

Date as postmark

## Dear Applicant

Thank you for your recent interest regarding our current job vacancies at Opportunity Housing Trust. Please find enclosed an information pack containing the following:

- Application form (to be completed and returned)
- Guidance notes on completing the application form
- Job Profile
- Person Specification (**please read carefully to ensure your application reflects the criteria**)
- Job Description

When filling in the application form, please ensure that you explain how your experience, which may have been gained by paid employment, voluntary work or through your life experiences, relates to the person specification. **Candidates will only be invited for interview if they meet the criteria on the person specification.** Additional sheets are encouraged in order to meet the criteria.

We would be grateful if you could return your completed application form and any other relevant information to the address below:

**OPPORTUNITY HOUSING TRUST  
GROUND FLOOR  
LIBRARY COURT  
FAIROAK ROAD  
CATHAYS  
CARDIFF  
CF24 4PX**

Closing date for applications: **OPEN ENDED – NO CLOSING DATE**

Thank you for your interest in our organisation and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Regards

**OPPORTUNITY HOUSING TRUST**

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION FORM**

Opportunity Housing Trust's Recruitment and Selection process aims to appoint the best candidate for the vacancy.

When you apply for a job, the application form plays a very important part of the selection process. The details you provide will determine whether or not you will be shortlisted for an interview.

Read through the application form and the person specification before you write anything. Do a rough draft first and make a copy of your completed application form.

### **COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM**

**COMPLETE EVERY SECTION OF THE FORM**, particularly your full address and contact telephone numbers. If a section is not relevant then put a line through it so that we know that it has not been left accidentally.

Your application needs to show the relevant skills, interests and experience you have gained. Do not disregard any involvement that you have gained outside of paid employment such as community or voluntary work, or experience gained at home or through leisure activities. Always present evidence in a positive way (e.g. I was responsible for ....., I organised ....., I was involved with .....

**You must aim to address all aspects of the person specification.** If there is not sufficient space on the application form to complete your response fully, please continue on additional sheets. Remember to reference any additional sheets. Your reference number can be found on the front cover of your application form.

### **REFERENCES**

It is a requirement of the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales for employers to obtain satisfactory references. You must provide the names, full addresses and contact numbers of 2 referees. One must be your current or most recent employer/manager. The second can be a character referee who is a person that knows you well, such as a work colleague, but not a relative.

Also, if you have worked in other Care Sector organisations over the past 5 years, it is a requirement to obtain references. Please supply this information when completing the references section on the application form.

If you have no employment history, we must obtain references from your school, college or university tutor.

**You must provide full postal addresses, including postcodes of both referees. Failure to do so will result in a delay in sending for your references as the Post Office require full addresses with postcodes.**

### **INTERVIEWS**

If you are successfully shortlisted, you will be invited to attend an interview. Once you receive the letter, please confirm you are able to attend or if you need to re-arrange. Interviews are normally conducted by 2 Appointing Officers who will ask pre-determined questions. The panel has to keep a record of their assessment of each candidate so that the reasons for their decisions are clear, consistent and justifiable. Do not worry about the panel making notes during the interview.

## **OPPORTUNITY HOUSING TRUST**

***“To empower and support people with a disability to enjoy a valued life in the community”.***

Opportunity Housing Trust (OHT) is a non-profit making organisation serving communities across Wales. We provide support to children and adults of all ages all of whom have some degree of learning disability and some have additional needs due to their age, behaviour and physical problems. We also provide specialist support to people with Autistic spectrum disorders and people requiring respite services.

We were established in 1985 and have grown over the years to the extent that we now employ over 800 staff providing support to over 250 service users.

We provide support across 6 Local Authorities Cardiff, Bridgend, RCT, Caerphilly, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion.

Opportunity Housing Trust is one of the biggest providers of support to people with learning disabilities in Wales and as an organisation our Corporate aims are to;

- Make a difference in people's lives, through a range of flexible and responsive care and support services, utilising appropriate technologies and resources.
- Continually improve our efficiency and effectiveness through innovation, quality assurance, good communication and partnership working.
- Develop a shared culture that defines what OHT is and what we stand for.
- Promote person-centred approaches in all aspects of our work, from planning and monitoring systems to HR, Finance and Admin processes, so that the people we support are able to achieve positive outcomes relating to their daily independence, inclusion and decision-making.

