

CROYDON COUNCIL

ROLE PROFILE AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

DIRECTORATE: Adult Social Care and Health

DIVISION: Adult Social Care Operations

JOB TITLE: **Financial Assessment Officer**

ROLE PROFILE

Job Title:	Financial Assessment Officer
Directorate:	Adult Social Care and Health
Division:	Adult Social Care Operations
Grade:	Grade 9
Hours (per week):	36 Hours weekly
Reports to:	Financial Assessments, Charging Policy and Billing Manager
Responsible for:	N/A
Role Purpose and Role Dimensions:	<p>In accordance with the Care Act 2014, you will generate and communicate accurate and timely financial assessment outcomes to residents. You will share and provide detailed knowledge and information about the finance journey, working with necessary business functions to support those eligible for adult social care services, ensuring a smooth finance journey is experienced.</p>
Commitment to Diversity:	<p>The council has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its services to the community and in the employment of people. It expects all employees to understand, comply with and promote its policies in their own work, undertake any appropriate training to help them to challenge prejudice or discrimination.</p>
Key External Contacts:	<p>Residents of the London Borough of Croydon, their Carers and family members and representatives including voluntary sector organisations. Solicitors, care providers and anyone who is involved in the provision of care and linked to the financial circumstances of the client, UKBA, Land Registry, Advisory Centres, Age Concern/Age UK, Citizen Advice Bureau, Disability Croydon Voluntary Agency, National Care Standard Commission, and other Voluntary Organisations as necessary.</p>
Key Internal Contacts:	<p>Team Manager and colleagues including Financial Assessment Officers, Welfare Information Officers, Deferred Payments Officer, Team Administrator and Billing Officers. Corporate Services in relation to debt recovery and collections, Providers</p>

of Service, the Client and / or their financial representatives, Solicitors, Private and Voluntary Sector organisations acting on the clients / LBC behalf, Commissioning, Placements and the Brokerage Team, Care and Case Managers, The My Resources and Oracle teams, Direct Payments Team, the Community Payments Team and the Service Users Financial Management Team, Fraud Team, Corporate functions and others. Localities and care management teams for all service areas and hospital teams. And others as necessary.

Financial Dimensions:

Responsible for ensuring LBC adhere to their legal responsibilities in relation to charging clients for their financial contribution towards the cost of their social care packages arranged / provided by the council. Financial assessments include the calculation of contributions towards residential and non-residential care packages that may be commissioned in various forms, i.e a direct payment / virtual wallet. Financial assessments are processed using LAS and Controcc holding client data. To practice and implement national and local charging policies on a day-to-day basis to enable full implementation, maximising income, securing council fees and invoicing clients / their representatives, always providing an excellent service to all customers. To support the team in all its focuses to ensure we meet team and personal objectives that are derived to ensure efficient and accurate financial assessments are communicated to residents, with signposted support where required, considering disability related expenditure / exceptional circumstances, and the maximisation of income and debt prevention for the London Borough of Croydon.

Responsible for making decisions around how to interpret local government finance, alert budget holders to take the correct action and assist in developing strategies so that financial regulations and procedures are effectively and legally adhered to ensuring governance always holds priority. To meet benchmark expectations with regards to the level of productivity and income generation and to provide an excellent service to our residents of Croydon. To play a key role in ensuring the financial uplift process at the end of each financial year, assisting the team Manager to ensure it is fully and accurately implemented within the specified time frames.

Key Areas for Decision Making:

Discretion in prioritising own workload is required. Will take appropriate action when investigating and responding to enquiries. Will make decisions in relation to each financial assessment carried out through the application of Care Act 2014 regulations, complying with audit and legal requirements. To carry out required investigations in accordance with policy guidance and make appropriate decisions in the absence of the team manager.

To ensure financial information submitted and used for financial assessment purposes is fully declared as outlined within policy and regulations. All financial information must be evidenced as defined within policy, input, scanned and recorded for audit and verification purposes into the client file within LAS and Controcc.

Making decisions on the day-to-day management of a complex caseload and complex financial calculations both financial assessments related and forecasting and sustainability for deferred payment cases.

Making financial decisions on the appropriateness of the service users assessed charge.

Making decisions around how to interpret local government finance, alert budget holders to take the correct action when trouble shooting complex cases involving provider fees, client contributions and payments etc. To assist in the developing of strategies so that financial regulations and procedures are effectively and legally adhered to. When processing invoice runs for management authorisation, investigate and make decisions around suspension or activation of invoices, logged for audit purposes and management review.

Evaluation and making recommendations for improvements to the team's services.

Other Considerations:

To be accurate and consistent in high use of IT equipment including running reports as necessary. Interviewing services users / and or their representatives giving advice, checking all benefit entitlements and information, acting as a representative and within the capacity of the councils finance to ensure access to entitlements, to services and welfare benefits are achieved. To have a full driving licence and be independently mobile to travel to all parts of the Borough if required, when handling more complex cases. To make effective and efficient use of time when the need to visit clients arises.

