

YMCA WEST LONDON POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Housing Support Officer

RESPONSIBLE TO: Senior Housing Support Officer (Ventura House)

RESPONSIBLE FOR: No-one. However, an ability to manage ones own case load and to organise ones own time to maximise the benefit to the residents is essential.

Safeguarding

YMCA West London is wholly committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Job Purpose

The primary purpose of YMCA West London's Ventura House Project is to provide high quality, holistic support and temporary housing accommodation with associated facilities for young vulnerable people to develop their personal and social skills sufficient for them to live independently from the YMCA in a sustainable way and assist them to move on in a planned manner to more independent accommodation.

Every member of staff, therefore, has the support of residents as their primary purpose. The principle accountabilities of this post therefore flow from that premise.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Support Tasks Relevant to this Post

- 1.1 This includes ensuring that interviews and risk assessment with prospective clients are carried out within the prescribed time limits and that the resident once accepted is fully and carefully inducted into the YMCA, to conduct needs and risk assessments of residents, develop outcome-focused support plans with residents
- 1.2 Help in settling into the accommodation, help in maintaining the licence or tenancy, developing domestic / life skills, developing social skills / behaviour management, advice, advocacy and liaison, help in managing finances and benefit claims, emotional support and general counselling, help in gaining access to other services, help in establishing social contacts and participation in activities
- 1.3 Help in establishing personal safety and security, supervision and monitoring of health and well-being, help in maintaining the safety and security of the accommodation, advice and support in relation to repairs and improvements to the accommodation, liaison and advocacy support from the same ethnic group, help finding move-on accommodation, ensure support plans are kept up to date, co-operate with external agencies and experts to ensure that the wider needs of residents are met
- 1.4 Ensure that residents are aware of health, safety and security Policies and Procedures, deal with health, safety and security issues raised by staff members or residents, ensure that residents understand the Procedures for reporting abuse or neglect, deal with abuse or neglect issues raised by residents, co-operate with external agencies in relation to abuse or neglect issues, ensure that residents are aware of the Association's Complaints Procedures, encourage residents to use the Complaints Procedures, deal with complaints from residents

2. Equality & Diversity



Revised 30/11/05

This includes ensuring that residents are aware of the Association's Equality & Diversity Policy, Anti-Discriminatory Practice and Harassment Policies. Co-operating with external agencies in relation to discrimination and harassment issues, ensuring that residents are aware of the Association's complaints Procedures, encouraging residents to use the complaints Procedures, deal with complaints from residents by implementing the Association's Equality & Diversity Policy, signposting where necessary to culture-specific counselling / emotional support, access to local community, organisations, security support related to racial harassment, culture specific legal services and culture specific health / treatment services.

3. Christian Ethos

To be willing to work within the Christian Ethos of the YMCA.

4. Resident Programme and Participation

This includes facilitating the Residents involvement and working with them to develop a holistic programme of activities and encouraging participation by the wider resident community.



5. Communication and Liaison

This includes regular communication and liaison with colleagues in the wider housing team in order to facilitate the smooth running of the residency, providing reports for the Housing Management committee of the Board of Management, developing and maintaining links with the support agencies, Department of Work and Pensions etc. to help ensure joined up working is practiced by attending meetings and creating relationships which engender a positive image of the YMCA, its services and its ability to add value to the member by promoting the Christian ethos of YMCA West London.

6. General

This includes being part of the Duty Support Officer rota and monitoring as far as is practical the movements of the residents, taking responsibility for the evacuation of the building in the event of a fire alarm being raised, reporting accidents and incidents appropriately and ensuring a thorough handover to the next Duty Support Officer, carry out any other duties which may be reasonably requested by the Line Manager or a designated representative, adhere to all Policies and Procedures at all times.

7. Involvement

This includes: being alert to opportunities to involve resident members, members, clients and users appropriately; to act on these opportunities for involvement and to evaluate the success of the resulting involvement activity. This would be achieved by actively promoting the opportunities available to resident members to become involved with the YMCA; liaising with the Resident Involvement Worker to identify resident members who are interested in exploring these opportunities and encouraging all resident members to become involved.