We strive to work to a set of key values which we believe underpin our ethos and culture:

- People with learning difficulties have a right to normal patterns of life within the community.
- People with learning difficulties should have the right to be treated as individuals.
- People with a learning difficulty have the right to the additional support they need if they are to develop to their maximum potential.
- Support should be provided in a safe environment that preserves dignity.
- We should encourage and support those who can do so to build their independence.
- We should promote the continued development of a high quality workforce.

The recently advertised positions form part of our plans to compliment our existing senior management team and to contribute to OHT's ongoing success and growth.

### **OHT aims to be at the forefront of providing unique person centred support to people with a broad range of learning disabilities**

At a time when personalisation is high on the national agenda it is important for OHT to streamline its operations and measure qualitatively and quantitatively the difference we make to help people achieve their personal goals and aspirations.

Any one of the positions offers an excellent opportunity for you to demonstrate your passion and commitment towards OHT's aims and values either working collectively within a team or independently. We will offer comprehensive training for all new starters and continued support from your colleagues and managers.

If you would like to find out more by visiting OHT or be directed to someone who can discuss the opportunities in more detail telephone our HR Department on **029 20 236216**

## Enhanced Disclosure (Criminal Records Bureau)

**It is important that you read the information below as all successful applicants will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure.**

As an organisation, OHT supports people with learning disabilities to live full and active lives as valued members of their community. People with learning disabilities are classed as 'vulnerable adults'. As an employer, OHT has an obligation to protect it's clients. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has been set up to facilitate safer recruitment to protect children and vulnerable adults. **There will be a requirement for you to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure prior to commencing employment with OHT should your application be successful.**

### **What is an Enhanced Disclosure?**

A disclosure is a document containing information held by the police and government departments. Enhanced disclosures are for posts involving a far greater degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults. It includes a check on local police records and will provide details of current and 'spent' convictions held on the Police National Computer (PNC) including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings.

### **What if I do have previous convictions?**

In line with the principles of OHT's Equal Opportunities Policy, the organisation will not discriminate against anyone applying for a post who has disclosed details of any previous convictions personally or through an Enhanced Disclosure. The declaration of an offence by a potential employee or as disclosed through an Enhanced Disclosure, will not automatically result in the withdrawal of a job offer. The nature and seriousness of the conviction will be considered by the appointing officer and the Human Resources Department. Ex-offenders will retain the protection afforded by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, the post for which you are applying is exempt from a section of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Therefore, **any previous caution or conviction is not considered 'spent' and will appear on your Disclosure form. If an offence appears on your Disclosure form which you have not disclosed on your application form and at the interview stage, your application will be considered void.**

### **Can I refuse to have a Disclosure?**

There is no general obligation to apply for a criminal record check. However, OHT retains the right to withdraw the offer of a position if a candidate declines to apply for a disclosure. This is because OHT is obliged under the Care Standards Act to undertake such checks for any potential employees.

### **Who will have access to my Disclosure?**

Disclosure information is kept in securely locked storage and only those entitled to see it as part of their duties will have access. Once a recruitment decision has been made, OHT will hold the information for 6 months. Once this time period has elapsed, the document will be shredded.

### **What if I have applied for a Disclosure in the past?**

Unfortunately, the new legislation does not permit us to accept Enhanced Disclosures from other organisations. Therefore, we **MUST** obtain our own Enhanced Disclosure **BEFORE** your start date can be arranged.

# Terms and Conditions

## **Selection**

People we support play an important part in helping us make selection decisions. All the information obtained during the selection procedure will be assessed and used in the final decision making process.

## **References/Checks**

References will normally be taken up for a candidate once an offer of employment has been made.

Both referees should be previous employers including your present or most recent employer.

Please note that all offers of employment are subject to references, appropriate checks, and employment commencement dates will not be confirmed until all satisfactory checks are in place.

## **Salary and uplifts**

The appointment will be made within the salary range advertised. Increments will be awarded to employees who meet performance standards every April until the top of the scale is reached.

