**Skye & Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau** 

**Welfare Rights Officer**

**Job Description and Person Specification**

Role purpose: To ensure the provision and development of quality advice, information and representational advocacy on statutory benefits, and other social welfare matters as appropriate within the area of benefit of Skye & Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau by way of casework and specialist support services to Bureau volunteers and paid staff of the Bureau, social work, health and voluntary sector practitioners.

To have particular regard to the requirements of “persons in need” within the Bureau’s area of benefit, and to assist in developing responsive and effective systems of service to address those requirements.

**Key work areas and tasks:**

**Casework**

* Provide casework covering the full range of Welfare Rights
* Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning and assisting clients with their benefit claims
* Negotiate with third parties as appropriate.
* Assist partner landlords with undertaking money management risk assessment matrixes and household census completions for clients included within active casework
* Ensure income maximisation through the take up of appropriate benefits.
* Prepare and present cases to the appropriate statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as appropriate.
* Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case and refer to other advisers or specialist agencies as appropriate.
* Make home/outreach visits as necessary.
* Provide advice and assistance to other staff across the whole range of welfare rights advice issues.
* Ensure that all casework conforms to the bureau's Office Manual and quality standards
* Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, and statistical monitoring and report preparation.
* Ensure that all work conforms to the bureau's systems and procedures.
* Assist clients to connect with employability services
* Liaise with the Housing Options Officer

**Social policy**

* Assist with social policy work by providing information about clients' circumstances.
* Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to bureau management.
* Monitor service provision to ensure that it reaches the widest possible client group.
* Alert other staff to local and national issues.

**Professional development**

* Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to money advice work and undertake appropriate training.
* Read relevant publications.
* Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
* Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings/management team meetings as appropriate.
* Assist with Service initiatives for the improvement of services.

**Administration**

* Review and make recommendations for improvements to bureau services.
* Maintain local information systems.
* Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
* Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to bureau work and undertake appropriate training.
* Attend internal and external meetings as agreed with the manager.
* Maintain close liaison with relevant external agencies.

**Public relations**

* Liaise with statutory and non-statutory organisations and represent the Service on outside bodies as appropriate.

**Other duties and responsibilities**

* Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
* Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the CAB service.
* Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.

**Person specification**

* CURRENT Knowledge and experience of Welfare Rights
* Effective oral communication skills with particular emphasis on negotiating and representing.
* Effective writing skills with particular emphasis on negotiating, representing and preparing reviews, reports and correspondence.
* Ordered approach to casework and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures.
* Understand the issues involved in interviewing clients.
* 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.
* Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.
* 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 the principle of a client driven, volunteer led service

**Please Ensure**

**That on your application you show how you meet the requirements giving clear examples of casework management within an advice and advocacy setting.**