



Athlone Community Services Council CLG

Esker House Domestic Abuse Support Services

Esker House Women's Refuge and Domestic Abuse Service, is a service provided by Athlone Community Services Council CLG (ACSC), operating from Athlone, Co Westmeath. We offer a suite of services to women and children who are subject to all forms of Domestic Abuse and Violence. Our role is to provide a safe space for each woman and her children and then to assist her in exploring options and making decisions which will lead to safety, healing and recovery.

The suite of services we offer is composed of a number of strands:

REFUGE – The refuge has five family units which provide short-term emergency refuge to any woman who is at risk, who is in danger and for whom no other place of safety can immediately be found. The emphasis in refuge is on safety and allowing each woman calm and time to consider her next steps.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICE – working with women who continue to live in the community in their homes and who do not avail of refuge, whether by appointment or drop-in. We offer advocacy or referrals for engagement with other agencies, eg, Intreo, local housing authorities, social services, etc.. ACSC, Esker House offer outreach provision in Westmeath, and Monksland/ South Roscommon. We also offer Own My Life programme, a psychoeducational programme to women to have or are currently being subjected to domestic abuse.

CHILD AND YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE – this specialist service offers a dedicated service, working with children and young people, safety planning, and support to manage the impact of abuse. Our service on safety, healing, building resilience, emotional regulation promoting and feelings of safety. We also provide parental support.

COURT SUPPORT SERVICES – We provide a dedicated court support service and clinic in the court. We offer support in attendance at court, engagement with legal aid or legal support. We also offer safety planning pre and post court. We also assist in



navigating breaches of orders and work closely with An Garda Síochána and the court service.

TRAINING & AWARENESS – we are committed to addressing the causes of abuse within our community and to challenging the societal norms that can appear to make abuse acceptable. This is done through our Training & Awareness programme, providing training to statutory and voluntary agencies as well as working with schools, colleges and community partners. We also founded the Purple Hand Campaign, an innovative community project creates safe spaces and the equips communities to recognise and respond to domestic abuse and refer to specialist domestic abuse support services.

ADVOCACY –Esker House Domestic Abuse Service operates from a rights-based approach and espousing a principle of empowerment. Our work involves advocating with and for each woman, to advance her own case, in addition to providing a voice for women in respect of shared issues.

Esker House are currently at a stage of organisational development and growth. As a priority area for refuge and service development under the Third National Strategy for DSGBV, we are in the process of planning a new purpose-built facility, which will expand our refuge capacity as well as our community support services.

Our values are grounded in Domestic Abuse Trauma Informed Practice, creating supportive and nurturing workplace with a professional and experienced team.

This is an exciting time for our organisation and the extended Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence sector and a great time to join our amazing team.

Job Title: Refuge Support Worker

Location: Athlone

Shift Pattern: 12-hour shifts, 8am-8pm/ 8pm-8am, live nights. Monday – Sunday

The Successful Candidate:

The candidate will have an excellent knowledge and understanding of domestic violence and the impacts this has on women, children, and families. The Refuge Support Worker will provide support and structured services to women with an



emphasis on progressing their needs and ensuring their safety and security.

Our Mission: To meet the needs of women and children experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse, by providing inclusive, supportive, and confidential services that empower women and children to live life without fear.

Job Specification

Key duties

- To work in accordance with, the Esker House analysis of violence against women and children as a gendered issue.
- To ensure that the needs of service users are central to the work in accordance with the service standards of the organisation.
- To adhere to all practices, policies, procedures and protocols for the Refuge Service.
- To offer emotional and practical support and information to service users, using an empowerment approach.
- To provide service users with current information on their entitlements, such as housing, immigration, education and social welfare, and to provide support in accessing them as necessary.
- To provide accurate information on the legal system and to accompany service users to court as appropriate.
- To work with service users to complete risk assessments and develop safety plans.
- To make referrals or support service users in making self-referrals as necessary.
- To advocate for service users when appropriate and by agreement.
- To maintain all records and files according to the agreed standard.
- To implement Esker House and Tulsa policies on child protection.
- To team-work with other team members to ensure that women and children are provided with an integrated domestic violence service.
- To implement Esker House policies and procedures at all times.
- To ensure that all new service users are admitted in a timely and sensitive manner, according to the agreed procedures and to arrange for suitable alternative accommodation where the refuge is full.
- To keep informed of developments in the area of domestic violence including new methods of work, changes in policy, legalisation, additional supports etc.
- To liaise effectively with other statutory and voluntary bodies.
- To adhere to all practices, policies, procedures and protocols of the refuge.



- To ensure that the IT system is used for the accurate collection of service data.
- To work according to the shift work rota (including weekends and public holidays) and participate in the out-of-hours emergency service rota

General Duties

- To participate in monthly supervision
- To attend bi-weekly refuge team meetings.
- To produce reports and other documents as required
- To participate in training as required
- To adhere to Esker House quality standards and participate in the performance

Personal Specification

- We want the right person for this role; the right person is one who wants to take on this challenge and who must bring the following to the task:

Essential

- A minimum of 2 years direct case work / key work experience with victims of domestic abuse
- Demonstrable knowledge of current domestic abuse legislation and issues
- Demonstrable knowledge of welfare, housing and other matters as they pertain to victims of domestic abuse
- Full knowledge of issues pertaining to Children First and safeguarding
- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, with the capacity to prepare reports, file notes, correspondence to a high standard
- Fully flexible available to work days, nights and weekends and a willingness to meet the demands of the role

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the dynamics of abuse, the impact of abuse on women and children and how women and children can present
- Knowledge of the role of power and control within an abusive relationship and how theories of power and control can be utilised to empower a woman
- Knowledge of key work approaches with women, adaptable to various forms / circumstances of abuse, and methodologies to be deployed as support



- Knowledge and an understanding of the impact of trauma and knowledge / experience of working with women who are so impacted and how to respond
- Knowledge of a broad range of issues including mental health, addictions, relationship and family breakdown, poverty and social exclusion
- A commitment to feminist principles in the practice of working on violence against women
- A high degree of cultural competency, with knowledge of the impact of domestic abuse as it pertains to women from minority backgrounds
-

Core Competencies

- Ability to encourage and promote a healthy working environment which fosters trust, respect and hard work
- An ability to generate insights and solutions to challenges
- An ability to deal with unexpected situations in a flexible way
- Committed to collaborating with other agencies and services in the delivery of this organisational vision and the necessary skill to achieve this through positive effective relationships and networks
- Innovative in identifying new ways to work with, liaise with and engage with clients
- The ability to solve complex problems, creating effective and innovative solutions
- Respect and value differing views and go the 'extra mile' and help colleagues when required
- Promote a culture of high-level trust and integrity and professionalism
- Encourage clients to identify strengths and focus on progress, despite the challenges they face
- Competent in the collection, collation and analysis of information, whether through paper-based systems or IT based systems
- The duties outlined in this job description may be subject to review in the future

Application Process

Please apply by sending a detailed CV and Cover letter for the attention of the Head of Services, Deirdre Berry, at recruitment@eskerhouse.ie

Applications are by email only.

Closing Date is 3rd May 2024 @5pm.



Application Process

To apply send a current CV and cover letter to recruitment@eskerhouse.ie

Closing Date: 5pm 18th April 2025.

This post is funded by Cuan, Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Agency, Department of Justice



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please note any offer of a position is subject to references and Garda Clearance.

Athlone Community Service Council is an equal opportunity employer