



Post: Income officer

Department: Housing

Reports to: Housing Income Team Leader

Contracted hours: 37.5 hours a week.

Working Hours: 9:00 am– 5:00pm

Contract: Permanent

Salary: £ 25749

Location: 2nd Floor Eden House, Eastgate Office Centre, Bristol, BS5 6XY

About ACH

Our vision is to empower refugees and migrants who reside in the UK to lead self-sufficient and ambitious lives.

ACH is a social enterprise comprised of a diverse group of strategists and researchers led by lived experience. We provide tailored integration services that not only help individuals, but also disrupt the systems that have entrenched inequalities in our society.

We have a track record of delivering effective support services that give refugees and migrants the tools they need to succeed. In 2021 alone, we have helped 1000+ people to achieve their personal goals and lead fulfilling lives in their new country.

By working with us at ACH, you will be supporting refugees and migrants to build a better, brighter future.

Purpose of job

To ensure the ACH maximises its income through the effective collection of rent, service charges and other income owed to it by tenants working supportively and proactively with the aim of sustaining tenancies.

The Housing Income Team maintains very close links with our supported services team throughout to ensure efficient and effective processes are in place to manage rental income, service charges and arrears with all of our tenants.

Key Responsibilities

INCOME RECOVERY

- To assist the Housing Income Team Leader in the management ACH property rental income and tenant service charges within agreed budgets. This post is based within the Housing Income team which sits within the wider housing operational services.
- To work proactively to identify potential loss of income and adopt early intervention practices to prevent the escalation of arrears, prevent tenancy breakdown and prevent escalation of need.
- Work collaboratively with your colleagues and partner agencies to ensure that the ACH maximises income recovery alongside tenants getting the very best service and opportunities to live independently and safely in their homes.
- To liaise with the relevant Benefits sections in local authorities regarding the processing and progress of individual housing benefits claims, liaise regularly with the Benefits Officer about chasing the progress of housing benefit applications and overpayments where appropriate.
- Monitor all aspects of income recovery, taking decisive action to implement solutions to prevent the escalation of debt owed to ACH.
- Advise and assist tenants to claim housing benefit and other welfare benefits as applicable, and to monitor the status of these claims to ensure recovery of rent and collect service charge throughout the tenancy.
- To work with the Team Leaders to quickly identify issues relating to housing benefit/ housing element of universal credit and to ensure that any identified issues are tackled promptly.
- To complete accurate affordability calculations with tenants preparing to move into ACH accommodation.
- To negotiate debt payment arrangements based upon the tenant's income and expenditure commitments.
- To ensure that maximum income is collected making best use of tenants and other customers preferred options to pay.
- To carry out regular home visits in connection with income recovery or arrears prevention and to serve notices of seeking possession.

ARREARS PREVENTION

- To provide an excellent customer focussed service for all ACH tenants ensuring that tenants are aware of their responsibility to pay their rent on time and regularly, and to advise on preventative action to be taken to stop them falling into arrears.
- To keep up to date on welfare benefit entitlements, particularly housing related benefits and all changes due to Welfare Reform.

- To advise tenants on welfare benefits – to offer advice and encourage debt counselling and refer tenants to specialist advice.
- To complete claim forms on behalf of tenants and verify claims on behalf of the Local Authority.
- To keep up to date with best practice on arrears prevention, putting forward ideas and suggestions for service improvements.
- To arrange for the production and distribution of regular rent statements to tenants and advise tenants on these accordingly.
- Make decisions and take in accordance with action to recover arrears in accordance with current law and policy guidelines, referring any matters of doubt to the Housing Income Team Leader.

GENERAL

- Regularly liaise with stakeholders to help tenants meet their tenancy obligations and retain their tenancy.
- To work in partnership with colleagues in housing, support and finance and being flexible over tasks and responsibilities to ensure the best customer service to tenants.
- A flexible approach to working hours will be required in order to meet the needs of tenants. This will involve some evening and occasional week-end work
- Proactively suggesting ways to improve service delivery and work with others to amend policies and procedures to enhance the service to tenants.
- A flexible approach to working hours will be required in order to meet the needs of tenants. This will involve some evening and occasional week-end work.
- Adopt safe working practices to comply with legislation, policies, and procedures, while mitigating risks posed by challenging behaviour, identifying and recording accurate information to minimise risks to others.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to GCSE level or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relevant qualification in social care / housing. • Qualification in Social Housing e.g. CIH level 3 / 4.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working within the Social Housing Sector. • Experience of working in a housing environment. • Experience of delivering financial inclusion advice. • Experience of rent collection and arrears, void control, service charges and managing complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a residential setting. • Experience of working with the public. • Health and Safety experience, particularly in an accommodation setting. • Ability to speak Arabic/Somali.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of providing support to tenants. • Ability to work with honesty, discretion, integrity and confidentially. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable experience of working with people with Refugee and Asylum Seeker status
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of and commitment to customer care. • Understanding of and commitment to the principles of equality and diversity. • Demonstrable experience of delivering customer service excellence and knowledge 	
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to effectively assess, manage and continuously review needs and risks. • Ability to maintain accurate records and manage a caseload. • Strong organisational and planning skills • Ability to manage own time, whilst also working within a team • Confident Microsoft skills - Outlook, Excel, Word, and PowerPoint. • Strong verbal and written communication skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A knowledge of Salesforce
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment and desire to support refugees with their integration in the UK. • A commitment to Equality and Diversity principles • A commitment to the professional representation of ACH 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Subscription • A flexible approach is needed to meet business need with occasional weekend or evening working, when this is required 	

To apply please complete our application form on our website.

For an informal conversation or to find out more about ACH or the role, please don't hesitate to contact our People and Culture Manager, Werner Lourens - werner.lourens@ach.org.uk.

Due to the nature of this post, an enhanced DBS check will be undertaken for successful applicants, but only with their prior consent.

Applicants need to have right to work in the UK and access to their own vehicle for work purposes to be considered for this role. We may close this role early, so please apply ASAP to avoid disappointment.