8. Environment

This includes: being aware of YMCA West London's environmental management system as it relates to your project or programme. Ensuring that energy is not used wastefully, using energy saving appliances and equipment and turning these off when not in use. Looking for opportunities to support the protection and care of the environment where ever possible.

SCALE

This factor takes into account the overall importance of the position to the Association and its degree of complexity. This is usually reflected in terms of:-

Staff: Nil.

Clients: Maximum of 30.

Budget:-

Revenue: Nil.

Capital: Nil.

DISCRETION TO ACT

The Post-holder is free to act in the daily organisation of work-load. The nature of the post requires close working with other Housing Support Officers to ensure the best service possible is provided for the residents. The Post-holder will be required to be accountable for the housing support service referring to the Line Manager for advice and guidance.

ENVIRONMENT

Unsocial hours

The nature of post is such that a shift system is in operation and unsocial hours are worked during weekdays plus occasional weekend Duty Support Officer shifts.

Risk

The level of risk is calculated as low / medium. The Ventura House Project is a fully operational site with other programmes and services run on site and therefore a range of persons may be called on for support. However the service provides housing and support for people who are vulnerable and in housing need. Although this is a



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low support hostel there remains a risk of violence both directed at staff and directed on residents by themselves e.g. overdose etc. This is combated through a range of interventions including; non managerial supervision, continuing professional development, team meetings and line management meetings, the implementations and review of Policies and Procedures ensuring the up to date inclusion of best practice standards.

RELATIONSHIPS

Internal Contacts

Housing Support Officers and Housing Department Team.
Reception Team.
Other YMCA Departments.

External Contacts

The Homeless Persons Unit.
Social Services.
CMHRCs.
Voluntary and Statutory Agencies.
YMCA Metropolitan Region Networking Groups.



EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Educated to 'A' Level standard or equivalent training and a minimum of 1 year experience working in a supported housing environment. Some vocational training is an advantage.

Senior Housing Support Officer

Name in Capitals: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Housing Support Officer

Name in Capitals: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signatures are required in order to demonstrate understanding and acceptance of the document and accuracy of the contents. Dating the document allows for revisions to take place without confusion as to which is the most current version.



YMCA WEST LONDON
PERSON SPECIFICATION

POSITION TITLE: Housing Support Officer

RESPONSIBLE TO: Senior Housing Support Officer (Ventura House)

Requirement	Essential	Desirable	Application Form	Selection Test	Interview
Knowledge					
K1. Good working knowledge of housing and welfare benefits and the relevant legislation.	✓		✓		✓
K2. Knowledge of implementing Arrears Policies.	✓		✓		✓
Skills					
S1. Excellent interpersonal skills.	✓		✓		✓
S2. IT Literate.	✓		✓	✓	
Aptitude					
A1. Able to communicate effectively with service users, residents, professionals and members of the public both in writing and orally.	✓		✓		✓
A2. Able to work under pressure.	✓		✓		✓
A3. Able to deal with potentially violent and difficult situations.	✓		✓		✓
A4. Able to deal firmly and politely with residents to ensure the House Rules and Licence Agreement are adhered to.	✓		✓		✓
A5. Able to take responsibility and make decisions in a lone worker situation.	✓		✓	✓	✓
Experience					
E1. 1 year's previous experience of working in a hostel environment.	✓		✓		✓
E2. Experience of working with a vulnerable client group.		✓	✓		✓
E3. Experience of working in the voluntary sector.		✓	✓		✓
Education					
Q1. General education to "O" / GCSE level standard or equivalent.	✓		✓		✓
Q2. Evidence of recent relevant training.		✓	✓		✓
Christian Ethos					
V1. Willing and able to implement YMCA West Londons values within their work.	✓		✓		✓
V2. Willing and able to work within the Christian ethos of YMCA West London.	✓		✓		✓
Personal Qualities					
P1. Able to present self and work effectively.	✓		✓		✓
P2. Honesty and integrity.	✓		✓		✓

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Circumstances					
C1. Able and willing to work unsocial hours.	✓		✓		✓



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Health					
H1. Able to meet the requirements of the post with or without reasonable adjustment.	✓		✓		
Equality and Diversity					
O1. An understanding of equality and diversity issues.	✓		✓		✓
O2. Commitment to implementing Equality and Diversity Policy.	✓		✓		✓

