



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service



JOB DESCRIPTION: WELFARE OFFICER (TPDPS & WW) **(Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme & Wider Welfare)**

- Responsible to:** Welfare Coordinator (Line Manager)
- Location:** Greater Belfast, North Down and Lisburn
- Hours of work:** 30 hours per week (FT) until 31st March 2023 with potential for extension, subject to new funding being confirmed.
- Salary:** £21,820 p/annum Gross (for 30 hours) + 6% Pension payable monthly in arrears

Purpose of the Role

To deliver a confidential, impartial and objective welfare advice service to victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland Troubles to include, face to face (centre or home visits), email, via telephone or Zoom/Microsoft Teams. To provide representation for SEFF clients at all stages of the welfare application process, including the Appeals stage.

Key working relationships:

Internal contacts:

- Welfare Coordinator (Line Manager)
- SEFF's Management Team
- Individuals and families (clients)
- Other sessional welfare service personnel
- Volunteers

External contacts:

- Other community and voluntary organisations
- Statutory agencies eg VSS, CVSNI, DOJ, TEO

Key Responsibilities:

1. Follow up and prioritise referrals to the welfare advice service, advising and assisting clients with all aspects of Welfare applications, including those for the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme.

2. Be proficient in the rules and regulations associated with the PIP, Carer Applications, Disability welfare applications, Housing Benefit applications, Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme and all other welfare applications as appropriate.
3. Carry out follow up work promptly and efficiently as required.
4. Liaise with Staff across the SEFF Team, Health and Wellbeing Caseworkers, VSS Case Managers, Counsellors and other sessional providers and volunteers within SEFF to provide a holistic service to clients and best support their needs.
5. Provide information to clients on welfare benefit rules/tests and processes so clients are empowered and have a better understanding of the welfare benefits system and welfare reforms which may affect them.
6. Maximise client's income by completion of Welfare applications process or undertaking benefit checks, benefit and better off calculations and identifying other means of practical support.
7. Carry out all follow-up work for the resolution of a case; including telephone calls, letters, preparation for Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals, liaising with other staff and/or agencies.
8. Advise and assist clients as necessary to obtain further information when required.
9. Prepare written submissions for appeals, research commissioner decisions and abide by the TAS Code of Practice in providing Social Security Appeal representation.
10. Provide effective representation at Social Security and Disability Appeal Tribunals.
11. Assume responsibility for the management of case files including the accurate inputting of relevant case details onto the organisation's computerised Advice Pro case recording system and maintaining timely and up to date records.
12. Identify and highlight advice needs and issues as they arise including welfare reform.
13. Provide materials/talks/information days on welfare changes and other issues relevant to victims/survivors and other staff as requested.
14. To keep updated with the changes in law relating to welfare reform and the benefits system.

Reporting

15. Prepare monthly reports for the Director of Services and statistics for the Welfare Coordinator.
16. Prepare welfare articles or materials on welfare issues for client use including for the monthly Newsletter, SEFF website, Facebook and Twitter Apps as requested.
17. Network and liaise with voluntary and statutory organisations and government agencies.

Social Policy & Lobbying

18. Identify, record and follow up social policy issues as they arise and report these issues to the Director of Services.
19. Contribute to social policy research and papers as requested
20. Provide evidence, case studies and feedback on the relevant law and practice and assist in making proposals to effect change of policy relevant to victims/survivors.

Other

21. Identify and liaise with the Office Manager/ Welfare Coordinator in relation to personal training needs.
22. Undertake training as agreed with the Office Manager, and Welfare Coordinator, and attend internal and external meetings as requested.
23. Complete administration duties associated with the role for e.g. scanning documents onto Advice Pro and filing.
24. Adhere to legal and organisational requirements in the provision of advice, advocacy and representation.
25. Any other reasonable duties requested by the SEFF Management Team.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria

1. Law Centre NI or NIACAB accredited qualification in Welfare Rights.
2. Completion of welfare reform courses to demonstrate ongoing professional development.
3. At least 1 years' experience of working in a welfare rights setting within the last two years.
4. Experience of representing clients at Social Security and Disability Appeal tribunals or similar appeals.
5. Experience of assisting clients in preparing reviews and mandatory reconsiderations of benefit decisions.
6. Experience in the use of IT software, Microsoft programs, and in the use of CRM (e.g. Advice Pro)
7. Demonstrable knowledge of recent welfare reforms and universal credit.
8. Demonstrable ability to understand complex information and legislation.
9. Excellent, listening, written and oral communication skills.
10. Flexible approach to working hours, and travel throughout working region.
11. Demonstrable ability to plan, prioritise and organise own workload.
12. Caring and empathetic approach to the victims of trauma.
13. Current driving licence and access to a suitable vehicle (appropriately maintained and insured for business). (*This criteria will be waived in the case of an applicant whose disability prohibits driving but who is able to demonstrate an appropriate alternative means of meeting the mobility requirements of the post).

14. Desirable Criteria

15. Law Centre NI, or Advice NI qualification in Tribunal Representation or equivalent.

16. Level 6 Qualification (Degree)

17. Experience of representing clients at Social Security and Disability Appeal tribunals or similar appeals.

18. Demonstrate knowledge of housing rights in regard to issues which may affect victims and survivors.

19. Awareness of additional financial support schemes that are available to victims/survivors.