Legal Admin Volunteer

Ideal time commitment: 1-2 days per week, 6-month minimum

Reports to: Legal Administrator

Location: Asylum Aid office, London

# About Asylum Aid

Asylum Aid (previously merged with Migrants Resource Centre under Consonant) is, and has long been, a leader in the Immigration and NGO sector: providing high-level legal support to ensure the protection of vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Now, in its 30th year of providing high quality legal and welfare support - our services are needed more than ever.

The Helen Bamber Foundation is a pioneering Human Rights charity supporting refugees and asylum seekers who are the survivors of trafficking and torture, including gender-based and ‘honour-based’ violence. Recognising the complexity of each client’s suffering and needs, the Foundation offers specialist services within a Model of Integrated Care encompassing: therapy; medical advice; legal protection; counter-trafficking support; housing and welfare advice; and community and integration.

Since August 2020, Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid have combined efforts to support the vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees who need us the most, operating as two separate entities joined under a group structure, known as the Helen Bamber Foundation Group.

# About the role

This role is an opportunity to get experience of working in a busy office environment supporting a legal advice service. Through providing vital administrative support, responding to enquiries, arranging client meetings and coordinating interpreters, you will help our expert legal advisers to deliver specialist legal advice and representation to refugees and survivors in complex cases. Through this role, you will get experience of working in a legal advice organisation and an understanding of its administrative and support needs. As the role develops, there may also be the opportunity to gain basic knowledge of Legal Aid procedures and client care.

# Main tasks and activities

* Providing general administrative support such as copying, scanning, filing documents, data entry and generating reports from client databases;
* Basic reception duties including answering the phone, taking messages, opening and distributing post, and monitoring our email inboxes;
* Maintaining signposting list and providing information about alternative services where we cannot assist;
* Booking client appointments and interpreters, and maintaining interpreter register;
* Assisting the Legal Administrator and/or Billing Coordinator with preparing files for billing or transfer to another provider.

# Skills and experience needed

* Understanding of, and commitment to, the objectives of Asylum Aid;
* A demonstrable empathy for our vulnerable clients, including asylum seekers, refugees and survivors of torture and trafficking;
* Punctual, reliable and self-motivated with a positive, ’can-do’ attitude;
* Basic understanding of the challenges facing our clients and of the UK asylum system
* High degree of accuracy and attention to detail
* Experience of working with spreadsheet computer programs (e.g. Excel) and databases
* Confidence with IT skills
* Excellent organisational skills
* Strong communication skills – written, verbally on the phone and face-to-face
* Ability to work well as part of a team and form effective working relationships
* Understanding of the importance of confidentiality and respect for client confidentiality
* Ability to complete tasks independently once given a clear brief

# What you will get out of the role:

* Greater understanding of the experiences of asylum seekers and refugees;
* Knowledge of the UK asylum process and associated legal systems;
* Experience of working in a busy legal advice service;
* Basic awareness of Legal Aid eligibility and procedures;
* Experience of taking calls and responding to enquiries from vulnerable and often distressed clients;
* Stronger administrative skills;
* Ability to process large amounts of data and prioritise or categorise it;
* An ability to multi-task between competing priorities.

# Equal Opportunities

The Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid are an equal opportunities and Living Wage employer. We are committed to attracting and recruiting diverse candidates as we are keen to make sure that our staff, trustees, volunteers and ambassadors reflect the communities we serve and the wider community we work in at every level within the organisation. We particularly welcome applications from those with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

Please note that successful candidates will be offered the volunteer position subject to an Enhanced DBS certificate.