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**Island Advice**

**Information for Volunteer Advice Worker Applicants**

jo.ellis@island-advice.org.uk

**General Information**

Volunteers are invaluable to helping to deliver the much-needed advice services. Island Advice recruits volunteers and helps them to find a work placement in an advice centre. We deliver a basic advice work training course and offer NVQ Level 3 in Advice and Guidance. If you are interested in finding employment as an advisor, you will need to commit to being available 2 days per week for a year, one day per week volunteering and one day a week training.

**Nature of volunteering work**

Advice and advocacy is the core work of the all the organisations in the partnership, client groups and venues vary but all agencies provide advice on welfare rights, housing and debt issues. All work is supervised, and training is provided. You will assist clients with welfare benefits, housing and debt matters under the supervision of trained staff. You could be helping with sorting out benefit problems, filing in a forms, contacting a creditor to arrange or dispute payments for debts, dealing with housing problems. You will be interviewing clients, finding out their situation, supporting them to resolve their problem or referring them to alternative services.

This might include face to face/telephone/video appointments, filling in forms, helping at drop in advice sessions

**Suitable for**

You do not need any previous experience, but good literacy and communication skills are essential. You do not need to have any qualifications; all applicants must sit a literacy test. Advice work can be stressful and demanding, you need to be able to able to deal with clients in a non-judgemental, supportive, and empathetic manner. You will also need basic computer skills.

**Time commitment**:

Two days per week for a minimum of 12 months

**Training provided**:

* All volunteers will have to **volunteer for one day per week giving advice**; you will shadow experienced workers, eventually interviewing and giving advice on benefits, housing, debt issues (all supervised)
* We deliver a **20-session basic advice work course** and volunteers will be eligible for a place on this and can gain a Learning to Advise certificate (one day per week for a period of around 6 months), held in Island House, E14 3PG 10am to 3pm (usually Tuesdays)
* Once you have completed your basic certificate you will be eligible to register for **National Vocational Qualification** (Level 3 and 4 in Advice and Guidance), an accredited qualification

**Partner Advice Centres**

We facilitate a network of advice centres in Tower Hamlets ([www.thcan.org.uk](http://www.thcan.org.uk)) many of these centres offer a voluntary work placement, however if you apply for a place on our training course we will help you find a suitable place.

If you are already volunteering, as long as you are giving advice and carrying out at least one day per week of giving advice you would be eligible for a please

For more information and an application please contact jo.ellis@island-advice.org.uk