



## GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

Thank you for your interest in working for Refuge.

Refuge opened the world's first refuge in 1971 and is now the country's largest single provider of specialist domestic violence services. On any one day, around 3,800 women and children access Refuge's services. These services include:

- Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline: Run in partnership between Refuge and Women's Aid
- Refuge accommodation: A network of refuges across the country providing emergency accommodation for women fleeing abuse.
- Outreach services: Working with women who are either still living with their abuser and/or those who have left their abuser and require support
- Community outreach: Supporting women from ethnic minority groups, including Vietnamese and East European women from Bulgaria, Poland and Romania
- Independent advocacy: Refuge's independent domestic violence advocates operate across London and Coventry and Warrington, supporting women through the civil and criminal courts
- Prevention and education: Refuge works to influence the Government's response to domestic violence and raise public awareness of the issue

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form. If you have any questions please contact the human resources team on 0207 395 7744 or email [recruitment@refuge.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@refuge.org.uk)

As well as this document, you should make sure that you also download the job description and person specification for the role. These outline the main duties of the post and the skills, knowledge and experience you will need to do the job.

### **The application form**

The application form is an important part of the selection process. Only the information provided on the application form will be used to assess your suitability for the role. We cannot make assumptions about your achievements and abilities. Completed application forms will be used to help decide your suitability for the post by matching your skills, experience and qualifications against those set out in the person specification. It is important that you read the job description and person specification carefully before completing the application form. Please complete all sections of the application form providing examples of your skills and experiences. Please make sure that you address all the criteria in the person specification and provide evidence to support your statements. You may want to include experience or skills/knowledge acquired outside of the workplace, as well as detailing your past and present employment.

### **Personal details**

Please provide a work/daytime telephone or mobile number if possible. We will only use this number with discretion, but it helps us to get in touch with you quickly. Please note the human resources team may use your email address to invite you to an interview rather than send you a letter.



### **Education and qualifications**

Please tell us about your educational qualifications. You may be asked to bring your qualification certificates to the interview. We may occasionally also need to verify qualifications with regulatory bodies.

### **Development and training**

Please tell us about any development, training or courses attended through your employment or voluntary work. Please also tell us of any work-related organisation of which you are a member.

### **Employment record**

This section gives you the opportunity to tell us about the work you are doing now or have done most recently. Please tell us your most recent salary and benefits. Always remember to specify *your* responsibilities rather than those of your section or department. Please state the reason why you left or are considering leaving your job.

Gaps in work history - Refuge is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. For safeguarding purposes you are required to inform us about any gaps in your work history.

### **Person specification**

This is an important part of the application and your chance to demonstrate your suitability for the role. We recommend that you read the job description and person specification thoroughly before you answer this section as we draw up a short list on the basis of this information.

Please also indicate briefly (no more than 1500 words) why you are applying for this job. You should highlight here particular skills and previous experience you have relevant to this role and provide clear examples of these.

### **Short listing and assessment processes**

Refuge uses a variety of selection methods, appropriate to the job, to assess whether candidates meet the requirements of the role. Where assessment exercises are to be used as part of the selection process candidates will be informed of this in advance. After the closing date, all applications are read to see how each person's skills and experience relate to the post. A key part of this is the information that you provide in the 'person specification' section of the application form. Please take time to fill this in fully. Applicants, who meet these requirements most closely, are invited for interview.

If you are invited to attend an interview and require any adjustments to be made to the interview arrangements, please notify us either by providing details on the Diversity Monitoring Form or contacting the human resources team in advance. We will do all that we can to accommodate applicants for our roles.

At the interview you will be asked questions relating to the job description and person specification.

All offers of employment are conditional upon background and health checks that Refuge considers to be satisfactory. Dependent on the role, a disclosure may also be required (see section Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Disclosure and Barring Service below).

