

Falkirk Area Welfare Benefits Advice Support Unit

Job Description

**Employer:** Falkirk CAB

**Job Title:** Welfare Benefits Officer

**Responsible to:** Project Manager

**Grade**  £23,232 per annum

**Main Purpose:** Complimenting existing welfare benefits advice services in the Falkirk Council Area, this project provides an additional welfare benefits advice service, offering a quick response to people in need of the service, who have been directly affected by welfare reform.

The postholder will carry out home visits to vulnerable clients who have physical or mental health disabilities.

The postholder will provide a direct face-to-face service across the Falkirk Council Area in easily accessible venues to:

* Discuss the immediate concerns of the person
* Carry out a holistic welfare benefit assessment and identify potential benefit entitlement to maximise income
* Assist with the completion of benefit application forms
* Identify options and solutions to meet the persons needs and work closely with other agencies to ensure that further assistance is accessed, where appropriate
* Advise and explain about appeal rights
* Identify cases suitable for progression through the benefits reconsideration and appeals system and complete preparatory work to refer to Falkirk Council for representation at appeals tribunals.
* Provide occasional representation for clients at appeals tribunals

# Key Responsibilities

* Provide information and advice on all aspects of Welfare Benefits.
* Provide assistance with the completion of welfare benefits forms and take on complex benefit casework.
* Identify suitable cases for progression the benefits reconsideration and appeals processes
* Seek supporting evidence for people with cases suitable for progression through the reconsideration and appeals system
* Prepare all pre-appeals paperwork and refer to Falkirk Council for representation at appeals tribunal
* On occasion provide clients with representation at appeals tribunals
* Maintain close links with Citizens Advice Bureaux/Falkirk Council/Falkirk Jobcentre and other agencies and refer cases on as appropriate.
* To liaise and negotiate with other agencies with regards to benefit enquiries on general or individual cases.
* To work co-operatively with Welfare Benefits Advisers in Falkirk Council, other CABx and other agencies, within the local authority area.
* Participate in the production of reports and strategies to improve the provision of welfare benefits.
* Monitor changes in Welfare Benefits Legislation and attend internal and external training courses as appropriate.
* Ensure that ongoing welfare benefit advice service cases are progressed, recorded and filed appropriately.
* Support bureau volunteers training as Welfare Benefits Officers.

Undertake such duties from time to time that may fall outside of the above.

# Accountability

* The postholder will be responsible for ensuring client confidentiality. Accurate record keeping will be required. As the postholder will be seeing people within the community and visiting people in their own homes they need to display the ability to operate without supervision.
* Provide written reports to monthly/quarterly steering group meetings as required.
* Attend annual appraisal



WELFARE BENEFITS OFFICER

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

* Good standard of general education.
* Ideally candidate will have considerable experience (paid or unpaid) in advice work or related fields
* In-depth current knowledge of the benefits system, particularly that relating to sickness and disability benefits
* Ideally candidate will have experience of carrying and managing a complex caseload
* Ability to work under pressure, on your own initiative, but also to be part of a team
* Ability to work in a systematic manner
* Excellent organisational, communication and report writing skills
* Good IT skills – especially word-processing, and database entry
* Good working knowledge of the statutory and voluntary agencies in the area
* Understanding of community care issues
* An ability to deal with clients and other professionals in a sensitive manner
* Commitment to the principle of a client driven, volunteer led service
* Commitment to the aims of Falkirk CAB
* Commitment to CAB Equal Opportunities Policy