



Job Description and Person Specification

Post Title:	Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)
Project Focus:	Ascent Advice and Counselling/Ascent Advice Plus
Contract Type:	Funded until March 2025
Hours:	Full Time (35 hours per week)
Salary:	£29k - £32k depending on qualifications and experience
Place of Work:	Hybrid (Southall & remote)
Responsible to:	Advocacy Team Leader

About Southall Black Sisters

Originally set up in 1979, Southall Black Sisters (SBS) has established itself as an iconic organisation working in West London, but with a national reach and reputation for its landmark legal interventions, its targeted campaigns to bring about changes in policy for the benefit of Black and minoritised women, and its unique approach to casework and advocacy.

In 1983, SBS set up a not for profit, advice, campaigning, resource, and advocacy centre for Black and minoritised women, with a particular focus on the needs of South Asian women. SBS's casework has highlighted flaws in community and state responses to the needs of Black and minoritised communities, which have often ignored the plight of the most vulnerable, especially women and children. Our casework focuses on violence against women and girls, including specific forms of violence including honour-based crimes, forced marriage and related problems such as religious and cultural pressures to conform, racism, homelessness, housing, matrimonial, child custody and immigration matters. Our work by its very nature must address issues of multiple discrimination, involving the simultaneous experience of race, sex, class, caste and other forms of discrimination.

Job Description

Job Purpose:

- To provide high-quality and comprehensive advice, information, practical and advocacy support relating to domestic and other forms of gender-based violence perpetrated against Black and minoritised women and children.
- To assist with educational, developmental, policy and campaigning work arising from advice and casework.
- To promote the aims and objectives of SBS as a specialist organisation for Black and minoritised women and children.
- To work along side the Ascent Partnership to deliver on the key outcomes providing specialist advocacy and counselling to women who have been victims of domestic violence and abuse.
- To work as part of the Ascent Partnership to ensure that specialist support is provided to women with NRPF and ensure that they are supported through counselling and holistic support interventions.
- To work closely with counsellors to ensure that the project is maintaining its required referral numbers.
- To work within the Ascent Partnership focusing on the West Cluster, by maintaining and developing partnerships to ensure that the project is meeting its targets.

Job Responsibilities:

1. To provide trauma-informed information, advice, support, and advocacy services for victims of domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence, including forced marriage, rape and sexual abuse, so-called honour crimes, and related issues such as immigration, asylum, and No Recourse to Public Funds.
2. To assist women to access support under various destitution schemes, including the SBS No Recourse Fund.
3. To promote social inclusion, encourage independence, and develop the personal resilience of women using the advocacy service.
4. To ensure women are referred to external advice, information, and support agencies as appropriate, and encourage engagement with a range of SBS services.
5. To ensure the service user is at the heart of all service delivery and development.
6. To liaise with relevant professionals and statutory agencies as necessary.
7. To undertake Risk Assessments and participate in local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).
8. To maintain case files and other records to the highest possible standard, as per SBS guidelines.
9. To adhere to SBS policies and procedures and ensure awareness and integration of an equalities and human rights agenda in all areas of work.
10. To ensure compliance with all legal and contractual reporting requirements in relation to service delivery.
11. To provide verbal and written reports to Senior Managers, the Executive Director and Management Committee as necessary.
12. To assist in the coordination and delivery of SBS outreach surgeries.
13. To register with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) as a competent advisor by undertaking any relevant training and tests.
14. To maintain up to date knowledge on issues relevant to the position by undertaking training as identified in supervision and appraisal meetings.
15. To contribute to and assist in the facilitation of training to relevant professionals, statutory and community organisations.
16. To provide information for monitoring, evaluation, policy, research, and training purposes.
17. To undertake campaigning and policy work arising from advice and casework, working with legal experts to challenge decisions, laws, and policies to further the aims and objectives of the organisation.
18. To actively contribute to the organisation's cohesion, encouraging cross-team working and problem-solving approaches.
19. To attend team/staff meetings, supervision/appraisal, and other meetings as appropriate.
20. To undertake any additional duties to contribute to the smooth running of the SBS centre, services, projects, and campaigns.

It is essential to the development of SBS' service delivery that the post holder is able to respond flexibly to changes in the requirements of this post. This job description is therefore a guide and not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities the post holder may have over time.

Person Specification

Your application should give clear examples of experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities you have gained in both paid and/or unpaid (volunteer) work in relation to the Person Specification criteria.

Specification	Essential or Desirable
Experience	
CAADA/SafeLives/Womens' Aid IDVA/DAPA qualification, or the willingness to complete this	E
Experience of working with survivors of domestic violence and other forms of violence and abuse	E
Experience of providing advice, advocacy, or casework services to Black and minoritised women	E
Experience of providing non-judgemental and confidential support to individuals, and of encouraging them to take control of their lives and set realistic objectives and goals	E
Experience of working within a multi-agency framework	D
Knowledge	
An understanding of the practical, emotional, social, and economic issues facing Black and minoritised women affected by domestic violence and other forms of violence and abuse	D
Knowledge of the range of options available to survivors of domestic abuse including safe housing, criminal justice, and civil remedies	D
Knowledge of issues relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults	E
Working knowledge of current immigration, policing, and social housing issues relevant to domestic abuse and other forms of violence and abuse	D
Skills	
Ability to speak a language relevant to Black and minoritised women	D
Ability to manage a caseload, prioritise workload and meet deadlines	E
Ability to demonstrate empathy for the issues and barriers faced by Black and minoritised women	E
Ability to maintain professionalism when dealing with crises and challenging situations	E
Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with other teams and external organisations that offer services to our service users	E
Excellent written and verbal communication skills	E
Ability to use the Microsoft Office suite and case management systems	E
Ability to work flexibly and proactively, with strong organisational and administrative skills	E
Personal Attributes and Circumstances	
A strong commitment to tackling all forms of violence against women and children within a secular framework, and to fighting for the freedoms and rights of women and girls	E
A willingness to work flexible hours where required to meet the needs of service users	E

This post is restricted to Black and minoritised women due to the nature of the role. The Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 applies.