



Counsellor volunteer role Counselling and Psychotherapy Services

Time commitment	One day per week (Monday to Friday) from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm
Minimum commitment	6 months - subject to the number of service users being supported
Link Worker	Counselling Services Coordinator
Location	LAWA's Offices in Hackney, London

About LAWA

Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA) is a community-based organisation led by and for Latin American women and children in London, working to end violence against women and girls (VAWG) since 1987.

We provide a range of different supporting services: we manage the only refuge accommodations for Latin American women and children in the UK and Europe. Likewise, we run a VAWG Advice Centre to provide support and advocacy for women from the Global Majority¹.

In addition to this, we offer crèche, English classes, counselling, a Change Maker empowerment programme, a housing policy project (WAHA) and children and young people's services.

Our mission is to work together with women and children from the Global Majority to end violence and achieve self-determination.

¹ By Global Majority we refer to the population groups that have been widely referred to as "ethnic minorities". We recognise that people of African, Asian, indigenous or mixed origin are not a minority and that, in concrete reality, the experience of whiteness is not the norm for majorities on the planet. The use of this term is a political response to the social, political and economic marginalisation of groups that, from a colonial perspective, have been treated as "minorities".

Volunteer role description

LAWA Volunteer Counsellor/Psychotherapist will join our counselling and psychotherapy team, providing short-term therapeutic work of 12 sessions. Sessions offered are face-to-face, online and by phone with Latin American and other women from the Global Majority, whose native languages are Latin American Spanish/Portuguese, and English. The volunteer handles internal referrals and works closely with other teams within the organisation.

The volunteer counsellor works individually with the service user who has been referred to the counselling services offering emotional support. The volunteer should be aware that the nature of the work is one-to-one and seems to be a lone work; however, the volunteer's performance is supported by the link worker or counselling coordinator.

This role is subject to an enhanced criminal record (DBS) check paid for by LAWA.

Please note that this role does not apply to individuals who are involved in VAWG casework in other organisations.

Tasks and Responsibilities

Within the first month:

- To attend a one-day induction, which is mandatory to start volunteering.
- To carry out all assigned trainings at Atlas Citation.
- To attend Lamplight training, carried out by the LAWA Development Officer.

From the second month ahead:

- To provide short-term (12 sessions) face-to-face, online or telephone counselling to users.
- To work from a gender-responsive, strength-based, trauma-focused perspective.
- To work from an intersectional approach.
- To be able to understand each user's specific needs and, if necessary, to be able to liaise through established conducts, with other LAWA's services such as advocacy and advice.
- To be able to detect and report high-risk cases.
- To be able to contribute with new perspectives of work based on her own experiences and psychological approach.
- To work with a staff counsellor on administrative tasks, under the supervision of the counselling coordinator.
- To attend group clinical supervision once per month.
- To contribute actively to group supervision.

- To attend volunteer counsellor's meetings every 6 weeks.
- To provide a minimum notice of 6 weeks if leaving placement.
- To provide a minimum notice of 4 weeks if leaving on holiday.

Standard practice:

- To work within the confines of confidentiality, ensure that professional boundaries are always maintained when working with service users, staff and external bodies, and work within LAWA's Code of Conduct.
- To work within the Code of Ethics and Practice of the British Counselling Association.
- To ensure that the security of sensitive information is maintained.
- To work within and implement all LAWA's policies and procedures, especially those on Safeguarding, Confidentiality, Individual Support, User Involvement, and Health and Safety.

Person specification

- Fluency in Spanish and/or Portuguese and English.
- Come from a Latin American or Global Majority background.
- Be a qualified psychologist/counsellor or have completed at least the second year of a diploma in counselling or an equivalent level.
- Be registered as a BACP, BPS, UKCP, or equivalent, and currently pursuing full accreditation.
- Experience in counselling/psychotherapy.
- Possess the ability to handle difficult situations and go through sensitive data.
- Be committed to guaranteeing and defending women's rights.
- Have a non-judgemental attitude.
- Be able to empathise with people.
- Have good listening skills.
- Have a proactive attitude/ability to take her own initiative.

Benefits of volunteering at LAWA

- Gain experience and be involved in various aspects of third-sector service provision.
- Learn about gender, intersectionality, and women's issues, through day-to-day work and training opportunities.
- Develop bonds and integrate with fellow Latin American and other Global Majority women in the UK.
- Increase your professional experience and enhance your CV.
- Access to community events and social engagements, both organised by LAWA or enabled through LAWA's facilitation.

- Food and travel allowance (within a limited budget).

LAWA's volunteer programme is open **exclusively** to Latin American and other women from the Global Majority. We encourage applications from Black Latin American as well as LGBTQ+ women.