Is a satisfactory disclosure and barring check required?

[\(click here for guidance on DBS\)](#)

Standard DBS check

What level of check is required?

Is the post politically restricted

No

[\(Click here for guidance on political restriction\)](#)

**Is the post exempt from the Rehabilitation of
Offenders Act (ROA) 1974**
[\(Click here for guidance on ROA \)](#)

select from drop down

Key Accountabilities and Result Areas:

The end to end business process and customer journey

Key Elements:

This will involve:

The post holder is responsible for the timely and accurate production of financial assessments and the communication of assessed contributions to all parties involved, ensuring the end to end business process is complete. This includes ensuring client contributions are in place and linked to approved budget spend for invoices to be generated, allowing for the maximisation of income for LBC and our residents and allowing the accurate payment to care providers. Financial assessments include those related to residential and non-residential placement agreements. It is a legal requirement to apply correct charging rules, as defined within the Care Act 2014, to each client assessment. Rules applied depend on the type of financial assessment and the client's circumstances. In addition, it is important that the financial assessment officer understands and can check that the correct coding is in place to ensure income and expenditure is reflected correctly for accounting purposes. The financial assessment officer will be responsible for complying with timetables agreed in relation to the processing of budget spend commitments and agreed client contributions. It is essential to ensure that vulnerable customers and their representatives have sufficient information, understanding and communication to help ease what may already be a stressful time of their lives. The financial assessment officer will be expected to communicate with any parties necessary to ensure that all information needed is obtained and correct. If issues arise, the financial assessment officer will be expected to make recommendations for remedy to the Team Manager. Should there be any safeguarding concerns, the financial assessment officer will be expected to raise, provide information and represent the financial assessment team in all meetings in compliance with safeguarding policy and practise to ensure best interests are met.

The financial assessment and calculation of the client contribution

This will involve:

The financial assessment officer is responsible for ensuring that clients and care managers are made aware of a correct client contribution as quickly as possible and within the time lined expectations of the department. Once referred and

through contingency reporting facilities, the financial assessment officer is responsible for working closely with the client and/or their financial representatives, Welfare Information Officers and case management to obtain all necessary financial information and a signed and completed financial assessment form. Once all relevant information is obtained, it is essential that the financial information is interpreted and processed correctly. Decisions will be led by the type of financial assessment being carried out. Speedy and accurate communication of the financially assessed contribution to all parties necessary is essential. The financial assessment officer needs to ensure that once calculated and fully communicated, that the client contribution is set up appropriately for accurate processing. Failure in completing all tasks can result in client distress, loss of income for the council and providers not being paid. It is a key finance role within the finance department.

Dealing with sensitive personal information, it is imperative that integrity is maintained at all times.

You will be responsible for monitoring and logging this area of work as required by the Department for audit and for verification purposes.

Excellent communication, both written and verbal is essential along with the ability to listen and be compassionate.

Contribute to the effective and efficient operation of the Service, by supporting the team where necessary.

The scope of the post requires the post holder to use own initiative in prioritising their workload in-order to meet deadlines.

Deferred Payments

This will involve:

In compliance with the Care Act 2014, you will apply legislation around deferred payments to all appropriate customers. You will ensure that appropriate, financially sustainable financial solutions are offered to all clients meeting the eligibility criteria, in the form of a deferred payment. You will have the knowledge and understanding necessary to enable you to confidently guide and assess clients who wish to enter into a contractual arrangement with LBC that effectively allows for deferring costs of social care packages in exchange for fees including interest and security on client properties.

Through the offer and implantation of this contract it is imperative that you comply with legislative requirements and adhere to all policy and practise requirements set out with in

the Care Act, the Department of Health and LBC. The Financial Assessment Officer is responsible for ensuring that contractual terms are sustainable, that the client is fully informed and knowledgeable and with joint working alongside the Deferred Payments Officer, see that security on property is fully completed with legal compliance. As part of this process you will need market awareness in relation to property valuations and be able to forecast and anticipate the financial situation of the arrangement to ensure that LBC is compliant with the terms of the contract issued. It is essential that key financial trigger points are understood and monitored to enable LBC to be acting in both the clients and the authorities best interests, being policy compliant at all times.

Billing for client contributions

This will involve;

The financial assessment officer will be expected to work alongside Billing Officers to ensure that financial assessments are prepared and set up appropriately to allow for income collection of client contributions. This responsibility involves report running of pre-assessments to ensure accounts are finalised.

The financial assessment officer will be expected to take responsibility in the testing and development of processes and systems for management consideration and approval. Invoicing responsibilities may in some circumstances fall outside of the collection of client contribution for example raising invoices for monies owned by the NHS and joint working to ensure income is recouped will be required.

