

JOB DESCRIPTION

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|--|---|-----------------|---------------------|
| Job Title | Customer Service Specialist (Inclusion Advice Line) | | |
| Directorate | Education | | |
| Reporting to | Education Relationship Manager | | |
| Grade | 13 | | |
| Evaluation ref: | AG0770 | Job ref: | Family CCT13 |
| Role purpose | | | |
| To respond to telephone, email, SMS text, fax, white mail and social media enquiries /posts from the general public and professionals, identifying their needs, providing support and guidance and clarifying issues. Provide information and advice to customers on complex multi-agency issues. | | | |
| Responsibilities | | | |
| <p>Responds to telephone, email, SMS text, fax, white mail and social media enquiries / posts from the general public and professionals, identifying their needs, providing support and guidance, and clarifying issues. Provide information and advice to customers on complex multi-agency issues relating to, amongst others, Children's Social Care and Education. Deals with general enquiries relating to other Somerset Council (SC) and Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) services as appropriate.</p> <p>Takes, as required, all relevant details from the customer to make formal referrals and, as necessary, refers issues of appropriate urgency or complexity to named contacts in Children's Social Care, Education, Primary Care Groups/Trusts, and voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Undertakes an initial assessment of often complex needs using prompts and information contained on various IT systems and databases, where appropriate.</p> <p>Takes referrals from external organisations.</p> <p>Liaises with professional staff within Children's Social Care, Education Services, Primary Health Care Trust, and other Departments of the County Council as appropriate.</p> <p>Logs all enquiries, accesses and records data using various IT and manual systems, including the main Social Services database (Protocol), Customer Contact's Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) and various Admissions and Early Years databases.</p> <p>Prepares letters and other documents as required, sending out information and publications to customers, as necessary.</p> | | | |

JOB DESCRIPTION

Acts as first point of contact for public access to all Children's Services for the Authority.

Provides a messaging service to the Emergency Duty Team. Assessing and prioritising the urgency and complexity of the needs of the caller. This work will require training and skills development to appropriately respond to crisis work in Child Protection and Mental Health cases.

Deals with calls in line with the County Council's policies and procedures (on Equalities and Diversity for example), and relevant legislation; for example, the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, ensuring all data recorded is relevant and accurate.

Takes ownership of difficult calls, using call handling skills and judgement to determine the best course of action, involving Service Experts, back-office specialist staff or a Team Manager if necessary.

Takes responsibility to use electronic feedback process to report any information that is inaccurate/absent from the CRM and/or website, but also to make suggestions for improvements to the presentation or functionality of our systems where identified.

Promotes and encourages the use of other access channels, in particular www.somerset.gov.uk, e-mail/e-forms and SMS text services, providing support and advice on their use.

Engages with Customer Service Experts and specialist staff in back offices to create and maintain a good rapport between them and Customer Contact, using these relationships to identify any changes to these services, or their related legislation, which may affect Customer Contact.

Takes ownership of personal training and development needs, using initiative to take appropriate action where necessary, and use 1 to 1 (CRAD) meetings to raise matters where advice/assistance is required from a Team Manager

Undertakes regular caller surveys to monitor the effectiveness and satisfaction of the services provided by Customer Contact.

Individually responsible for the data management of one or more IT databases, ensuring accurate, up-to-date information is provided to clients/professionals. Takes a proactive approach to information gathering.

Uses Contact Centre Broadcaster to maintain a constant awareness of real-time service levels and effectively manage own availability in telephony system to maximise the team's ability to meet monthly Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), showing consideration for colleagues and prioritising/managing outgoing call or administration work.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Receive calls and deliver services on behalf of other Customer Contact teams during busy periods, or to cover unexpected absences.

Impact

Contacts & Relationships

The role of the Customer Service Specialist is entirely communication based and the post holder will be at ease with customers, and quickly build relationships with them. The majority of customers will be members of the public, but they will also be in regular contact with professionals in external businesses/agencies (i.e. other local authorities, schools, County/District/Parish Councillors as well as other members of the Contact Centre team and internal County Council staff).

There is close contact with other team members to share specialist knowledge, problems, solutions, and support to ensure continuity of service and consistent standards.

The post holder will come into contact with people who need to access services for a variety of reasons, many of which are potentially sensitive – for example, reporting concerns about the welfare of a child, criteria for acceptance into local schools, recent bereavement, or dissatisfaction with a received service. Consequently, they may be exposed to callers who are aggressive, rude, or distressed. There is a need to deal with these callers in a tactful, courteous, and professional manner.

There will be regular contact with professionals from Children's Social Care, Education, and other services from within the County Council. Contacts also take place with staff of Primary Care Groups/Trusts and voluntary organisations. These relationships are crucial to the effect delivery of key services.

The Specialist will report to a Team Manager who leads their team. Outside of regular 1 to 1 (CRAD) meetings, the post holder will also be able to refer particularly complex or contentious issues to them. They are expected to exercise judgement and initiative before referring problems to their Team Manager.

Resources

Being the voice of customers and communities (approx. 525,000 people live in Somerset) and working with representative customer groups to decide where and how they access our services.

Customer Contact delivers over 3000 different service activities which goes someway to demonstrate the variety of services available and the number of enquiries likely to be received.

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There is no direct responsibility for budgets however the aim of customer access is to deliver better service at less cost so this post will support Services in shaping and streamlining more effective customer service management and delivery.

No direct permanent line management of staff.

Knowledge / Experience / Skills

| | Essential | Desirable | |
|---|-----------|-----------|--|
| Knowledge | | | |
| Detailed understanding of existing service delivery with a clear specialism | X | | |
| Ability to easily build a rapport and engage with others | X | | |
| Demonstration of good diagnostic and questioning ability. | X | | |
| Shows natural empathy and understanding to the needs of others. | X | | |
| Evidence of computer literacy and good typing speed. | X | | |
| Ability to deal with some highly sensitive subject matters. | X | | |
| Ability to extract relevant from irrelevant information from a conversation | | X | |
| Detailed knowledge of service delivery for either Highways, Social Care or Council Tax. | | X | |
| Identified contacts within service areas with proven effective working relationships. | | X | |
| Experience | | | |
| Evidence of having gone that 'extra mile'. | X | | |
| Experience of positively managing change. | | X | |
| Evidence of consistently high-quality performance | | X | |
| Experience of adjusting quickly from one conversation to another with differing requirements. | | X | |
| Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications | | | |
| Your attitude and communication skills are far more valuable to us than any qualifications. | X | | |
| Skills | | | |
| Clear, concise, accurate and professional written and verbal communication skills. | X | | |

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| Ability to speak fluent English as stated in Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016). | X | | |
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| Working Arrangements | | | |
| Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position. | | | |
| Corporate Responsibilities | | | |
| Understand, uphold, and promote the aims of the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all. | | | |

Date: June 2025