

Role profile

Job Title:	Business Service Officer	Grade: 7	Spinal point 23 to 25
Department:	Housing Demand	Post no.:	68636, 68637, 68638
Directorate:	Housing and Environment	Location:	Perceval House W5

Role reports to:	Business Services Manager
Direct reports:	None
Indirect reports:	None

Job description

Recruitment practices to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults apply to this post in addition to the requirement to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

PURPOSE OF ROLE:

- Responsible for assessing and determining the day to day placement of homeless households and applicants into emergency temporary accommodation (TA), matching requirements to suitable properties.
- This role requires the post-holder to provide advice and liaise with Bed & Breakfast (B&B) landlords and TA proprietors on council procedures and policies. Negotiate rent prices with landlords/TA proprietors for emergency occupation.
- To take lead responsibility for advising, supporting and guiding vulnerable prospective and new homeless customers, tenants and applicants through the housing benefit (HB) and tenancy sign-ups process and to ensure that residents are at the heart of all service delivery.
- Manage the provision of a comprehensive administration and support services, ensuring the provision of a continuous administrative processes relating to the business operations of the Division and the wider Housing Department.

- This role requires the post-holder to have a basic working knowledge and understanding of the housing benefit legislation and process, landlord & tenant act (1985), homelessness act (2002) and housing 2004.
- Due to the nature of the role and service function the post-holder will be expected to work flexibly in according to the needs of the service, which may include early mornings, evenings and weekends work as required

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:

TA Bookings & Sign-up Services

- To assist the Business Service Manager in managing the temporary accommodation bookings service, having responsibility for the day to day placement of homeless households and applicants into emergency temporary accommodation. Evaluating and matching homelessness applicants and tenants to suitable and affordable emergency accommodations.
- Provide advice and liaise with B&B landlords and TA providers on council procedures and policies relating to TA booking process. Negotiate rent prices with landlords/TA proprietors for emergency occupation.
- Responsibility for assessing and determining the most appropriate placement for homeless households and applicants into emergency temporary accommodation, matching requirements to suitable properties provided through the local letting agency team.
- Work in collaboration with the Allocations staff and manage any necessary moves between TA accommodation units in response to changes in circumstances
- Responsibility for terminating B&B tenancies and take all other necessary action including advising B&B landlord/TA proprietors of eviction proceedings.
- Access and download Homeless Extraction Reports from the Council's out of hours database
- Responsibility for arranging, booking and notifying applicants/tenants of housing benefit and tenancy sign-up appointments through the council's appointment system (Q-Matic).
- Meet and conduct interviews with vulnerable customers, homeless households and applicants providing advice or sign posting to appropriate services, housing benefit and employment / training services.
- Responsibility for obtaining support documentation and perform verification checks on Identification Document (ID) paperwork. To be aware of fraud legislation, identify and refer cases to the fraud investigation officers or internal audit where necessary.
- To provide information and advice on claiming HB or Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), tenancy sign-ups, debt advice, employment and training

pathways, and sign-posting customers to other appropriate council or external services e.g. Job Centre Plus (JCP) and social services

- Responsible for carrying calculations on housing benefit, household budgets with customers to determine affordability.
- Undertake home visits to assist and support vulnerable households and customers in the completion of HB and DHP applications and provide advice on housing options, employment and training pathways.
- Draft, compose and type detail and complex letters. Respond appropriately to all enquiries whether by telephone, post or in person
- To maintain up to date knowledge of appropriate Local Government legislation including discharge of duty, suitability, acceptance of qualifying offers, the Housing and Council Tax Benefit regulations, current procedures and other Social Security Benefit Legislation
- Carry out database and business systems updates, such as matching, preparing paperwork and completing forms and documents in a timely manner.
- To liaise with the Case Officer and make all necessary system changes in response to changes in circumstances.