## **Salary Arrangements**

A recognition agreement exists between Unison and Opportunity Housing Trust and annual salary reviews are negotiated as part of this arrangement.

Salary is paid, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month (20 days in arrears the remaining days in advance).

## **Hours of work/Flexible working**

These will be agreed at the interview stage of the recruitment process.

## **Probationary Period**

A new entrant to Opportunity Housing Trust is subject to an eight month probationary period.

## **Medical Questionnaire**

Please note that all offers of employment are subject to satisfactory health clearance.

You will be required to complete and return a health questionnaire to our Occupational Health department.

## **Proof of Qualifications**

You will be required to provide documentary proof of examination success once appointed.

## **Proof of Eligibility to Work for Opportunity Housing Trust**

All candidates are asked to provide documentary proof of their eligibility to work in accordance with Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order 1996.

Acceptable documents include:

- A passport showing that you are a British Citizen, or have the right to live in the United Kingdom.
- A document showing that you are a national from a European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland. This must be a national passport or national identity card.
- A residence permit issued to you by the Home Office if you are from a EEA country or Switzerland.
- A passport or other document issued by the Home Office which has an endorsement stating that you have a current right of residence in the United Kingdom as the family member of a national from a EEA country or Switzerland who is resident in the UK.
- A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you can stay indefinitely in the UK or have no time limit on your stay.
- A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you can stay in the UK; and that this endorsement allows you to do the type of work you are being offered if you do not have a work permit.
- An application Registration Card issued by the Home Office if you are an asylum seeker stating that you are permitted to take employment.

If you are unable to provide any of the above, please contact the Human Resources department for advice.

# **Employee Benefits**

## **Job Sharing**

There is a degree of flexibility in carrying out the duties of the position(s) this allows you to balance your home and work life commitments (eg) agreed arrangements for working from home etc. In addition job share requests are considered and accommodated where possible

## **Childcare Vouchers**

OHT are currently looking at introducing a Child Care Voucher Scheme

## **Holidays**

Opportunity Housing Trust holiday entitlement starts at 20 days (pro rata for part-time and contract staff) and following five years service an additional 5 days are awarded.

In addition to the holiday entitlement there are 12 paid bank holidays.

The leave year starts on 1 April and ends on 31 March.

## **Pension**

A valuable benefit available to most staff is the option of joining a group pension scheme. Opportunity Housing Trust makes a 6% contribution to the Scheme in addition to an employee's personal contribution. Consideration will also be given to a successful candidate continuing with a pension provision currently held with a local authority.

## **Training and Career Development**

By investing in the training of its staff, Opportunity Housing Trust aims to

- provide a skilled and knowledgeable workforce which is able to achieve its objectives
- provide high quality services to service users.
- maintain and improve staff motivation and to foster employee job satisfaction.
- achieve a flexible, adaptable and multi-skilled workforce as a source for future recruitment needs.
- ensure that its Equal Opportunities policy is applied to all staff training activities.
- be an 'Investor in People' employer

Opportunity Housing Trust encourages all its employees to take advantage of training opportunities for their development at work. Study support is available for employees seeking to obtain relevant qualifications.

Where professional qualifications are a job requirement for a particular post or the qualification is directly relevant to the post we will reimburse the relevant professional membership fee. This benefit is subject to a cap and subject to approval.

Staff Development also provides opportunities for course sponsorship, work shadowing, secondments and work experience placements.

## **Company Sick Pay**

We recognise that it is important for our employees to be reassured in times of illness and therefore offer a package that exceeds the statutory minimum.

## **Counselling Service**

There are times when employees may seek some personal advice and support. OHT offers access to an independent counselling service for such times.

## **Eye Care**

Employees who are regarded as a regular VDU computer user have the benefit of receiving a free eye test and a contribution towards their purchase of glasses/lenses.

## **Refer a Friend to OHT**

We encourage employees to recommend people who they know to join us and enjoy a rewarding career. A payment of £100 will be made to you if you recommend someone to us and they successfully complete their probationary period.

## ***Job Profile –Personal Assistant***

**£6.51 - £6.77 per hour**

**Extra Payment of £23.87 for Sleep/Wake Ins**

Opportunity Housing Trust is a major social care provider in Wales, providing support to people with learning disabilities. The Personal Assistant role provides an ideal opportunity to develop knowledge and experience within this field.

