Job Description and Person Specification – Refuge Support Worker (9 month FTC maternity cover)

Reporting to:	Refuge Service Manager/Refuge Team Lead
Location:	Refuge Location in North-West Surrey plus Woking Head Office as required
Salary:	£25,264 (FTE £26,750 per annum)
Special Conditions:	Emergency on-call/out of hours helpline rota responsibilities (for which an additional shift allowance will be paid). Post holders must live within maximum 45 minutes driving distance from our offices in Woking. This is so that occasional emergency on call rota responsibilities can be fulfilled in the event of callout to our premises to provide urgent support. Clinical supervision provided during working hours.
Working Hours:	34 hours per week Monday to Friday

A full driving licence and use of a reliable car for work purposes is essential.

Please note that this job description is not a definitive list of tasks but is designed to give an overview of the role. All employees are expected to undertake reasonable additional duties as required and to understand that job descriptions develop and change over time.

Purpose of the post: To be part of the team responsible for the smooth running of the refuge service and to provide support to women using the refuge services. To help constantly develop and improve these services in conjunction with service users and to work with refuge residents in an empowering way to enable them to lead independent lives.

Key duties and responsibilities:

Work with women

- Act as a key worker for a specified number of refuge residents. To include preparing for their arrival, welcoming them to refuge, conducting regular weekly one-to-one sessions and supporting their plans to move on to alternative accommodation.
- Conduct risk and needs assessment in conjunction with the resident. Ensure identified risks are addressed and take appropriate action to minimise risk.
- Ensure that support is appropriate to a resident's needs and produce and implement support plans in conjunction with the resident. Record progress and actions agreed.

Establish and monitor short and long term goals that empower the women to re-build her life. Review, update and amend plans as a resident's needs change.

- Provide practical and emotional support and help in areas such as: health (mental and physical); housing; financial; resources; employment; relationships; education; parenting; daily living skills; listening to a women's experience of domestic abuse; encouraging and empowering residents to plan for the future.
- Signpost to specialist external agencies if required and work in partnership with these agencies where appropriate.
- Liaise with other organisations whose activities may benefit the residents.
- Provide advocacy support for the residents in their dealings with external voluntary and statutory agencies.
- Acquaint residents with the aims, policies and practices of Your Sanctuary and the refuge service.
- To work within the confines of confidentiality and good safeguarding practices, ensuring that professional boundaries are always maintained.
- Facilitate group work and deliver training such as the 'Freedom Programme'.
- Participate in our Emergency-on-Call Rota and cover the helpline when required.

Refuge Referrals

- If requested, assist with the refuge referrals process as required, taking instructions from the Service Manager/Team Lead(s) as needed.

Housing Management

- In conjunction with team members, arrange and attend house meetings with residents on a regular (at least fortnightly) basis.
- Encourage residents to take responsibility for housekeeping of the refuge (for example, agree a cleaning rota; identifying and shopping for appropriate supplies).
- Refuge administration (logging/distributing post, correspondence, filing,).
- Refuge finance (petty cash, receiving and recording residents' rent etc.)
- Maintain the anonymity of the location of the house and staff/volunteers' names in any correspondence.
- Carry out regular defects checks, noting necessary works and taking appropriate action. When a room is empty carry out inspections, checking inventory of fixtures and fittings and taking appropriate action to ensure the room is within our required standards. Undertake cleaning of the room including making of beds for resident changeover (on ad hoc basis if Housekeeper is not available or demand is high).
- Provide accurate monitoring information as required, including occupancy levels, rent collection, maintenance issues etc.

Health & Safety

- Always work in a safe and efficient manner, be aware of Health & Safety policies, safety and security of residents and refuge building, fire precautions and actions to be taken in the event of a fire. Record and bring to attention any deterioration of equipment, potential hazards and identified risks. Participate in addressing risks identified in the health & safety annual audit.

Other

- Be individually responsible for achieving measurable quality in designated areas of performance (e.g. Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework).
- Identify possible areas of development and improvement and bring to the attention of the Refuge Support Lead.
- Train and supervise volunteers who assist in the delivery of the refuge service.
- Regularly attend and participate in team meetings, training events etc. and inform colleagues who can't attend of agreed outcomes and actions.
- Work as part of a team to ensure flexibility and service continuity combined with willingness to offer and participate in professional challenge.

Person Specification

Experience and Qualifications (Essential and/or Desirable)

- Experience of working in a field related to domestic abuse (E)
- Experience of providing person-centred support to survivors of trauma(E)
- Experience of undertaking risk assessments and safety planning (E)
- Experience of advocating and multi-agency working (E)
- Experience of involving clients in the organisation and management of a service (D)

Skills and Qualities (Essential and/or Desirable)

- Strong Professional Boundaries (E)
- Non-judgemental, empathetic and empowering (E)
- Listening skills (E)
- IT Skills including Word, Excel, Outlook (E)
- Organisational and Administration Skills (E)
- Written and Oral Communication Skills with the ability produce reports, maintain records etc. (E)
- The ability to work both on your own initiative and as part of a team (E)
- Flexibility (E)
- The ability to prioritise competing demands (E)
- The ability to remain calm in stressful situations and to successfully respond and manage conflict (E)
- Ability to speak other languages; in particular Urdu or Arabic (D)

Knowledge (Essential and/or Desirable)

- Knowledge (D) and awareness (E) of issues relating to domestic abuse
- Current welfare rights legislation as it affects women escaping domestic abuse e.g. housing benefits (D)
- Homelessness legislation (D)
- Relevant civil and criminal legislation (D)
- Immigration legislation in relation to women fleeing domestic abuse (D)
- Diverse needs of women (D)
- Equality issues (D)
- Safeguarding legislation and practices (E)
- Professional boundaries (E)

Demonstrate Your Sanctuary Team Values

- **Compassion** – to have an understanding of the experiences of survivors of domestic abuse and others coupled with a determination to support and help
- **Empowerment** – to work alongside survivors and colleague to achieve autonomy, self determination, and space for action
- **Collaboration** – working together with survivors, colleagues, agencies and the wider community to achieve our aims
- **Non-judgemental** – to be accepting, understanding and respectful of other's experiences, decisions and values

It is important that the post holder has the required personal attributes and holds values and ethics in line with those held by YS. As a result, applicants may still be considered for the post if they have alternative experience, qualifications, skills and knowledge which do not directly match with the above requirements.

All post holders will be required to have a DBS check at the appropriate level (generally Enhanced with Barred lists where legally required). Applicants will also need to satisfy the interview panel that they have an objective distance from any personal experience of abuse.