Maintain up to date knowledge of all departmental and statutory charging policies ensuring departmental compliance with Council's financial regulations and its charging policy

This will involve;

To keep up to date with current legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to welfare rights and charging policies. Read relevant publications and access relevant websites. Where appropriate, attending various meetings as necessary to promote joint working and tackle social policy. Making appropriate referrals as service user needs require and ensuring the necessary actions, whether it is an internal or external agency, have been followed through. Undertake training and personal development in order to develop skills and increase knowledge and understanding on topics that impact both our service users and the business, as agreed with the line manager.

Confidentiality

- Treating all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in confidence. There are strict rules and protocols defining employee access to and use of the council's databases. Any breach of these rules and protocols will be subject to disciplinary investigation. There are internal procedures in place for employees to raise matters of concern regarding such issues as bad practice or mismanagement.

Data Protection

- Being aware of the council's legal obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 (the "2018 Act") and the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held, ensuring that all administrative and financial processes also comply.
- Maintaining customer records and archive systems in accordance with directorate procedures and policies as well as statutory requirements.
- Treating all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in accordance with the **Workforce Data Protection Policy**.
- There are strict rules and protocols defining employee access to and use of the council's databases. Any breach of these rules and protocols will be subject to disciplinary investigation. There are internal procedures in place for employees to raise matters of concern regarding such issues as bad practice or mismanagement.

Contribute as an effective and collaborative team member

This will involve:

- Participating in training to demonstrate competence.
- Undertaking training as required for the role.
- Participating in the development, implementation and monitoring of service plans.
- Championing the professional integrity of the service.

Equalities and Diversity

- The council has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its services to the community and in the employment of people. It expects all employees to understand, comply with and promote its policies in their own work, undertake any appropriate training to help them to challenge prejudice or discrimination.

Health and Safety

- Being responsible for own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public.
- Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment and report defects and hazards to management.
- Managers should carry out, monitor and review risk assessments, providing robust induction and training packages for new and transferring staff, to ensure they receive relevant H&S training, including refresher training, report all accidents in a timely manner on council accident forms, ensure H&S is a standing item in team meetings, liaise with trade union safety representatives about local safety matters and induct and monitor any visiting contractors etc, as appropriate.

Person Specification

Job Title: Financial Assessment Officer – Adult Social Care and Health

Essential knowledge: You will have current and extensive knowledge of the Care Act 2014 and LBC Charging Policy is essential with clear understanding of responsibilities this has on the role and LBC. Extensive knowledge of the responsibilities and operational activities of the adult social care service, end to end is essential. Understanding of other roles as defined in the key internal and external contacts within the role profile for this post, to ensure you can understand the relevance of involvement for communication and investigation purposes and to ensure calls and enquiries are fielded correctly. An understanding of our customer needs and expectations and a commitment to the continuous improvement of service delivery, Customer Focus, Best Value and Data Protection. Understanding the need for Safeguarding vulnerable adults and the referral process is essential. Knowledge of welfare benefits and understanding of local authority finance in social care setting is essential. Knowledge of statutory regulations within the council regarding the billing and collection of income.

Essential skills and abilities: You will have the ability to:

- Work on your own initiative and have a proactive quality to get the job done.
- To have the ability to work individually and as part of a team, aiming to meet individual, team and corporate objectives.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate clearly both verbally and in writing, with an understanding that customer service is paramount, particularly in relation to financial knowledge and interpretation etc.
- Ability to adapt communication tactics for example an appropriate approach to sensitive cases is essential.
- Accurately interpret, practise, and provide feedback on council and national charging policy.
- Have knowledge and an understanding for the various functions within operational finance and an appreciation for the end to end business process.
- Demonstrate attention to detail through thorough investigation and recording of facts.
- Be responsible for case reconciliation and resolution ensuring the end to end business process is completed thoroughly.
- Organise high volumes of workloads and manage conflicting priorities within strict deadlines.
- Demonstrate that you are proactive and willing to work additional hours to meet deadlines or peaks in workload.
- Adapt readily to change and work effectively in a variety of situations, either with groups or individuals.
- Be IT literate and in the use of the Council systems, LAS/Controcc, Enterprise, Microsoft Suite, Excel, Word and My Resources / Oracle

systems and the DWP CIS system.

Essential experience: Up to date experience of working with social care charging policies for both residential and non-residential clients and the processing, calculation and application of policy is essential. Working with the general public, specifically within a financial social care capacity.

Special conditions: A financial assessment officer may be expected to attend appropriate meetings and represent the team and working responsibilities as requested by your manager for input and developmental purposes. These may include the attendance at the quarterly National Association of Financial Assessment Officers, systems related meetings with service providers, Safeguarding and case specific meetings and other such meetings as required. A financial assessment officer is expected to guide, train and assists in the development of less experienced finance officers as well as carry out finance inductions to staff joining the people department in other functions. An experienced financial assessment officer will have the knowledge and policy understanding to see through the financial process from beginning to end, i.e. financial assessment to contractual arrangements / invoice / provider payment preparation. The experienced financial assessment officer will also have the responsibility to ensure compliance and implantation of the end to end Deferred Payments Agreement legislative requirements and be able to carrying out the billing run process in preparation for Management authorisation.