We support people to lead active and participative lives within their own homes and local communities. The support provided is tailored to individuals' needs, with the focus on people being enabled to make everyday decisions.

A number of people supported need a minimal level of assistance with their everyday living. The emphasis of the support is on an emotional level providing people with advice, a listening ear, and a "safe" and non-judgemental environment in which they can express their thoughts, achievements, worries and fears. You need to be able to actively listen and respond appropriately.

As well as emotional support some people will require varying levels of physical support, e.g. assistance with eating, communicating, and personal care. This may involve assisting someone with dressing, bathing and using a toilet. You will be expected to provide this in a sensitive manner ensuring the person's dignity and privacy is respected at all times.

We are looking for candidates with good written and verbal communication skills; these are essential to maintain records and to pass on accurate information to team members and other professionals.

It is essential that you are able to work as part of a team. This is a key area of the role as you may liaise and work with fellow staff members on a daily basis. A professional manner is expected at all times as the interaction and relationship between staff and/or the team has a direct impact on the people we support.

We provide regular supervision for our staff, the emphasis placed on supporting people develop their skills and to encourage reflection on job performance.

Personal commitment is essential to these posts, and will be evidenced by: -

- A willingness to learn and develop new skills via training and practical experience.
- A desire to be involved in a role that requires you to adapt your support and approach according to a person's individual needs
- An ability and commitment to work within Opportunity Housing Trust's guidelines, policies and procedures
- A commitment to supporting service users to practice full citizen's rights

The posts involve shift work, and you will be expected to work on a flexible rota including weekends and bank holidays. Sleep-in duties are required for which an additional payment is made. Following the successful completion of a probationary period you will be supported to work towards, and achieve, a Level 2 in N.V.Q.

## PERSONAL ASSISTANT PERSON CRITERIA

**When filling out your application form, it is important that you refer to the list below and provide evidence in each area:**

**You may need to add additional sheets into your application form in so that you cover each of the bullet points in detail in order to provide enough information.**

### ***Must have...***

#### **Experience**

- An awareness or understanding of the post requirements and job role.
- Experience of working as part of a team, e.g. past employment, voluntary work, etc.

#### **Skills**

- Possess skills in basic household tasks, e.g. cookery and maintaining a balanced diet, everyday household budgeting, DIY, household maintenance, gardening, hygiene, laundry, ironing and cleaning.
- The ability to communicate effectively with a range of people, e.g. staff, managers, families, GPs, etc.
- The ability to work on your own initiative and to use a common sense approach to solve everyday problems.

#### **Knowledge**

- Knowledge of Health & Safety in the home.
- An understanding of issues faced by people with disabilities.

#### **Attitude**

- A willingness to participate in service user based activities such as hobbies, interests, etc.
- A willingness to attend training events to develop your role within the Company.

**The above criteria is what you will be shortlisted on and successful candidates will have provided information on each of the criteria's.**

**OPPORTUNITY HOUSING TRUST**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	Personal Assistant
<b>GRADE:</b>	Point 13 – 15 (£6.51 - £6.77 per hour)
<b>RESPONSIBLE TO:</b>	Support Team Manager
<b>SUPERVISED BY:</b>	Support Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager
<b>HOURS:</b>	Agreed contracted hours, to include evenings, Weekends, bank holidays and sleep-in duties.
<b>BASE:</b>	As stated in contract of employment.

**JOB PURPOSE.**

To work as part of a team in the provision of overall support and development to service users living in their own homes. The support will be provided in accordance with Individual need and in line with O.H.T's Code of Practice

**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

- 1. Responsibilities and Support to Service Users**
- 2. Staff and Personnel Issues**
- 3. Household and Administrative Responsibilities**
- 4. Organisational Responsibilities.**

**1.0 RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUPPORT TO SERVICE USERS**

- 1.1** To provide continuity and consistency of support, both physical and emotional to service users, which reflect individual changing needs. The support should be provided in a manner that promotes independence

**Physical Support** required by individuals **may include**; household and domestic tasks, shopping and diet/food preparation, personal hygiene, dressing and personal appearance.

