**SUPPORT AND EMPOWER VOLUNTEER ROLE**

Support and Empower (SAE) Volunteers will be a valuable source of additional support to our most vulnerable clients. They provide a friendly face and informal support alongside the legal assistance offered by our caseworkers. They provide a regular link to the project and can also help clients access nonlegal services from other agencies. They provide support while a case is ongoing and after a decision, whether positive or negative. When needed, they will accompany clients to appointments at other services and help clients to navigate the services they need.

The idea is to provide support in order to make the legal process less daunting for clients who might otherwise feel alone in a confusing and sometimes hostile system. This might mean offering more support as clients come into contact with the Home Office and Courts system through reporting, submitting evidence or attending their appeal.

There is a robust training programme to help prepare volunteers for this key role in the support of our clients.

AS A SUPPORT AND EMPOWER (SAE) VOLUNTEER YOU WILL:-

Meet with clients before and/or after their appointments with a caseworker to ensure they get to the appointment on time and to discuss how it went afterwards.

Discuss with the client and caseworker any additional support and services needed by the client and help put the client in touch with those services.

Sit in on appointments with the client if this is what the client wants.

Make calls to other agencies on the client’s behalf and accompany clients to appointments as needed.

Offer emotional support if a client is distressed or anxious before or after an appointment.

If needed and appropriate, offer support through phone calls when clients report at the Home Office.

Offer support around a court hearing for appeal clients.

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO ARE:-

Reliable

Friendly

Approachable

Passionate about supporting people in the asylum process

Empathic

Good listeners

Have a good understanding of confidentiality

Are able to maintain good boundaries

Are able to keep written records of contacts with clients

Willing to work within MBP’s Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Equality policies and other relevant policies

Able to recognise when they need support and ask for it

WE WOULD ALSO VALUE THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES / EXPERIENCE, BUT THEY ARE NOT ESSENTIAL:-

Lived experience of the asylum system

A working understanding of the UK asylum system

Knowledge of services offered in Leeds

A working understanding of Safeguarding

Active listening skills

Experience of a support role with vulnerable people

Experience of liaising with services on behalf of vulnerable / excluded people and encouraging self-advocacy

Knowledge of a language spoken by people seeking asylum

*NB If you do not have the knowledge or experience mentioned in the additional section, please don’t worry. Most of it (apart from lived experience and knowledge of a second language) will be covered in our training*