



## LEGAL AID APPLICATIONS (ECFs) VOLUNTEERS

**Haringey Migrant Support Centre (HMSC)** is a charity set up in 2012, staffed by volunteers and a small number of paid workers, offering advice and support to migrants in London. The beneficiaries often have an insecure immigration status and are affected by the 'hostile environment' agenda. HMSC assists visitors (clients) in many different ways, on issues ranging from immigration to housing, welfare or health. We have weekly triage sessions (first assessment), followed by advice and casework when needed. Twice a month, we also run a social community space with a hot lunch and activities to support visitors' wellbeing, help foster connections and build community knowledge.

The role of **Legal Aid Applications (ECFs) Volunteer** would suit people wishing to gain additional experience in the area of immigration law and is particularly suited to Law students or anyone with a strong interest in law and access to justice, combined with good analytical and writing skills and an ability to grasp complex legal issues. You will need to show determination to support our visitors, have excellent interpersonal skills, flexibility and initiative. Full supervision provided.

**When?                    Every Tuesday from 10am to 1.30pm – In our offices in Haringey (N15)**  
**+ 1 hour at the end of the week (you decide when) remotely** (this allows you to check/chase emails and make sure cases are progressing quickly)

### Tasks

**You will be responsible for making Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) applications for our visitors.** ECF applications allow our visitors to get legal aid and a free immigration solicitor. Most of our ECF applications are granted, but the process can be tedious, and you will need to be persistent and pay attention to details. This will include supporting visitors to obtain financial evidence to show that they are eligible for legal aid, as well as completing ECF forms and drafting cover letters for the Legal Aid Agency.

**ECF Volunteers are fully trained and supervised.**

We ask our volunteers to be flexible as you may have to undertake other tasks needed by the immigration team.

### Commitment

- Need to be available to volunteer **every week**, on the day and times mentioned above. We understand that there might be circumstances where a volunteer can't attend (e.g., holidays, illness), please try to inform us in advance so that we can organise cover.
- Need a minimum commitment of **6 months** (full training takes 4 weeks and experience is gradually built up 'on the job' and through peer support).
- Need to complete initial training and any additional training provided by HMSC.

### **Essential requirements**

- A strong interest in gaining experience in the area of immigration law and access to justice. Previous knowledge of the immigration and/or welfare system in the UK would be appreciated but is not mandatory.
- Excellent English communication skills (written and spoken). Ability to write clear letters and notes, and to deal with a range of people and agencies over the phone.
- Excellent analytical skills and an ability to grasp complex legal issues.
- Personal qualities
  - ✓ Empathy and understanding of the complex issues faced by migrants.
  - ✓ Patient, calm manner when dealing with vulnerable visitors.
- IT and computer skills
  - ✓ Good computer skills and knowledge of Office 365 are essential. You will be working online, with cloud-based files, shared email addresses, online chats, remote video calls, etc.
  - ✓ Be willing and comfortable to learn and work with new systems, such as our Case Management System (Lamplight)

### **Benefits**

- Valuable experience at the frontline of a grassroots organization with hands-on casework experience, in a small friendly team.
- Develop practical knowledge and experience in immigration law, including working on Exceptional Case Funding applications
- Professional reference after 4 months.
- Reimbursement of travel and lunch expenses.

**Contact:** [volunteering@haringeymsc.org](mailto:volunteering@haringeymsc.org)