**Active Support.** Service Users should where possible be assisted to undertake most tasks themselves. The level of assistance of support will vary according to individual need. The main aim is for service users to participate as fully as possible in all tasks and activities inside and outside their home.

**Emotional Support** required by individual may include; the offer of support in a sensitive manner with the ability to empathize and actively listen. To offer advice and guidance when supporting service users to make informed decisions and exercise their rights.

- 1.2 To assist and encourage service users to become integrated members of their local community, promoting physical and social presence in community based facilities. e.g. Educational, Occupational, Social and Leisure.
- 1.3 To act as appropriate role models, when supporting service users to participate in day and evening opportunities. Dressing and acting appropriately to participate in such daily living activities.
- 1.4 To liaise with families, staff and relevant services to maintain a high standard of support and provision of a quality service.
- 1.5 To monitor and maintain accurate records for the income and expenditure for service users personal finances. To act as joint signatory for individual service user/household accounts.
- 1.6 To ensure that service users are encouraged and empowered, to express their opinions and views in all areas of decision making, both at individual and organisational level.
- 1.7 To contribute to the development of individual service users by assisting with the planning and practical implementation of Opportunities and Goals identified in:-
  1. Activity and Support Opportunities
  2. Opportunity Plans
  3. Teaching Plans

## **2.0 STAFF AND PERSONNEL ISSUES.**

- 2.1 To participate and contribute to supervision and appraisal sessions, as agreed with line manager.
- 2.2 To attend and actively participate in both compulsory and relevant training events. To keep accurate records of training and personal development i.e. personal portfolio.
- 2.3 To identify ones own training needs in consultation with appropriate line manager.
- 2.4 To effectively communicate with the staff teams and colleagues, regarding issues relating to individual service users, the house and the organisation.
- 2.5 To keep accurate records of hours worked, and the completion and submission of timesheets.
- 2.6 To participate and contribute to relevant team and area meetings.

### **3.0 HOUSEHOLD AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 To assist in maintaining accurate records; i.e. Service Users personal records, house records, communication books, diaries, food and petty cash expenditure.
- 3.2 To comply where necessary with the regulatory requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000.
- 3.3 To be familiar with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations, and to ensure effective implementation during a span of duty. To assist and liaise with team members in maintaining acceptable standards for the maintenance and security of the house. To report, and where necessary deal immediately with malfunctioning equipment.
- 3.4 To successfully undertake a medication proficiency test. To update knowledge and understanding of policy change as and when requested.
- 3.5 To successfully complete ISS training and demonstrate proficiency in using the techniques when required.
- 3.6 To administer and supervise medication to tenants in accordance to O.H.T.'s policy and procedures.
- 3.7 To have an understanding of all financial and administration systems in operation in the development, to ensure accurate records are maintained with house finances.

### **4.0 ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4.1 **Confidentiality.** To fully understand and observe all matters concerning service users and staff are kept strictly confidential to individual houses, staff teams, and the Trust. **Any breach of the above may be subject to disciplinary action.**
- 4.2 To have an understanding and commitment of OHT's Code of Practice, and to be familiar with, and implement any individualised policies and procedures which may affect specific service users..
- 4.3 All staff must be prepared to work at any of the Trust's houses within the Operational area.
- 4.4 To contribute to internal and external monitoring and review systems.
- 4.5 To have an awareness of, and comply with the Trusts Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 4.6 To have awareness, understanding and commitment of OHT's Operational Policy and Procedures.
- 4.7 Be prepared to accept other duties and responsibilities commensurate with the post in light of changing circumstances.

**N.B This Job Description is subject to any reasonable adjustment in accordance with changing and developing needs of the service.**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**IF YOU ARE RETURNING YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM BY POST, PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE PAID ENOUGH POSTAGE, AS SOME APPLICATION FORMS REQUIRE MORE THAN THE USUAL FIRST CLASS STAMP.**

**IF INSUFFICIENT POSTAGE IS PAID, YOUR APPLICATION WILL NOT REACH US.**

**RETURN APPLICATIONS TO:**

**OPPORTUNITY HOUSING TRUST  
GROUND FLOOR  
LIBRARY COURT  
CATHAYS  
CARDIFF  
CF24 4PX**

**TEL: 029 20236216**