

Job Description

Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council



Resources Directorate

Post Title	Benefits Officer		
Post Number	BG00289	Grade	4
Base	Civic Centre	Hours	37
Car User Allowance	None	Disclosure	No
Contact	Service Manager Benefits 01495 355189	Updated	May 2014

Principal Job Purpose

Responsible to: Service Manager Benefits

Responsible for: Providing advice, support and understanding to customers enquiring about benefits, free school meals and school uniform clothing grants, via the telephone and face to face interviews. To verify and process applications for Housing Benefits & Council Tax Reduction, in accordance with Benefit & Council Tax Reduction Regulations.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To provide accurate and meaningful advice to customers, ensuring that they understand the action, which will be taken.
2. To encourage the customer to apply for all Benefits they may be entitled to, Discretionary Housing Payments, Free School Meals and School Uniform Clothing Grants.
3. To receive claim forms and supporting documents from customers.
4. To verify and process Benefit applications in accordance with the Benefit Regulations.
5. To ensure all overpayments are classified correctly .

6. To carry out means testing for House Renovation Grants and other means tested benefits such as free school meals.
7. To assist with the scanning and indexing of all documents received in a timely manner.
8. To conduct interviews with members of the public in person and on the telephone.
9. To listen patiently, to empathise with the customer's situation and convey a genuine desire to help and support.
10. To work with current and emerging technology to enhance customer contact service which includes electronic claims for benefits and identifying eligibility for other welfare benefits.
11. To ensure continuous improvement, initiating, facilitating and responding to change in a positive manner.
12. To liaise with Departments within the Authority and other External Organisations.
13. To comply with the relevant sections of the Authority's policy statement on Health, Safety and Welfare at Work.
14. To adhere to the principles of the Corporate Equality Policy and ensure commitment to anti-discriminatory practice.
15. To carry out any other relevant duties, commensurate with the grade as may from time to time be required by Management.

Person Specification – Benefits Officer

1. Qualifications & experience	Assessment Method				
	Essential / Desirable	Application Form	Interview	Other (please specify)	Probationary Period
Qualifications/relevant experience					
5 GCSE or O' Levels at grade C or above to include English and Maths or equivalent educational attainments.	Essential	✓			
Other experience					
Experience of working within a customer facing environment.	Essential	✓	✓		✓
Experience of using Civica EDM system and Northgate .	Desirable	✓	✓		✓
Experience of working in a Housing Benefits/Revenues environment.	Desirable	✓	✓		✓
Knowledge/Skills					
The ability to remain calm in difficult situations and demonstrate tactfulness, discretion and confidentiality at all times.	Essential	✓			
The ability to deal sympathetically, diplomatically and firmly with members of staff and members of the public.	Essential	✓			
Working knowledge and experience of Microsoft Desktop Applications.	Essential	✓	✓		✓
The ability and confidence to carry out duties without supervision on occasions	Essential	✓	✓		
The ability to work as part of a team to meet variable deadlines.	Desirable	✓			
Knowledge of Housing Benefit and other DWP benefits.	Desirable	✓	✓		✓
Experience in being discreet, diplomatic, persuasive, organised and interviewing others	Desirable	✓	✓		✓

3. Personal Competencies

All competencies are regarded as essential, although it is recognised that some may be achieved over a period of time. All employees are expected to continually develop their competencies in line with the appropriate framework.

In addition to those assessed as part of the recruitment process, competencies will be assessed during the probationary period and afterwards through the Authority's performance coaching scheme.

Assessment Method

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Delivering a Continually Improving Service					
	Is focused on continually improving performance of self gives regular, constructive feedback on team/individual performance		✓ Essential		✓
	Is positive about improving the service and identifies potential benefits for the citizen		✓ Essential		✓
	Consults team and others, inside and outside the organisation, for improvement ideas				✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Communicating	Uses appropriate and precise methods of communication	✓ Essential			✓
	Communicates positively and respectfully	✓ Essential			✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Making Informed Decisions	Considers implications of proposed decisions				✓
	Ensures decisions link to continually improving performance				✓
	Uses problem solving as a method of improving the service		✓ Essential		✓
	Seeks clarification or challenges appropriately				✓
	Explains decisions appropriately				✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Working Together	Understands the benefits of working together	✓ Essential	✓ Essential		✓
	Promotes and contributes to partnerships to continually improve services for the citizen				✓
	Networks effectively internally and externally	✓ Essential	✓ Essential		✓

Topic	Competencies	Assessment Method			
		App. Form	Interview	Other e.g. presentation, discussion group, simulation, etc (please specify)	Probationary Period/ Performance Coaching
Putting the Citizen First	Recognises the importance of the citizen's input to improving the service				✓
	Ensures team is focused on serving the citizen as the first priority				✓
	Seeks feedback from the citizen on the quality and appropriateness of service delivery				✓
	Is positive about the organisation and the community it serves				✓