**Manchester Volunteer Advice Project**

**Information**

**Pack**



  





***(MVAP) provides endless opportunities for personal development and will go a long way towards reaching various goals whether they be for personal reasons, or career aspirations***

**What is MVAP?**

Our partnership project recruits and trains advice volunteers for our services. Our key aims are; to enable you to develop by increasing your skills, knowledge and confidence and increase our capacitiy to meet the advice needs of our communities

*We believe in the potential of every individual.*

*We believe in the resourcefulness of communities.*

*We believe that no one should live in poverty.*

*We believe in the power of effective information and advice.*

**The Partners**

**Manchester Mind**

Manchester Mind is an independent local mental health charity which delivers services to young people and adults. Their Advice Team provides free and impartial advice on welfare benefits, housing and debt to people with mental health needs living in the city.

**Cheetham Hill Advice Centre (CHAC)**

CHAC is an independent neighbourhood advice organisation offering confidential help, advice, information and support to residents of Manchester. They help people with range of issues including welfare benefits, housing, debt, basic immigration advice, access to education, health and other local services.

**Manchester Refugee Support Network (MRSN)**

MRSN aims to build strong and independent refugee community organisations, develop the skills of community leaders and give people the information they need to settle and build new lives. Their advice service provides information and advice on welfare benefits, debt, housing, asylum support, and access to health services to refugees and asylum seekers and their families.

**Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU)**

GMIAU provide free, confidential and independent specialist legal immigration and asylum advice and representation to people seeking entry or leave to remain in the UK. It runs a drop-in advice session and appointments and has advice pages on their website as well as information about projects and campaigns.

**Centrepoint-Young Peoples Support Foundation**

Centrepoint-YPSF provides a wide range of services to support young people towards an independent life as an adult. They work with young people aged 16-25 and especially those who are rough sleepers, homeless and have problems accessing housing.

**Manchester City Council**

This is a new project within MVAP. Volunteers have the opportunity to be part of the Customer Service Centre’s Homelessness team. They will help people by supporting them through the homelessness process, giving general advice and information and assisting them with applications or advocating on their behalf.

**Volunteer experience & roles**

**For all roles you need to**

Have a desire to help people

Be committed, punctual and reliable

Be willing to learn

Be able to read and write confidently in English

Carry out all work in an impartial and non-judgemental way

Comply withpolicies including confidentiality, equality of opportunity and data protection

#### Reception volunteers tasks include taking messages, giving out information about other services, photocopying documents, inputting data and filing and retrieving information.

**Admin assistants** carry out office tasks to support the running of the organisations.

**Interpreter** tasks include interpreting on reception and for advice workers during interviews.

**Recruitment** support volunteers assist with advertising and by attending events.

**A social media volunteer** role is available at Cheetham Hill Advice Centre. They will be involved in the development and maintenance of their online presence in order to promote the service and raise funds.

**Training support volunteers** are involved in the preparation and delivery of training.

**Advice volunteers** interview and advise clients in person. This includes advocating on their behalf and assisting them to complete application forms.

**Advice Support Volunteers** carry out tasks to assist advisers. This could include writing letters, following up cases, photocopying, inputting data and filing.

**Immigration assistants** support the Immigration advisers to:

* Complete travel documents
* Complete child registration documents
* Complete nationality applications
* Complete some EEA nationals initial 5-year residency card applications

**Digital skills support** **volunteers** will assist clients to use online applications and share their skills, as a mentor, to other volunteers.

Really enjoyed the course & working with everyone super course

Brill, learning so much!

**Advice Work Training Programme**

We have developed our training programme to enable volunteers to gain the skills and confidence needed to carry out the range of roles within MVAP.

**What does it involve?**

Trainees will attend 1 days training at an external venue and half a day with one of the MVAP partners. The full course lasts for 9 weeks. Going into the Centre enables participants to relate what they are learning on the course to how the Centre works in practice. You will observe volunteers and paid workers, undertake practical exercises and carry out tasks under the supervision of your Advice Supervisor.

**The training programme** is divided into 2 Modules.

**Module 1** is 5 days. It covers an introduction to the advice world and its role in the community. Values, attitudes and policies within the organisations. Communication, interview and advocacy skills. An overview of the welfare benefit system.

**Module 2** is 4 days developing knowledge of welfare benefits, housing and debt issues.

## How do I get involved?

1. **Firstly you must be a Manchester resident.**
2. You attend an Information Session.
3. You submit an application form.
4. You have an informal interview.
5. Some volunteer roles may be subject to a DBS check. Having a conviction will not automatically disbar you from volunteering in this project but checks do need to be made.

For further information contact:

Dawn Kaveney, the Volunteer Development Worker at:

T: 07921 46 46 09 or 0161 226 5412.

E: dawn.kaveney@manchestermind.org