



Volunteer Position: ADVICE VOLUNTEER

South London Refugee Association

The South London Refugee Association (SLRA) supports refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants who live, work or study in South London. SLRA provides advice and support to assist our clients to build stable and secure lives for themselves and their families.

Through our support we aim to:

- > Reduce isolation
- > Improve health and wellbeing
- > Promote equal access to service provision
- > Relieve stress and poverty

We run two weekly drop-in advice centres for adult clients and families, a youth support project, a term-time youth club, GCSE Maths and English sessions for 14 – 16 year olds, ESOL classes for adults, and a programme of positive activities and outings.

Project Description

At our weekly drop-in sessions, staff and volunteers work as a team to advise and advocate for clients so that they are able to access services and support available to them. These include housing, welfare benefits, asylum support and immigration advice.

Days and time required

Mondays or Wednesdays. This may be subject to change.

Role Description

The Advice Volunteer role is varied, but always involves a non-judgemental attitude, a positive and practical attitude and enthusiasm for working as a team.

Volunteers are supervised by the Advice Coordinator.

Previous experience of advice giving would be useful but not essential: some training is provided and knowledge is shared amongst the team.

Main Volunteer Tasks

- Working face-to-face with clients to assess their needs.
- Advocating on behalf of clients by liaising with external organisations, statutory bodies and government departments. For example, Local Authorities, Hostels, the Home Office and Jobcentre Plus.
- Referring clients to specialist agencies and following up referrals.
- Responding quickly and creatively to crises.
- Researching a wide range of areas, such as destitution services, accommodation providers and hardship grants.
- Recording client casenotes in a clear and concise manner.
- Assisting clients in completing forms.
- Occasional administrative tasks.

Essential Skills and Characteristics

- A commitment to the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.
- A non-judgemental attitude and the ability to work impartially and sensitively with clients from a range of backgrounds.
- Excellent communication skills: The ability to communicate with vulnerable and distressed individuals, as well as being able to liaise with external agencies in English in a professional manner, both verbally and in writing.
- An understanding of the issues affecting vulnerable people in the UK.
- Punctuality and reliability.
- Additional languages are an advantage.

We request that volunteers commit to volunteering in this role for a minimum of 6 months.

Expenses: Travel expenses are paid

Training: All new volunteers will receive induction training. Volunteers are offered regular appraisals which identify their training and development needs. In-house and external training is provided as appropriate. This will not be extensive, but will provide a grounding required for the role. However, we aim to constantly develop our volunteers by providing them with new, interesting and challenging work.

Location:

The roles are based at either St Mary's Church in Balham (Mondays) or Holy Trinity Church in South Wimbledon (Wednesdays).

We particularly welcome refugee and asylum seeking volunteers.

DBS (police record checks)

We carry out DBS checks for all Advice Volunteers when they start at SLRA.

Contact information

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