



Client Support Caseworker Candidate Pack

Zacchaeus 2000 Trust



Job Description

Responsible to: Casework Manager

Hours of Work: 35 hours per week – Flexible working requests will be considered

Salary: £29,577 pa plus pension

Contract Type: Permanent (following successful probation period)

Location: Victoria, London (+ outreach in the community and the possibility of some remote working)

Holidays: 28 days plus bank holidays

Pension: Up to 5% matched employer contribution

About the role

The postholder will provide holistic support to clients accessing welfare benefits and housing advice from Z2K's wider casework team to address multiple issues that are impacting on their lives and ability to engage with advice. The postholder will be the first point of contact for all internal and external referrals for support.

As part of the team, the postholder will work to identify clients who would benefit from support in addition to advice and casework and work directly with clients to empower them to address their challenges. This may include helping individual clients to access additional specialist services for example; mental health support, Adult Social Care, or substance misuse services. There will also be times where the postholder will need to accompany clients to important meetings in the community and advocate on their behalf.

The postholder will be responsible for coordinating the Casework team's access to Z2K's hardship grants and support with external grant applications. The postholder will support clients with form filling, accessing small grants, liaising with landlords, and other service providers, accessing debt advice, employment support or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes. The post holder will also look at ways clients can maximise their income through benefit uptake as well as reducing expenditure by looking at entitlement to concessionary travel passes, Council Tax reduction or utility discounts. Support will range from a one-off intervention to a more in-depth package of support, lasting up to 6 months. In all interventions, the postholder will be working to support clients to take control and build their confidence.

About You

We are looking for a committed and proactive individual with knowledge and interest in social welfare advice and support. You will have gained experience of advice, support or casework through paid employment or voluntary work. You will have intermediate knowledge of the welfare benefits system and housing options that may be available to our clients, as well as an understanding of wider services; including Community Mental Health, Adult Social Care, hardship grants, emergency funds and concessionary travel. You will demonstrate excellent communication and interpersonal skills, have a commitment to working with communities

who are highly disadvantaged and a passion for helping people to overcome homelessness and poverty. You will have an understanding of the multiple barriers facing those experiencing poverty and homelessness. You will have the ability to work with service users empathetically and have a willingness to try new tasks and support the wider team with policy work and online communication. From time to time, you may be asked to work outside of usual working hours.

Z2K is an equal opportunity employer. People with lived experience of poverty, from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ individuals and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. We welcome evidence of experience from both work and non-work settings such as volunteering and personal life.

We encourage all applicants to complete the Equalities Monitoring form in the [How To Apply](#) section of this pack. We rely on your voluntary participation to enable us to monitor the impact of our equal opportunities policy.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Support, Casework and Advocacy

1. Identify clients who would benefit from additional casework support through regular liaison with the casework team and external referral partners.
2. Participate in the weekly enquiry rota, deliver outreach drop-in sessions and present cases to the wider casework team and take on internal referrals at weekly triage meetings.
3. Assess clients, agree action plans and support clients with their goals. You will work with them in an empowering way, helping them to make sense of the benefits and housing issues they are facing, and how they can help themselves to address these issues.
4. Advise on benefit entitlement, income maximisation and provide form filling support.
5. Develop and deliver workshops on income maximisation, tenancy rights, independent living etc. remotely and in person when possible.
6. Provide basic welfare benefit and housing advice to clients and where necessary provide more detailed advice, with support from the casework manager.
7. Provide advocacy support, for example where clients have particular support needs accompany them to attend external appointments and assessments including but not limited to; disability benefit health assessments, job centre appointments and homelessness approaches to local authorities.
8. Support quality assurance processes for work completed by volunteers including welfare benefit forms.
9. Maintain a database of external providers who offer services that are relevant to clients, build and maintain professional relationships with external providers who are able to directly and indirectly support Z2K's clients.
10. Co-ordinate access to Z2K's hardship grants, maintain a database of grant giving organisations (for both statutory and voluntary sector) and be the named professional for external grant applications.

11. Support the recruitment, training and management of volunteers. Be responsible for line managing up to 3 volunteers at a time.
12. Maintain clear and comprehensive case records using designated IT systems, for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation.
13. Ensure all data is adequately protected and handled in accordance with the organisation's confidentiality systems and procedures and in line with data protection regulations.
14. Ensure through reading, training and other methods that your own level of knowledge is up-to-date and that information is disseminated to all other team members where appropriate.

Policy and Campaigns

1. Assist policy and campaigns work by identifying and highlighting social policy issues faced by clients
2. Provide qualitative and quantitative data on cases (e.g. case studies, casework statistics)

Other

1. Prepare blogs, case studies and other relevant communications.
2. Develop and maintain good working relationships with colleagues, sharing information and making a positive contribution; Participate in casework and wider team meetings
3. Willingness to take a flexible and adaptable approach to service delivery, including working outside of normal office hours on occasion when required. The staff TOIL policy will apply.
4. Willingness to work at the Z2K office, remotely and at outreach venues as required.
5. Undertake other duties as may be required.

