



## JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Domestic Abuse Key Worker  
**Responsible to:** Client Services Co-Ordinator / Head of Domestic Abuse

### VISION AND MISSION OF COPE GALWAY

COPE Galway's vision is *a community where every person is valued, cared for and supported at every stage of life*. Our mission is *making a difference by empowering people, creating change and strengthening communities*.

### OUTCOMES

COPE Galway recognises the particular vulnerabilities faced by women and children who experience intimate partner abuse, and works both to support those who fall victim to such abuse, as well as striving to challenge societal norms and attitudes which allow domestic abuse to continue. COPE Galway's Domestic Abuse Service offers support to women who reside within the Refuge at Modh Eile House, as well as to many more who live in the community and receive support in their locality; we also work with children and young people who have been exposed to violence and abuse in the home.

### OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE POST

Modh Eile House provides temporary, safe accommodation for women and their children experiencing domestic abuse, with the Service supporting women and their children from Galway city & county who both live in and who do not. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, Modh Eile provides comprehensive and holistic care. This post is part of the dedicated team of professionals who operate this service, with a focus on key work planning and progressing with each client.

The overall aim of Modh Eile House is to prioritise the safety and welfare of the client group.

The aims of the Service are:

- To encourage each woman to determine her own future
- To offer support and information to any woman who requires it
- To recognise and care for the emotional needs of children
- To raise awareness in the community of domestic abuse and its root causes

### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

#### A) KEY WORK PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Support all new contacts to the Service through providing initial welcome, emotional support and conducting initial needs and risk assessment
- Work with women who seek support, including making admissions or referrals as appropriate and as per policy guidelines
- Take and manage calls to the 24/7 Helpline
- Work with a caseload of Key Work clients, to establish need, agree goals and work towards their achievement
- Draft with each woman a Care plan, working to her goals and in response to her needs, embodying the principles of a strengths-based approach and a model of empowerment
- Participate in the induction of new residents into the refuge

- Ensure client files are properly maintained and all records are updated and maintained, in accordance with policy and practice
- Provide a comprehensive service to each client of the Service, in accordance with her needs, which may include support in budgeting, seeking accommodation, engaging with other services / agencies
- Work with clients of the Service, resident or not, in considering the dynamics of the abuse which they have experienced and in examining paths forward in line with the client's wishes
- Accompany women to the courthouse to apply for legal protection as appropriate and carry out court preparation with women as required
- Accompany women to other agencies if appropriate and in accordance with any risk assessments in place
- Complete necessary paperwork with and on behalf of new admissions to the refuge
- Identify with each woman her own priorities across a range of areas including safety, medical, health, welfare, legal, housing, and others as may arise
- Work with each woman in establishing well-being of children and subsequently with Solas Oig in the development of support plans for relevant children
- Set out a care and support plan for each woman, and agree this with the client and the Client Services Co-Ordinator
- Plan week-to-week the progression of this plan, ensuring that the woman's changing needs remain central to the plan at all times, ensuring that she is informed of all progress, and ensuring that tasks continue as set out
- Review with CS Co-Ordinator on regular basis to ensure appropriateness of model of service delivery
- Devise an after-care plan for women leaving refuge
- Devise a care plan approach for Outreach clients, as appropriate

#### B) GENERAL

- Participate in the operation of the Service
- Work a variety of rostered shifts which will include a range of shifts, potentially including late evenings and weekend work, and is subject to change periodically
- Record and maintain records of any incidents and other day to day issues in the appropriate systems of record
- Keep other staff on duty fully informed of such incidents and issues
- Compile statistics, and record relevant information as required
- Comply with all procedures and guidelines relating to financial matters within the Service
- Remain familiar with safety features of the Service including the fire alarm system and other fire safety equipment
- Comply with all health and safety checks as required
- Participate in fire drills when scheduled
- Be pro-active with regard to keeping updated about changes in all areas relating to work such as social welfare, housing, legal, immigration etc
- Undertake any other duties as assigned by management

#### C) WELFARE OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

- Ensure that the Service has a friendly, warm and inviting atmosphere for the Service users
- Be respectful, courteous and patient with women and children at all times and in all circumstances
- Offer emotional support to women who require it
- Address the issues and needs, which women may present to you in the course of your dealings with them
- Consult and liaise with external voluntary, statutory and professional agencies as appropriate in relation to the needs of individual families
- Advocate on behalf of women and children with a range of relevant agencies and organisations in the context of a gendered analysis of Domestic Violence
- Encourage and support women in taking responsibility and contributing to their own welfare needs and ensure that women are fully involved in decisions affecting them

- Keep written records of actions taken in addressing the issues and needs of families, as per systems and policy
- Key work clients as assigned, conducting needs assessments and care plans as appropriate
- Be proactive about seeking feedback from women on the service they receive and support them to become involved in the service as per the COPE Galway Client Involvement Policy
- Ensure that any information given to women is appropriate and in accordance with COPE Galway policy guidelines
- Work in accordance with the policies and procedures of the service and the wider organisation while ensuring that any discussions/issues regarding these are raised and dealt with in the appropriate forum
- Liaise with management with regard to the aftercare of families
- Engage as required on designated tasks with the SURF (Service User Refuge Forum) forum
- Ensure that any discussions and information pertaining to women and children is kept strictly confidential in accordance with the COPE Galway Code of Practice
- Work in accordance with the Safeguarding and related policies

