1. **Job Description**

Anchor Foster Care Services is committed to safeguarding and protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the promotion of equal opportunities and valuing diversity. Anchor expect all staff, stakeholders, students and volunteers to share this commitment.

 **Role Profile**

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| **Job Title** | **Independent Social Worker** |
| **Job Holder** |  |
| **Line Manager** |  | **Hours of Work** | **Various** |
| **Location** |  | **Duration of Job** | **Independent** |
|  |
| **Purpose of Job** | To provide high quality independent social work practice to support the agency in all or some of the areas listed below. |
| **No. of staff task Managed** |  | **As Task Manager** |  | **As Counter Signatory** |  |
| **Finances Managed** |  |
| **State what % of the job is represented by each duty** |
| **Areas of work and responsibilities** |
| **Area of work** | **Home Reviewing Officer** |
| **Responsibilities** | You will be responsible for chairing allocated Fostering Household Reviews in accordance with legislation, regulations and agency policies and procedures.* You will need to have knowledge of fostering legislation and regulations.
* You will share best practice with the service and ensure service delivery is of a high standard at all times.
* You will contribute to the development of the service to ensure standards and practice is maintained that enables foster parents to provide the best care that supports good outcomes for our children in care.
* You will complete your report and upload it to Charms within 5 working days of the Home Review taking place, informing the SSW it is completed
* You will endeavour to commit to, attend and contribute to ISW-RO and ADM meetings. These take place 3 times per year.
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| **Area of work**  | **Form F Assessments** |
| **Responsibilities** | Initial Assessment visit (where requested)Where applicants have made an enquiry / or applied to become a foster parent, you will be asked to undertake an Initial Assessment visit to that applicant’s home (using Anchor’s template on Charms). This will include: -* Undertaking a thorough initial assessment interview with applicants. If there are two applicants in one household, both should be included
* Complete an Initial Assessment Report according to Anchor’s initial assessment guidelines
* The objective of the initial assessment report is to provide the decision maker with enough information about the applicant to enable clearly unsuitable applicants to be sifted out without unnecessary bureaucracy or expenditure of time and resource by the Anchor or the applicant.

Completion of all parts of a full British Association for Adoption & Fostering (BAAF) Form F Assessment on prospective foster parents. The post holder is required to read the BAAF Guidance along with the agency guidance prior to completing the Assessment* There should be no less than six home visits to the applicants and each visit should be no less than 2 hours long.
* Make contact with applicants within one week of allocation of the assessment and set up appointments with applicants, and ensure visits are carried out on time.
* Support the efficient completion of DBS for applicants, all adults living in the home and any assessed back up carer and send to the Panel Administrator
* See joint applicants separately on at least one occasion.
* See applicants’ own children individually and depending on age. It is important to evaluate their understanding of the need for self-protection. Adult children living away from home should be contacted and ex-partners of applicants should also be contacted.
* Assess any other adult member of the household or significant adult who is likely to be involved in caring for any children placed (back up carer).
* If any offences are shown by the Police check, the applicants’ attitude to the offence and explanation should be included in the Form F and separate Risk Assessment undertaken. Respect confidentiality.
* Visit 3 referees, to be decided in advance by Anchor and evaluate references. It is important to get as full a picture as possible from the applicants’ referees, as the visit forms an important part of the assessment. Report on each referee visit.
* Advise applicant about the process for statutory checks. Liaise with Anchor Panel Administrator about responses received.
* In case of a foster parent transfer, ensure the following: - current files are read, evidence of training completed (including TSDS) is obtained and arrangements for existing foster children are clear. Please request Anchor’s Policy on what should happen where there is a child in placement.
* If applicants have not had previous fostering experience, their previous experience of caring for children needs to be discussed and evaluated alongside their understanding of the fostering task.
* A critical evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in terms of parenting capacity is essential e.g., evaluating what behaviours they have/can potentially handle, their understanding of abuse including sexual abuse, their ability/capacity for safe caring/ self-protection. Evidence this with specific examples where possible.
* Under family lifestyle, there should not only be a discussion on the attitudes to race and culture, but also sections discussing their attitudes to gender, sexuality and disability.
* If the applicant’s interest includes long-term fostering, this should be fully explored and evidenced in terms of understanding. It is also important to evaluate applicants’ understanding/attitude to contact with birth family.
* All information given should be critically analysed. The social work assessment is an important summary of your assessment, it should therefore be in depth, with clear reasons given for the recommendations you are making.
* Chronology should include months and years and needs to be completed within 4 weeks of the assessment beginning to support any checks that need undertaking.
* Home Safety checklist and Safer Care policy to be completed with the applicants.
* Assessors are required to complete the first page of the foster parent profile template using the information gathered during the assessment (highlighted red on the template) by week 10 of the assessment. The draft profile to be quality assured by the supervisor before sharing with the agency.
* Complete the Form F. Proofread and spell check before passing to Line Manager. Ensure you have filled in all boxes. Applicants to be given Front Page, Section B and Section E ONLY of their Form F to read (at least ten working days before Assessment is presented to Panel), make comments and sign. Panel Admin will support if required.
* Explain the Panel process to the applicants and provide the applicants with Anchor’s ‘About the Fostering Panel’ – an applicant’s written guide to Anchor’s panel process.
* Completed signed Form F to be with designated Manager 16 weeks from the date the assessment was allocated. Please refer to targets dates and deadlines on individual assessment contracts.

