

Job title: Prison Services Coordinator, HMP Peterborough and HMP Foston Hall

Location: Home based, with regular work in assigned prison(s) with weekday meetings in London

**Hours** 136.5 hours per month (4.5 days per week)

**Salary:** £27,000 pro rata

**Contract:** Fixed term contract of 18 months

**About Birth Companions**

Birth Companions is a small charity that supports women experiencing multiple disadvantage through the perinatal period in the community across London and currently in three different prisons. We aim to address some of the many health and social inequalities facing the communities we work with, and in doing so, improve the outcomes of our service-users and their children. We believe that no woman should be isolated or unsupported during this crucial transition.

Through the work of our staff and trained volunteers we offer practical and emotional support before, during and after birth. We work in a woman-centred way that is trauma-informed, flexible, non-judgemental and mindful, basing our support on what a woman tells us she needs.

**Job purpose and scope**

The Prison Services Coordinator is involved in all aspects of coordinating and delivering our services supporting pregnant women, new mothers and their babies in HMP Peterborough and HMP Foston Hall. The post holder will be responsible for supervising a small team of prison visitors in each location, liaising with the prison and midwifery services and developing appropriate partnership working with other relevant agencies. The post holder will also play a crucial role in the delivery of our engagement project recruiting, training and supervising peer supporters within the prisons themselves.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on visits to prisons, we have adapted our services to provide remote support for women in prison, using phone, email and post. This remote way of working has also enabled us to support some additional women in other prisons and to offer support to women being released further afield until they are able to access support in their local area.

There is still uncertainty about how COVID-19 will continue to affect our services. As well as safety considerations, the way that the post holder will be asked to deliver our service will also depend on prison visiting rules and the numbers of perinatal women who remain in HMP Peterborough and Foston Hall prisons.

We are therefore looking to recruit someone who is able to work in a flexible and creative way to support women through this challenging time. The attached job description is based on our pre-pandemic model of working.

As prisons relax their restrictions on visits, we intend to return to our usual model of support, where the post holder and members of the team visit the prisons regularly; however, it is very likely that the service will continue to involve at least some remote support for women in HMP Peterborough and Foston Hall and also some remote support for women being released around the country.

**Location**

The post usually involves travel 4-6 times a month to the prisons. The post holder will be home based when not delivering services in prison and will also need to come to London for Staff team meetings – this is usually a minimum of once a month but this may be up to 3 times per month in busy periods. The successful candidate will be expected to be able to travel into London reasonably easily and candidates should be aware that this may involve travel during peak times.

Depending on the geographical location of the successful candidate, either Peterborough or Foston Hall would be designated as the primary place of work depending on which is closest. The post holder will be expected to cover all travel costs to the primary place of work and any costs incurred when travelling within an equivalent distance between their home and the primary place of work. Birth Companions will cover any travel costs incurred beyond the distance of the designated place of work including to meetings in London.

Given the distance apart of the two prisons we would be willing to consider dividing the total allocated hours to create two posts if we were able to attract the right candidates. If you would like us to consider you for one location only please indicate this on your application

**Key Areas of Responsibility**

**Service Delivery**

* Responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of a high quality trauma informed service to women and babies through group and 1:1 support.
* Co-ordinate prison visits and holistic support for women and babies in prison, through group and one to one support. This includes the support of women who have recently separated from their babies; coordinating birth and hospital based postnatal support; and sourcing practical items for women.
* Co-ordinate and provide through the gate and post release support to women in the community as appropriate.
* Provide supervision and training for prison visitors, including organisation of visits rotas and holding regular prison visitor meetings.
* Liaise with Phoneholders to ensure they have all the information required to coordinate birth support.
* Recruit and train new prison visitors when necessary.
* Maintain links with prison staff, other agencies and midwives in order to advocate for, signpost and refer women.
* Attendance at key meetings with partner agencies, representing BC at Conferences and presenting on our work as appropriate.
* Liaise with prison staff to ensure the effectiveness, security and safety of our services.
* Deliver services in line with our policies and procedures including our Health and Safety policy and Trauma Informed Policy.
* Responsible for delivering services in line with agreed budget.
* Support the development and delivery of training to staff and volunteers as required.
* Support the development of written resources for pregnant women and new mothers in prison.
* Prepare and disseminate detailed reports of all group and 1:1 support.
* Record and monitor statistics.
* Gather feedback about the quality of services from women we support using evaluation forms and other approved methods.
* Contribute to our policy work when required.