Learning and Professional Development

1. Identify learning and development needs in conjunction with your line manager.
2. Willingness to develop knowledge, skills and undertake appropriate training in line with learning and development plans.
3. Attend and contribute to support and supervision and appraisal meetings with your line manager, to further own development

Person Specification

| Experience | Essential | Desirable |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| At least one years' experience of advice, support or casework through paid employment or voluntary work supporting people from diverse backgrounds and providing person-centred, holistic support | ✓ | |
| Experience of volunteer recruitment and management | | ✓ |
| Experience of working within a computerised case management system to provide effective advice and casework, record casework data and outcomes. | ✓ | |
| Knowledge and Understanding | Essential | Desirable |
| An intermediate understanding of the welfare benefit system and housing options that may be available to those experiencing poor quality housing or homelessness. | ✓ | |
| A thorough understanding of the support needs of those experiencing poverty and homelessness, as well as knowledge and understanding of statutory and voluntary services relevant to our service users. | ✓ | |
| A thorough understanding of professional boundaries and the issues surrounding confidentiality and safeguarding issues that may arise within the provision advice and casework. | ✓ | |
| Understanding of data protection requirements in the provision of advice services. | ✓ | |
| Understanding of the needs and experiences of vulnerable or disadvantaged clients from a range of backgrounds, including black and minoritised communities, people with disabilities, mental or physical health conditions. | ✓ | |
| Skills and Abilities | | |
| Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to relate to a wide cross-section of people, including people from diverse communities experiencing or at risk of poverty | ✓ | |
| Good organisational and time management skills, with the ability to use own initiative and prioritise workload effectively | ✓ | |
| Excellent verbal and written communication skills and the ability to communicate complex information to a wide variety of audiences in an accessible way. | ✓ | |
| Ability to work as part of a team sharing information, encouraging collaboration and feedback, promoting common practices, challenge sensitively and give and receive constructive feedback. | ✓ | |

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| Numeracy skills required to understand and check welfare benefits awards, calculations, financial statements, and produce statistics and data for reports. | ✓ | |
| Highly proficient in the use of IT software packages including Microsoft packages, casework and data management systems. | ✓ | |
| Values | | |
| A commitment to working in and contributing to the ethos of an anti-poverty charity. | ✓ | |
| A demonstrable commitment to inclusive working, ensuring equality and valuing diversity and ability to incorporate this in all of your work. | ✓ | |
| A commitment to continuous professional development, including a willingness to develop knowledge and skills. | ✓ | |
| A commitment to client focused and holistic approach to advice, support and casework services. | ✓ | |

About Zacchaeus 2000 Trust (Z2K)

Z2K's vision is that no individual in the UK should be living in poverty. We believe that adequate income and secure housing are key to creating a more equal society where everyone has the chance to lead a stable and dignified life. We work with people in London to solve their social welfare legal issues, with a focus on social security and housing matters, and we use the evidence from our casework to campaign to change policy and practice that drives injustice. Embedded at the heart of Z2K is our client-centred approach and our work to ensure the voices and views of people with lived experience are heard by decision-makers.

We work with a diverse range of people across London who are eligible for Social Security benefits and prioritise those who are most vulnerable. A large proportion of our clients are from black and minoritised communities and/or have a disability, mental or physical health condition. We take a holistic approach to casework, working with clients to resolve their social security and housing issues, provide wraparound support, and facilitate access to other services. Our award-winning Pro-Bono project handles social security benefit appeals to the First Tier Tribunal in relation to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Universal Credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) decisions as well as form filling support for benefit applications and reviews for our most vulnerable clients. Our Pro-Bono Project is supported by volunteers from corporate law firms and University law students. We work closely with other independent advice services and law centres as well as legal aid lawyers and a range of law firms. In 2020, we supported 967 people with 1,603 cases.

For further information about Z2K, please [visit our website](#).

Our Team

Our team of seventeen committed and dynamic staff members work across Operations, Advice and Casework Services, and Policy and Campaigns. The Chief Executive is supported by an Office Manager and Operations Officer in the day to day running of the organisation. Our Fundraising Manager supports the Chief Executive and Directors to secure the income required to deliver our vital work. The Director of Policy and Campaigns leads a team of two Policy & Campaigns Officers and the new Participation Officer role. The Advice and Casework team, led by the Director of Advice Services, currently comprises Casework Manager, Tribunals Project Co-ordinator, four Caseworkers, and a Casework Assistant. We are also supported by a wide range of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers who work across our projects and services.

Employee Benefits

We offer a range of employee benefits including generous annual leave entitlement, a matched pension contribution up to 5% of salary, life insurance and income protection for all employees, an employee assistance programme providing a range of services and support, and training and development opportunities to continue your professional development. As an inclusive employer, we consider flexible working arrangements in line with organisational requirements.

How to Apply

To apply, please complete our online [application form](#). The completed form is the only information we will use in consideration of your application, so please ensure that you complete it fully, with particular attention to your personal statement detailing how you meet the required specifications for the role.

If you have any particular support needs in relation to the application or recruitment process, please email recruitment@z2k.org or contact Tanya Sutton on 020 7259 0801 (press option1 & ext. 211) to discuss how we can support you.

Anonymised monitoring during the job application process enables us to see what is happening in practice, to assess the impact of our equal opportunities policy and its implementation, to set any targets for improvements, and to measure progress. We rely on your voluntary participation to enable us to do this, and to make the exercise successful. Participation is anonymous and you can select 'Prefer not to say' in response to any of the questions.

[Please complete our Equalities Monitoring Form](#)

Closing Date: Midnight 12th December 2021

Interview & Assessment date: 22nd December 2021

Any queries related to this job application process can be directed to recruitment@z2k.org and we will respond within one working day.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), The Zacchaeus 2000 Trust (Z2K) complies fully with the [code of practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.