### **References**

The protection of vulnerable adults and safeguarding children are very important to the work that we do. For this reason it is our policy that at least two references will be taken up for the successful candidate following interview and once a verbal conditional offer of employment is made. References must be from your current employer and previous



employer or, if not currently employed, your most recent employer. Please note that referees cannot be colleagues but must be either your manager or supervisor. If your application is successful we will contact that organisation's human resources team. Refuge reserves the right to contact any of your past employers.

### **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

As a matter of good employment practice, and to meet the requirements of Sections 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975, we require applicants who are offered employment in certain roles within Refuge to provide an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. This disclosure will include details of "unspent" convictions and cautions, as well as convictions that for other purposes are "spent" under the provisions of the Act. It may be appropriate for roles where there is 'regulated activity' with children or vulnerable adults to request an enhanced certificate with DBS barred lists check which includes a check of local police records as well as information about whether or not the individual is on either of the lists held by the DBS of individuals who are unsuitable for working with children or vulnerable adults.

A basic DBS certificate which lists 'unspent' convictions may be required in other roles where an enhanced DBS certificate is not appropriate.

A DBS certificate will be used by Refuge to make recruitment decisions. The certificate will be provided to Refuge, with the applicant's authorisation, by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The reason for us applying for a certificate is to ensure that we do not employ people with a conviction or history which would make them unsuitable for the post that they are applying for.

A certificate will only be applied for with the consent of the applicant. Refuge is keen for all applicants who have a criminal record to be aware of their rights when applying for posts within our organisation. Further information will be provided to the candidate with a conditional offer of employment. We would like to stress that having a conviction will not necessarily bar a candidate from obtaining employment with Refuge. Refuge aims to promote equality of opportunity for all, with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from diverse candidates. Criminal records will be taken into account for employment purposes only. This will depend on the circumstances and background of any offence. Any information given will be confidential and will be considered only in relation to an application for positions to which the Order applies. Please note that some offences may bar you from positions that involve working with children and vulnerable adults and you may be committing an offence if you apply for these roles.

Please contact the human resources team if you require further information. In the event of an offer of employment being withdrawn as a consequence of information received the recruiting manager or the human resource team representative will be happy to discuss the reasons with you.

### **Eligibility to work in the UK**

In order to comply with Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, all employers in the United Kingdom are required to make basic documentation checks on every person they intend to employ. We ask all short listed applicants to provide evidence of the right to work in the UK. Refuge is required to see satisfactory proof in the form of original documentation before we can confirm any offer of employment.

### **Satisfactory medical clearance**

All successful candidates are required to complete a health questionnaire. If there is doubt as to your medical fitness for the post Refuge will require you to be assessed by our occupational health provider.

**Evidence of qualifications**

All successful applications will be required to provide evidence of stated qualifications, training or memberships.

**Refuge's policies and Code of Conduct**

All successful applicants will be required to comply with Refuge's policies and Code of Conduct

**Data Protection Act 1998**

Information provided by you in your application form will be kept for the purposes of monitoring. It will be copied for use during the recruitment process. Once the recruitment process is completed, the data will be stored for a maximum of 6 months and then destroyed. If you are the successful candidate, relevant information will be taken from this form and used as part of your human resources record. All personal information that you supply to us as part of your application will be processed in accordance with prevailing UK Data Protection legislation.

**Two Ticks disability symbol**

Our commitment to the Two Ticks disability symbol means that any person with a disability, whose application clearly shows that they meet the essential requirements in the person specification will be invited for interview.

**Equality and Diversity**

Our commitment to quality, equality and diversity aims to ensure that every applicant is treated fairly. Your application is the only information on which we decide whether or not you will be shortlisted for an interview. It will be used as a basis for the interview itself. The content of your application form is therefore very important and these guidance notes are designed to help you complete it as effectively as possible.

**Declaration**

Before you submit your application, please check that all of the information that you have provided is true, accurate and complete. If you email your application and if your application is successful, we will ask you to sign the application form before commencing work with us.

We look forward to receiving your application.