#### D) STAFFING

- Participate in the supervision provided by the Client Services Co-ordinator or other relevant persons
- Participate in any group supervision/reflective practice sessions that may be implemented, as required
- Attend team meetings as instructed
- As a team member, foster a positive attitude to both practice and organisational issues
- Supervise subsidiary staff, student placements and volunteers as directed by the Client Services Coordinator or Head of Domestic Abuse Service
- Provide guidance and leadership for subsidiary staff and volunteers and participate in the induction of new staff
- Help identify training needs and how they can best be addressed
- Participate in appropriate training programmes as directed by the Manager or Co-ordinator
- As a team member, contribute to fostering a culture of reflective practice and a positive working environment for all staff in the service
- Inform the Client Services Coordinator and / or Head of Domestic Abuse Service as soon as possible of significant issues and incidents relating to the operation of the Service
- Ensure that any staff discussions are kept strictly confidential
- Have good self-awareness and the ability to manage personal emotions that may arise during working hours in an appropriate manner that is consistent with organisational policies and procedures
- Monitor personal behaviour and ensure that it is professional and appropriate to the workplace at all times
- Ensure a focus on client issues during team discussions, reflective practice sessions and general discussions on practice issues
- Ensure a non-judgemental, non-discriminatory approach in the work at all times
- Seek support/supervision as soon as possible for any boundary issues that may arise in the work identified by yourself, by other team members or by the Manager
- Contribute constructively to team discussions, while allowing space for others to do likewise
- Have a clear understanding of the roles of both Client Services Co-Ordinator and Head of Domestic Abuse Service and take direction as required
- Contribute to a positive working environment for all colleagues
- Engage in ongoing reflection on practice as required from both a personal and team perspective
- Have a flexible and solution-oriented approach that seeks to resolve issues in a constructive and collaborative manner

#### E) THE COMMUNITY

- Endeavour to publicise and promote the work of Modh Eile House and the other services provided by COPE Galway
- Contribute to the fostering of positive relations with the local community in addressing and responding to enquiries made to the Refuge
- Contribute to team discussions on and participate in fundraising events as appropriate

## F) HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Take reasonable care for personal safety, health and welfare, and that of others who may be affected by actions or omissions
- Co-operate with the employer in relation to compliance with statutory requirements under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 & 2005
- Use protective equipment, clothing or other means for securing the safety, health and welfare of employees
- Report to management, without delay, any defects in the workplace, equipment or systems of work, which may lead to danger
- Be proactive in the area of self-care with regard to identifying any impacts of the work and bring these to the attention of Client Services Coordinator or Head of Domestic Abuse Service
- Ensure that Health and Safety policy and procedures as per the COPE Galway Health and Safety Manual and Safety Statement are fully adhered to
- Ensure that high standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained in the Service
- Ensure that you are familiar with the fire safety procedures in place at Modh Eile House including the fire warden duties and responsibilities in the event of a fire occurring and evacuation of the premises in such an event and when fire drills are being conducted
- Strictly observe the provision of the COPE Galway COVID-19 Procedures and the systems and approaches in place in respect of COVID-19 at Modh Eile House

**The duties outlined in this job description may be subject to review in the future.**

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

The ideal candidate will have a proven interest and experience in the area of Domestic Violence and will have worked in a similar type Service.

### ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- A relevant third level qualification in social care
- A minimum of two years of employment in the area of social care, with specific experience in the area of domestic violence
- Knowledge of Domestic Violence and its impact on women and children
- Experience of managing a caseload, including the drafting and implementation of a care and support plan

### SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- A demonstrable attitude of warmth, patience and acceptance for every woman and child who reaches out to this Service
- Capacity to listen proactively and be present with a woman, working at her pace and according to her needs and priorities
- An ability to advocate effectively for and with women and in the context of a gendered analysis of domestic violence
- An ability to maintain positive relations with clients, colleagues, students, volunteers, and other professional agencies
- An ability to be organised in one's approach to work, to follow through with tasks and to maintain records
- An ability to work pro-actively and reflectively to ensure best practice in all areas of service delivery
- An ability to work in a stressful environment and to work effectively within an environment involving shift work
- Strong ICT skills
- A commitment to providing the highest level of quality service
- A client-centred approach, promoting engagement and empowerment
- A high-level of initiative and openness to challenges
- A commitment to working with a diverse client group
- A high level of integrity, trust and respect

**DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Experience of direct work with women who have experienced domestic violence in a key-working role
- Previous experience of working in a domestic violence service
- An interest in the area of violence against women and related gender equality issues and a commitment to its eradication

The duties outlined in this job description may be subject to review in the future

**KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS:**

<b>Hours:</b>	35 hours per week on average
<b>Contract:</b>	Fixed term 6-months
<b>Pay Scale:</b>	Social Care Scale
<b>Method of pay:</b>	Monthly by credit transfer
<b>Annual Leave:</b>	22 day per annum pro rata