery of training when required.

**Promoting the service**

* Present a positive image of the Bureau at all times.
* Form effective working relations and networking with other organisations and stakeholders ensuring collaborative approach in service delivery.
* Assist in raising awareness of the service.

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION – WELFARE BENEFITS ADVISER**

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Qualifications | Good level of general education and/or have equivalent relevant experience.  Evidence of vocational training/qualification | Additional training undertaken in, for example, welfare benefits as they relate to immigration, carers, etc |
|  | Extensive Welfare Benefits advice experience, particularly with vulnerable clients gained within the last two years.  Experience of preparing for and providing Tribunal representation  Good awareness and understanding of how rights and advice issues impact on local communities  Recent experience of working in a performance driven environment and evidence of meeting targets.  Experienced in using and constructing Spreadsheets and Databases; using word processing packages.  Experience of partnership working in the voluntary and statutory sectors. | Experience of working in the advice sector  Experience of undertaking research and/or consultation  Experience of CASTLE case recording system  Experience of Upper Tribunals |
| Skills, knowledge and attributes | An excellent working knowledge of Welfare benefits, better off calculations and the appeals processes.  Ability to research, understand and explain complex information both orally and in writing.  Effective oral communication skills with particular emphasis on advocacy and representation.  Effective writing skills with particular emphasis on drafting reviews, submissions, reports and correspondence.  Ordered approach to casework and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures.  Understand the issues involved in and confident in interviewing vulnerable clients.  Commitment and ability to taking part in social policy, research or evaluation  Numerate to the level required in the tasks.  Ability to prioritise own work, meet deadlines and manage caseload.  Ability to use IT in the provision of advice and the preparation of reports and submissions.  Attention to detail. | Awareness of the social needs of local communities and services provided by the voluntary sector  Experience in delivering training or a willingness to learn |
| Values and Attitudes | Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.  Ability to support and encourage vulnerable individuals.  Ability and willingness to work as part of a team.  Ability to monitor and maintain own standards.  Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision.  Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the CAB service and its equal opportunities policies.  Commitment to voluntarism  Commitment to quality customer care. | Proven ability to work within a community development or volunteer setting.  Experience of implementing equal opportunities policies and practices. |
| Other | Willing to be flexible and adaptable in meeting the needs of the service  Able to work on own initiative  Ability to travel as required by job remit and occasionally undertake work out of office hours |  |