**Engagement**

* Work with the Engagement Manager to maintain a peer support programme in the prison.
* Assist in the delivery of peer support training and supervision peer supporters working in the prison.

**General Administration**

* Keep accurate, up-to-date records on all activities in the organisation’s database and maintain efficient administration systems for the Prison service.
* Assisting the Head of Services in ensuring that yearly budgets meet the needs of the service
* Produce reports to ensure compliance with funding requirements.

**Expectations**

* Carry out all duties with full regard to Birth Companions’ policies.
* Attend staff meetings, supervision, a reflective practice support and other meetings in London or by Zoom, as required.
* Attend training, conferences and other opportunities for professional development.
* Maintain appropriate confidentiality at all times.
* Ensure the principles and practice of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults across the service.
* Maintain and model the organisation’s commitment to equal opportunities.
* Carry out other reasonable tasks as requested by the Director and Head of Services.

This job description is not necessarily an exhaustive list of duties but is intended to reflect a range of duties the post-holder will perform. The job description will be reviewed regularly and may be changed in the light of experience and in consultation with the post-holder.

**Person Specification**

Only female applicants will be considered.

This role is exempt from the sexual discrimination act 1975 as the post requires working closely with women.

**Essential**

* Experience of working with women and/or families experiencing disadvantage
* Experience of planning and coordinating services
* Experience of facilitating groups
* A commitment to working in a trauma-informed way
* Experience of working with volunteers and/or peer supporters
* Good presentation and communication skills
* Proficiency in the use of IT including Word, Excel, Outlook and the Internet
* Ability to work flexibly including occasional evening and weekend hours
* Ability to manage own workload and keep records
* Understanding of and ability to maintain professional boundaries
* Commitment to the work of Birth Companions
* Commitment to working and delivering our services in a way that supports Equal Opportunities and is non-discriminatory

**Desirable**

* Experience of prison environment, working with and/or supporting women affected by the criminal justice system (we will also consider lived experience)
* Experience of multi-agency/partnership working to deliver services for people experiencing disadvantage
* Experience of supporting women during the perinatal period
* Demonstrable knowledge of the issues and understanding of the needs of perinatal women facing multiple disadvantage

**Submitting your application**

Applications must be submitted using the application form supplied by Birth Companions.

Only information that is contained within the form itself will be used when we shortlist candidates.

* Please do not send CVs or covering letters as these will not be used when shortlisting

Please only submit application forms in **Microsoft WORD**.

* Please do not submit PDF’s, or any other document format
* If this is going to be a problem for you, please contact us in plenty of time before the closing date so that we can ensure that your application is received on time and in the correct format.

Applications are usually submitted as an email attachment.

* If you are unable to submit your application form by email please contact us as soon as possible to ensure that we can arrange for postal application before the closing date.

**Shortlisting Process**

In order to make the process as fair as possible, our shortlisting process is anonymous. Staff will not be able to see any of your personal information until after shortlisting is completed.

**We use a scoring system to shortlist candidates which is based on the essential and desirable criteria listed under the person specification on the job description. Question 6 on the application form, ‘Additional information’,asks you to provide detailed explanation of how you meet these. We will also take into account the general presentation of your application.**

**Equality and Diversity**

To ensure that Birth Companions provides an equal service and follows good practice, we monitor the background of those who apply to work with us, either in a paid or volunteer capacity and those with whom we work. These characteristics are protected in the Equality act 2010.

Birth Companions is committed to Equality and Diversity and we encourage applications from candidates from under-represented groups, any information provided to us about an applicant’s background will be stored anonymously and is not used as part of our shortlisting process.

**Other things to consider about working for Birth Companions**

Birth Companions does not have an office but the majority of our staff team related activities are based in London unless otherwise stated in the job description. Meetings are usually held in venues close to the Angel, Finsbury Park or Kings Cross. During the COVID-19 crisis, our meetings have been held by Zoom but we are expecting to resume at least some face to face meetings later this year.

Although there is some homeworking involved in being part of our staff team, all our staff are expected to be flexible about their availability for meetings and other activities in London. Our staff meetings take place on Mondays.

Staff are expected to be able to travel into London reasonably easily and candidates should be aware that this may involve travel during peak times.

As a non-office based organization we also rely heavily on staff being able to communicate remotely with access to reliable internet network.

We will provide any necessary training and equipment but the successful candidate will need to be able to work from home on a regular basis and access work files and information via internet based platforms.