
Job Description:

Detention Outreach Caseworker

About JRS

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) accompanies, serves and advocates for the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced people. JRS in the UK supports people made destitute by the asylum process through practical support including accommodation, food and clothing; expert casework and legal advice; and a range of classes and activities. JRS UK also runs a detention outreach service supporting people detained for the administration of immigration procedures at Harmondsworth and Colnbrook, including befriending, social visiting, and casework support. This frontline work informs our research and advocacy for a more just and humane asylum system.

JRS UK is based in the Hurtado Jesuit Centre in Wapping, East London. We currently have 28 full and part-time staff and around 100 volunteers, drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, nationalities and generations; people of all faiths and none; including people with lived experience of the asylum system. We work collaboratively with JRS offices around the world, other Jesuit projects in the UK and many others in the Church and wider refugee sector.

A Global Mission

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation with a shared global mission to accompany, serve and advocate alongside and for the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced people. Our work is based on hospitality, carried out in a spirit of compassion and solidarity, encouraging participation and community, aiming to kindle hope, secure justice and affirm the dignity of refugees and forced migrants.

Our values and ways of working are rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and Jesuit (Ignatian) spirituality: we actively encourage reflective practice and participative decision-making at all levels of the organisation, as well as investment in, and care for our staff and volunteer teams.

Detention Outreach Caseworker

The Detention Outreach Caseworker is a full-time post on a 12-month renewable contract, joining a small team at the JRS UK offices in Wapping, working closely with the Detention Outreach Manager.

The JRS UK Detention Outreach project supports individuals who are detained in the Heathrow Immigration Removal Centres (Harmondsworth and Colnbrook). This busy and varied role focuses on combining accompaniment, practical support, and assistance to those in immigration detention, especially those who are most vulnerable and struggle to self-advocate. The Detention Outreach Caseworker will make referrals to solicitors and partner organisations where appropriate and liaise with Immigration Services, detention centre staff and others as needed.

The Detention Outreach Caseworker will occasionally support individuals who are released from, but continue to be affected by, immigration detention. Through relationships built across the NGO sector, they will refer individuals to local organisations who can most appropriately assist with reintegration into the community. They will provide in-depth and pro-active support to high-need individuals supported in detention who continue to require long-term accompaniment on release.

The Detention Outreach Caseworker will be responsible for managing their own caseload and work closely with the Detention Outreach Manager to identify themes and trends arising from immigration detention to contribute to the organisations wider strategic work.

The post-holder should have a good understanding of and empathy with the issues and challenges faced by asylum-seekers and refugees, with particular focus on immigration detention. They will need highly developed listening skills, personal resilience and emotional maturity to respond to the emotional and practical needs of asylum seekers, accompanying them and supporting them to positively progress with their lives. They need to have and maintain an up-to-date knowledge about the immigration and asylum context as it relates to our work in immigration detention.

The Detention Outreach Caseworker will be enthusiastic about working in a small faith-based organisation and have a willingness to integrate JRS UK's ethos of accompaniment in their approach whilst also demonstrating sensitivity in responding to the needs of destitute and detained individuals. They will enjoy working in a fast-paced environment and possess excellent communication skills. They will work flexibly as a member of the team and organisation and undertake other reasonable duties and responsibilities as needed.

They will possess outstanding communication and organisation skills, will enjoy working in a very fast paced environment, and will adhere to JRS' values and

commitment to social justice, as well as our commitment to tackling racism and discrimination.

JRS UK is committed to providing opportunities to individuals who may otherwise face obstacles in accessing paid work in the asylum and refugee sector and actively encourage applications from black, racialised and other underrepresented communities.

Specific Responsibilities

Accompaniment and service of people in detention

- Regularly visit those in immigration detention as part of JRS UK's weekly welfare drop-in
- Provide emotional and practical support to those in immigration detention
- Organise regular volunteer visits to individuals in detention
- Collaborate with other JRS UK staff and volunteers to ensure refugees are supported holistically and in line with the JRS ethos of accompaniment
- Assist with JRS drama sessions detention as and when required

Advice and Casework

Detention Outreach

- Provide one-off support and non-legal advice to individuals attending JRS UK's weekly Welfare Drop In
- Assess the needs of and provide casework, advice and emotional support to individuals requiring ongoing assistance from JRS.
- Make referrals to immigration solicitors, public law solicitors and specialist organisations as appropriate
- Draft witness statements and letters of support as required

Post Detention Support

- Provide initial practical support for individuals released from detention.
- Identify and assess high-need individuals who would benefit from in-depth support from JRS UK's Post Detention Support.
- Provide in-depth, pro-active and flexible casework support to this small number of individuals
- Provide onward referrals to immigration solicitors, other legal specialists and specialist organisation as appropriate
- Draft witness statements and letters of support as required

Administration of files

- Update records on the case management system (Lamplight)
- Ensure all records are kept up-to-date and maintained in accordance with data protection legislation
- Provide regular reports on casework to the Detention Outreach Manager
- Collate data, themes and trends arising from casework.

Personal growth and development

- Engage with opportunities for training and development and reflect regularly on practice, including:
 - Ongoing training in areas such as asylum & immigration system, mental health support/therapeutic care, rights and entitlements of those we serve, etc.
 - Day workshops and trainings relating to JRS' mission and ethos
 - Participation in team and organisation meetings

Other

- Work closely with the Detention Outreach Manager to identify opportunities and explore ways for individuals supported by the service to share their experiences and contribute to JRS UK's advocacy and communications work.
- Assist the Detention Outreach Manager with impact and outcome reports including for funding
- Attend internal and external meetings as agreed with the Detention Outreach Manager
- Assist with volunteer recruitment and management including facilitating volunteer meetings.
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities as needed.

Person Specification

Essential

- Sympathy and congruence with the values of JRS UK and deep commitment to our mission to accompany, serve and advocate for refugees and those who have been forcibly displaced.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, empathy, personal resilience and emotional maturity for working closely with people in distress and detained

- Prior experience of working with refugees or vulnerable migrants or other marginalised groups
- A good understanding of the immigration and asylum system including detention, bail and deportation, as well as issues affecting asylum seekers, foreign national prisoners and refugees
- Ability to build strong relationships with a variety of stakeholders
- Respect for and experience of working with people from diverse backgrounds and faiths
- Prior experience of working in an area governed by complex policies and regulations.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills
- IT literacy and competency with Word, Excel and case management systems
- Commitment to ongoing personal growth and development
- Ability to work flexibly and collaboratively as part of a small and varied team.
- Commitment to principles underlying diversity and equal opportunities

Desirable

- Experience of working or volunteering in a faith-based organisation or similar setting
- Experience of advice provision in a detention or prison setting
- Experience of managing and working with volunteers
- Ability to speak additional languages

Hours: Full-time (37.5 hours)

Duration: 12-months, with potential to renew

Location: JRS UK Office, Hurtado Jesuit Centre, Wapping, London E1W 2QT with the opportunity for hybrid working

Salary: £30,000-£36,000

Pension: Additional 10% employer's contribution

Application deadline: Sunday 14 September (11:59pm)

Interviews: Week commencing Monday 29 September

We particularly encourage applications from people who have first-hand experience of the UK asylum or immigration system.

You must be permitted to work in the UK. JRS UK is not able to obtain a work visa for this post.