



Southall Black Sisters

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JOB DESCRIPTION

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE

Job Purpose

- To promote the aims and objectives of Southall Black Sisters (SBS) as a specialist black minority ethnic (BME) organisation for women and children.
- To provide high quality and comprehensive advice, information, practical and advocacy support relating to domestic and other forms of gender based violence against BME women and children.
- To promote the participation and engagement of BME women and children with SBS specialist holistic services.
- To assist with educational, developmental, policy and campaigning work arising from the advice and casework.

Responsible to

Senior Managers and Director.

Hours of Work

The standard working week for this post is 35 hours per week, 9am to 5pm. Monday to Friday. However, on occasions some flexibility may be required when handling emergencies or to meet deadlines and in this regard some evening or weekend work may be required.

Salary Scale

Salary ranges from £24,385 to £28,240 (incl OLW) per annum.

Commitment

The Advocate must be committed to the aims and objectives of SBS and working in the voluntary women's sector generally.

Duties and responsibilities

1	Provide information, advice, support (basic befriending and counselling) and advocacy casework for victims of domestic violence and other forms of gender based violence.
2	Provide information, advice and support in relation to issues arising out of gender based violence such as domestic violence, forced marriage, transnational marriage abandonment, rape and sexual abuse, honour based crimes and related issues such as immigration/asylum and no recourse to public funds, matrimonial and children, housing and homelessness, mental health and financial matters.
3	Assist in the delivery and coordination of SBS outreach surgeries.
4	Work with legal experts to challenge decisions, laws and policies to further the aims and objectives of the organisation.
5	Respond to a high volume of advice and casework in a demanding environment.
6	Provide practical support such as accompanying women to appointments, courts hearings, collecting belongings and otherwise taking all necessary steps to ensure the general safety and wellbeing of women and children.
7	Liaise with relevant professionals and statutory agencies in the course of conducting casework.
8	Approach casework in an analytical and thorough way when dealing with cases in order to meet the high standards required by SBS and to achieve the best outcomes for the users.
9	Challenging decisions and actions of police, social care, CPS, safeguarding boards and other related agencies at a senior level to ensure effective and appropriate advocacy of clients accessing the Advice Service.
10	Undertake risk assessments and participate in local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).
11	Provide reports, draft supporting letters, statements and collate evidence, as well as undertake some basic legal representation where necessary and with supervision.
12	Register with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner as a competent advisor by undertaking any relevant training and tests, and any other advice and casework accreditation schemes.
13	Assist women to access support under various destitution schemes, including the SBS No Recourse Fund.
14	Follow SBS policies and procedures and maintain case files and other records to quality assurance standards.
15	Contribute to and assist in the delivery of training to professionals, statutory and community organisations.
16	Maintain up to date knowledge on issues relevant to the position by undertaking training and helping to maintain directories and publications.

17	Provide regular verbal and written reports to Senior Managers, the Director and Management Committee for funding and policy work.
18	To undertake campaigning and policy work arising from advice and casework.
19	Contribute to SBS record keeping and provide information for monitoring, evaluation, policy, research and training purposes.
20	Ensure women are referred to and encourage engagement with SBS holistic services.
21	Undertake any additional duties which will contribute to the smooth running of the SBS centre, services, projects and campaigns.

General Duties and Responsibilities

The advocate will be expected to be self-servicing and carry out their own administration, but the following duties will be undertaken with supervision and where necessary with other members of staff.

1	Assist in maintaining high standards in all aspects of the organisation's work; this includes complying with and promoting issues of confidentiality, equal opportunities and other policies and procedures of the organisation.
2	To actively contribute to the organisation's cohesion, encouraging cross-team working and problem solving approaches.
3	Contribute to the smooth running of the SBS centre and its services.
4	Assist in development, research, policy, campaigning and media work where required.
5	Assist with reception and office administration duties when required
6	Assist with maintaining the premises to comply with health and safety requirements.
7	Provide information and assist in funding applications and monitoring reports on the work of the organisation.
8	Assist in the maintenance of finances and accounting systems.
9	Providing regular progress reports to senior managers and the Director as and when required.
10	Attend staff management training, supervision and other meetings when required.
11	Contribute to and assist in the delivery of training to professionals, statutory and community organisations.
12	To take a personal responsibility for keeping up to date with issues affecting BME women and the overall work of the organisation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person appointed to this post must demonstrate that she has the following general characteristics, skills, knowledge and experience. Essential criteria is indicated by **(E)** and desirable by **(D)**.

General

(E)	Must have a valid work permit documentation showing expiry dates and hours available to work.
(E)	Have knowledge and awareness of issues affecting BME women, especially in respect of violence against women, state responses, racism and religious and cultural constraints.
(E)	Commitment to challenging poverty and all forms of inequality and injustice.
(E)	Commitment to creating and maintaining secular spaces necessary to build solidarity across different ethnic and religious backgrounds.
(E)	Must be able to respond to a high volume of advice and casework in a demanding environment.
(E)	Commitment to the aims, objectives and working practices of SBS and the voluntary sector generally.
(E)	Be able and willing to work flexible hours, on occasions some flexibility may be required to deal with emergencies or to meet deadlines and in this regard some evening or weekend work may be required.
(E)	Have an understanding and commitment to shared responsibility in a team context (including covering in cases of emergency) and be able to put this into practice.
(E)	Be willing to undertake general reception and administration duties if required.
(E)	Be willing to take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of users this includes undertaking all practical support such as accompanying to court and agencies.
(D)	Be willing to undertake public speaking, training, seminars and media work where required.

Experience

(E)	Degree level qualification or equivalent level professional qualification.
(D)	Have experience of giving or undertaking advice, advocacy, counselling or casework either in a paid or voluntary capacity.
(D)	Have experience of working with women, especially BME women in a voluntary or paid capacity.
(D)	Have experience of organising meetings, seminars, workshops or conferences and support group activities including in schools/colleges.

(E)	Have experience of liaising with a range of professionals and agencies.
(D)	Have experience of preparing reports on behalf of users, preparing progress reports, funding applications or policy submissions to statutory or professional bodies.

Skills

(E)	Be able to speak Punjabi, or Hindi or Urdu.
(E)	Be able to demonstrate empathy for the issues and barriers faced by BME women.
(E)	Be able to work on own initiative and as part of a team without close supervision.
(E)	Be able to maintain professionalism when dealing with cases which may be stressful and demanding.
(E)	Be able to work effectively under pressure including prioritising workload and meeting deadlines.
(E)	Be able to respond positively to change.
(E)	Good level of IT proficiency, including a working knowledge of Microsoft Office.
(E) (D)	Have excellent written communication skills in order to be able to write reports on service users (E) , and articles and publications. (D)
(D)	Be able to conduct public speaking and press enquiries.