General Administration and Support Services

- To work as part of a team in the provision of a comprehensive business management service, ensuring the provision of a continuous administrative processes relating to the business operations of the Division and the wider Housing Department during critical business hours.
- Responsible for performing administrative and support duties, which include:
 - Update and monitor databases and IT systems
 - Undertake filing, faxing and photocopying
 - Responsible for scanning and indexing documents
 - Responsible for maintaining and ordering all stationery supplies, services and equipment supplies
 - processing all incoming and outgoing mail, including collecting, sorting, opening and date stamping
 - Provide general financial administration
 - Co-ordinating the division's complaints and member's enquiry
- Compliance with the council customer policy in providing a customer focused housing support service during office opening hours ensuring that there is an effective service at all times
- To undertake training and constructively take part in meetings, supervision, seminars and other events designed to improve communications and assist with the effective development of the post and post holder.

- Promote actively the Council's policies on equality and diversity in all respects by delivering, upholding and encouraging the highest standards of behaviour and by monitoring service outcomes.
- To work flexibly within a matrix management environment and according to the needs of the service, which may include early mornings, evenings and weekends work as required.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL):

- Assistant Director(s)
- Heads of service
- Internal and external Customers
- Tenants and Residents
- Other staff and colleagues within the department and council
- External partners, contractors, suppliers, landlords and visitors to the office
- Partners e.g. RSLs, suppliers, hoteliers

AUTHORITY LEVEL (PEOPLE, POLICY, FINANCIAL):

- Business Systems and Databases
- Corporate Financial Systems and Databases
- Information Systems and Databases & Data Protection

Person specification

Community and partnership working are essential for all roles as are a commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and ensuring Health and Safety at Work for everyone working at Ealing Council.

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Essential knowledge, skills and abilities

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- 1.** Experience of carrying out customer interviews in regards to housing benefit and tenancy sign-ups, providing information and signing posting to other services.
- 2.**Experience of work dealing with formal administrative processes and working in a regulatory service or within a large office environment.
- 3.**Experience of and a proactive commitment to, providing a quality customer focus business service.
- 4.**Good numeracy skills and the ability to perform simple arithmetic, calculations on housing benefit, household budgets and to analyse and interpret data information and reports
- 5.**Negotiating skills at the appropriate standard to liaise with landlords and TA Suppliers
- 6.**Ability to work as part of a Team and to manage and administer work efficiently and in a manner that supports shared responsibility for tasks.
7. Ability to develop, maintain and monitor paper and electronic information, record and filing systems, including scanning, photocopying, indexing a library of key documents and publications.
- 8.**Good typing and computer skills and the ability to use databases, spreadsheet, electronic diary, presentation and e-mail applications, the intranet and Internet. Must be able to retain and use expert knowledge on a wide variety of IT systems / packages and demonstrate the ability to both learn quickly.
- 9.**Good time management and organisational skills. Able to work flexibly, manage and direct own workload, acting on own initiative, respond to unplanned changes in priorities and workload, working to tight schedules and within conflicting demands.

10.**Ability to deal with a range of personal and telephone callers, including potentially irate or distraught customers, providing information and sign-posting to other services.

11.Ability to participate fully in training and development, attend supervision and appraisal sessions, and team meetings regularly

12. Ability and willingness to attend weekend meetings and evening events as required and to work late as the role demands.

13.**Ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English.

Essential qualification(s) and experience

1. Minimum NVQ level 2 Business Administration or Housing, or work experience equivalent
2. Educated to GCSE level or equivalent
3. Computer literate in MS Office Pro (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access) intermediate level or above

Values and behaviours

Improved life for residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
• Is passionate about making Ealing a better place • Can see and appreciate things from a resident point of view • Understands what people want and need • Encourages change to tackle underlying causes or issues	• Does what they say they will do on time • Is open and honest • Treats all people fairly	• Ambitious and confident in leading partnerships • Offers to share knowledge and ideas • Challenges constructively and respectfully listens to feedback • Overcomes barriers to develop our outcomes for residents	• Tries out ways to do things better, faster and for less cost • Brings in ideas from outside to improve performance • Takes calculated risks to improve outcomes • Learns from mistakes and failures	• Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making • Makes things happen • Acts on feedback to improve performance • Works to high standards

