

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Debt Recovery Officer
Service: Adult Social Care
Team: Financial Assessments and Debt Recovery
Grade: 9
Hours: 37 per week
Responsible to: Senior Debt Recovery Officer
Responsible for: None
Budget responsibilities: None

Main Purpose(s) of the job:

The ASC Income team is responsible for managing the invoicing and collection of adult social care means tested fees as well as case managing the recovery of accrued debts in relation to unpaid contributions from social service's users or their estates in accordance with national guidance. This includes working alongside Social Workers to support individuals to repay, raising safeguarding concerns, instructing formal court procedures to take place or putting forward cases for write off.

The post holder is responsible for: proactively and efficiently undertaking the collection of arrears owed for means-tested care services; monitoring high-risk debtors and taking prompt action in line with agreed procedures to reduce the Council's bad debt position; working closely with the Council's legal department to ensure successful resolutions to Council legal actions.

This post holder is responsible for ensuring that all relevant County policies and procedures are adhered to and concerns are raised in accordance with these policies. Work in accordance with the Corporate CHOICE values and competency framework. [Link to County Council Values](#)

Main Duties:

1. Review ASC debts outstanding and client case files, use relevant and available information to determine what appropriate action needs to be taken, whilst ensuring team procedures and timescales are met and accurate records of actions are maintained
2. Liaise and negotiate with ASC clients, their relatives or representatives to ensure payment of arrears, both in writing and by telephone as appropriate
3. As required work in conjunction with other Council departments to expedite the collection of ASC income and resolve ongoing payments difficulties, including attending safeguarding strategy meetings as directed
4. Attend face to face meetings with clients, their representatives or members of directorates, as required as part of recovery action to facilitate the collection of ASC arrears or resolving client queries. Ensure that meetings are conducted in line with team procedures and risk assessments

5. Fully prepare cases for legal action where appropriate, instruct legal department and monitor ongoing legal action.
6. Monitor all Income and Legal Services instalment cases on a monthly basis, ensuring that updates are provided to management and case files are updated as necessary
7. Monitor & maintain data records, regularly reporting on debt levels, high risk debt and settlement rates ensuring procedures are followed and to enable accurate monitoring of debt levels. Provide support to management in producing relevant information for analysis purposes as requested
8. Sensitively handle interaction with upset, distressed or aggressive clients and or their representatives in relation to collection of ASC payments owed to the Council
9. Monitor all ASC debts owed by clients managed by the Council's Money Management department and work with that department to expedite payments for charges owed, ensuring that case files are updated and cases are escalated to management following team procedure.
10. Maintain accurate client records/details on the system, keeping full records of communications with internal and external clients ensuring that electronic and manual storage systems are used effectively and efficiently and with due regard to traceability, security and confidentiality
11. Contribute and engage in the objective meeting, personal development and training in line with one-to-one sessions, appraisals, team objectives and council policies & procedures
12. Assist with the creation, review and training of interdepartmental processes and procedures to support continuous improvement within the Team and Oxfordshire County Council
13. Maintain up to date knowledge of the Care Act, Data Protection Act and Department Of Health guidance, state benefits, changes to the statutory charging schemes and wider personal finance initiatives, and to apply this knowledge in the maintenance of processes and training
14. Be responsible for staying up to date with current national guidance and debt recovery best practice. Maintain knowledge by attending relevant conferences and training events as required, communicating upcoming changes or developments that may impact ASC debt recovery processes or policies.
15. Be responsible for ensuring that all county adult protection policies are adhered to and concerns are raised in accordance with these policies

This job description is not intended to be exhaustive. The post holder will be expected to adopt a flexible attitude to the duties which may have to be varied, subject to the needs of the service and in keeping with the general profile of the post.

For all staff - You have specific responsibilities under Health & Safety legislation to ensure that you:

- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and that of others affected by what you do, or do not do
- Cooperate on all issues involving health and safety
- Use work items provided for you correctly, in accordance with training and instructions
- Do not interfere with or misuse anything provided for your health, safety or welfare
- Report any health and safety concerns to your line manager as soon as practicable

Oxfordshire County Council is re-organising office accommodation across the county, and the location of this post may change. The successful applicant for this position will be kept informed by his/her line manager of any proposed change in location

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SELECTION CRITERIA

Job Title: Debt Recovery Officer

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Educational achievements, Qualifications, Training and Knowledge:

- GCSE English and Mathematics A-C or equivalent
- Finance/Credit Control qualification or equivalent
- Knowledge of Local Authority statutory requirements in relation to Adult Social Care

Experience:

- Minimum 2 years' experience in a similar financial environment.
- Direct customer contact and dispute resolution including call handling and face to face meetings
- Experience of using Microsoft applications to intermediate level (in particular Excel)
- Proven ability to Ability to work effectively to deadlines and adapt to urgent re-prioritising of workload

Job related aptitude and skills:

- Ability to be assertive whilst maintaining Customer Focus
- Ability to cope with stressful situations and competing deadlines
- Ability to assimilate processes quickly taking responsibility for actively engaging in learning and completing individual tasks without supervision
- Ability to work calmly under pressure, prioritising competing demands effectively and delivering results
- Excellent organisational skills ensuring that both individual & team tasks and objectives are delivered successfully and on time
- Ability to clearly and effectively communicate complex messages to a variety of audiences by telephone, in writing, by e-mail and in person

Personal qualities:

- Initiative & self motivation.
- Adaptable and flexible and maintains personal resilience in response to change and competing priorities
- Ability to proactively work across teams and use consultative processes to improve the outcomes in debt recovery cases
- Able to work with competing and different priorities/deadlines

Special Requirements:

- Car Driver with valid license and business insurance or ability to travel throughout the county.

Desirable

- Understanding of the process of means testing for Adult Social care services
- Experience of working with SAP
- Experience of dealing with elderly or vulnerable clients

Equal Opportunities:

* Commitment to, and understanding of, the principles of Equal Opportunities for all, in employment and the delivery of services.