Commitment to agreed supervision.Observe the terms and conditions set out in the Form F Assessment contract |
| **Area of work** | **Case Management** |
| **Responsibilities** | Adherence to the SSW Job Description and SSW Guidelines while managing cases.To supervise and support foster families, as part of the team around the child, in looking after children and young people within their homes.Supervision of a caseload of Foster Families in line with national and agency standards and procedures.Work as part of a “team around the child” to manage support to foster placements around the needs of the children placed, the foster families' capabilities and circumstances, in line with agency procedures and ethos.Undertake social work duty in support of existing, new and potential foster placements, including out of hours duty.Commit to supervision in line with Anchor’s policy  |
| **Area of work** | **Safeguarding Investigations including Standard of Care** |
| **Responsibilities** | Investigations should consider the following possible sources of evidence: -* The foster family’s file record on CHARMS, including their Form F assessment and recent annual reviews and supervision records.
* The views of members of the foster family and their response to the allegation/concerns.
* The outcome of any previous concerns/allegations/SoC even if followed up by another fostering agency.
* The drawing up of a chronology – highlighting patterns specific to the concerns and the family functioning.
* The wishes, feelings and views of fostered children, and their parents.
* The views of Children in Care social workers, the family’s SSW and other relevant professionals.
* Information about both negatives (difficulties/weaknesses) and positives in respect of the family’s functioning and practice.

Discussions with family members should take place face to face and they should be afforded the right of reply in relation to all matters under investigation. Where it is believed that sharing details of an allegation might for example put a young person at risk then advice should be sought from the LADO.It is crucial that the investigation distinguishes between matters of fact and opinion and that evidence is provided to support any assertions made. This means looking at source evidence within this process and not relying on 3rd hand accounts which may contain distortions.Investigations will take place and conclude within a set deadline (agreed with the manager commissioning the investigation), but this may take longer depending on the circumstances and nature of the concerns.Production of a final analytical report within agreed deadlines. |
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| **Please specify any passport/visa and/or nationality requirement.** | **UK citizen or right to work in the UK.** |
| **Please indicate if any security or legal checks are required for this role.** | **As per Schedule 1 of Fostering Regulations.** |

**B. Person Specification**

The person specification provides a list of essential and desirable criteria (skills and competencies) that a candidate should have in order to perform the roles above.

Each of the criteria listed below may be measured through; the application form (A), a test / exercise (T), an interview (I), or documentation (D).

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| --- | --- |
| Professional Social Work qualification and current registration as a social worker with Social Work England (SWE) | A, I, D |
| The ability to independently interpret and analyse varied and complex information or situations and to produce solutions | A, I, T |
| The ability to identify and respond to needs of clients which may be difficult to satisfy enabling approaches whenever possible | A, I |
| The ability to undertake assessment of complex needs and develop, monitor and review appropriate programmes of care and support, involving multi-agency delivery, for and in partnership with clients and foster parents | A, I |
| The ability to act on behalf of Anchor Foster Care Services as an advocate in a formal setting | A, I |
| The ability to make frequent decisions and exercise initiative independently to fulfil the requirements of the role, as agreed in supervision | A, I |
| The ability to work under a very high degree of pressure including meeting unpredictable deadlines and dealing with conflicting demands | A, I, T |
| The ability and experience to cope with intense emotional demands  | A, I |
| Ability to work well with colleagues, including managers, as a member of a team | A, I |
| Mobility essential. Able-bodied applicants must be able to drive, have a driving license and be a car owner. Disabled applicants should be able to perform the job with aid, where necessary. | A, I, D |
| To be able to operate a keyboard, our database systems (Charms & SharePoint) and employ basic computer knowledge and skills | A, I |
| Ability to communicate fluently, in writing and verbally, with a wide range of people and in a timely manner | A, I, T |
| Satisfactory check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (enhanced with checked barred children’s list) and Right to Work in the UK | D |

General and Special Conditions

• Due to the nature of the work involved, this post is “exempt” from the provision

of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the ROA 1974

(Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986.

• This job description is a representative document. Other reasonably similar

duties may be allocated from time to time commensurate with the general

character of the post.

• All staff are responsible for the implementation of the Health & Safety Policy as

far as it affects them, colleagues and others who may be affected by their

work. The post holder is also expected to monitor the effectiveness of the

Health & Safety arrangements and systems to ensure appropriate

improvements are made where necessary.

• Since confidential information is involved with the duties of this post the post

holder will be required to exercise discretion at all times and to observe

relevant codes of practice and legislation in relation to data protection and

personal information

• The post holder must be able to undertake, and participate in learning and development activities, as appropriate.

• Where the post holder is disabled, every effort will be made to support all

necessary aids, adaptations or equipment to allow them to carry out all the

duties of the job

• The post holder must have a full driving licence and access to a car that is fully

insured, with business usage, and has a valid MOT

**Authorisation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Line Manager’s Name** |  |
| **Post Title** |  | **Department** |  |
| **Signature** |  | **Date** |  |
| **Name** |  |
| **Signature** |  | **Date** |  |

**On signing this document, you have agreed to supervision**