

GUIDANCE NOTES ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

You are advised to read the following notes carefully as, unless other pre-selection techniques are used, the decision to shortlist you for an interview will be based solely on the information you provide in the Application Form. This advice is designed to help you complete the Application Form as thoroughly as possible. Information you provide in the Application Form will be treated as confidential.

EXAMINE THE JOB PACK

All job Information Packs for posts with Aire Valley Homes Leeds contain, Application Form, Job Description, and Employee Specification, Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, and, where applicable, Car Leasing and Removal and Relocation Schemes.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Aire Valley Homes Leeds is committed to offering equality of opportunity in employment regardless of race, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or age. To monitor effectiveness of Equal Opportunities policies we need to monitor the number of applications by sex, race and disability. You are therefore requested to provide this information in the Application Form.

DISABLED APPLICANTS

A disability or health problem does not preclude prospective applicant from consideration for a job and applications are encouraged from disabled people. Disabled applicants whose impairment prevents them from carrying out any aspects of a post are still encouraged to apply since it may be possible to change the duties of the post. You are asked to indicate in the 'Additional Information' section of the Application Form whether your disability prevents you from undertaking any of the duties of the post and why. There is provision for information to be provided in large print and braille or on tape. If you have difficulty completing the Application Form you may alternatively submit a C.V, however this should still follow the same format as the application Form. For posts carrying an essential car user allowance, alternative arrangements can be made for people whose disability prevents them from driving. Disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of a vacant post are guaranteed an interview. You are asked to indicate in the 'Additional Information' section of the Application Form and arrangements that may need to be made in order for you to attend an interview.

CANVASSING

You must not canvass members of the Council or Aire Valley Homes Leeds in relation to your application. This means you must not seek support of the elected members or attempt to ask them to influence the decisions – if you do you will be disqualified.

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, certain jobs are classed as those for which applicants must declare all criminal convictions/cautions regardless of

whether or not they are spent. If the post comes within this category, it will be clearly indicated elsewhere in this pack.

PRESENTATION

- use a black pen or type your Application Form so it can be photocopied;
- check spelling and that you have answered every question;
- remember to sign the Application Form to declare that the information you have provided is accurate;
- always keep a copy of the Application Form for reference;
- make sure that you send the form to the correct address;
- make sure that your Application Form arrives before the closing date, it is not AVHL policy to accept late applications (although exceptions may be allowed in the case of disabled applicants who receive information in a different format, or who have difficulty in completing an Application Form).

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

- **General.**
- Make sure that you read the Application Form fully before you write anything. Write out your Application Form in rough first to help you organise your thoughts. Ensure the information you provide is accurate. Applicants who conceal or misrepresent relevant information at any stage during the recruitment process are liable to disqualification.
- **Employment Experience.**
- Complete this section as fully as possible giving exact dates. Where you cannot remember specific dates, provide as good indication of the time involved as possible.
- **Qualifications**
- Where specific qualifications are required for the position, this will be included in the Job Description and Employee Specification. You should complete this section giving details of relevant examination results and grades. If your application is successful you will be required to provide verification of these qualifications. Make sure you include any NVQ's which you are working towards or have obtained.
- **References**
- If you object to your references being sought at this stage you may indicate this on the Application Form
- **C.V.'S WILL NOT be accepted, with the exception of disabled applicants who have difficulty completing the standard Application Form.**

INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION

- please read the Job Description and Employee Specification carefully, so you understand what the position involves;
- ask yourself why you are interested in the position, for example, would it be a promotion or alternatively a good career move sideways to broaden your experience?
- Do not simply repeat your career history. Pick out skills, knowledge and experience required by the Job Description and Employee Specification and provide evidence you possess then in the Application Form;
- Be as concise as possible; any additional information included should relate specifically to the post applied for. You may attach additional information in support of your Application Form, **(please ensure your name and the job you are applying for on each additional sheet you submit)**; but **IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THIS EXCEED TWO SIDES OF A4 PAPER**. This restriction does not apply to those applicants who declare a disability and, therefore, who provide additional information in order that consideration may be given to reasonable adjustment.
- **Please note that applicants will only be shortlisted if they demonstrate that they meet essential requirements of the Employee Specification that can be assessed from the Application Form.** You must therefore give evidence that shows how you meet the specification. If the specification states “able to use initiative and work unsupervised” it will not be sufficient to say “I can work unsupervised and show initiative” you must quote examples of your work/life which demonstrate these attributes.
- mention any relevant experience you have acquired outside work, such as community, voluntary or leisure interests;
- above all, gear your application to this specific job;
- internal applicants must not assume any prior knowledge by the shortlist and interview panel and must give full details.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION FORMS – MS WORD FILE

Following requests from Job Seekers to be able to word-process their application forms, these can now be downloaded as an MS Word file from the Aire Valley Homes Leeds website.

A SUMMARY OF OUR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICIES AND PRACTICAL ACTION

We are committed to treating our staff, and the people of Leeds, fairly. We will make sure that we do not discriminate against people because of age, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, race, religious belief, gender, marital status, sexuality, responsibility for dependents, impairment, trade union or political activity, and any other disadvantage group.

We want to make sure that we take equal opportunities into account, in a positive way, at every stage of AVHL work. We try to make sure that we follow equal opportunities policies in how we;

- recruit and treat our staff
- deliver our services
- consult with people of Leeds
- work with other organisations

Our policies focus on tackling discrimination against black and minority ethnic groups, disabled people and women. We also follow all anti-discriminatory laws. For example:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1982
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998

Some examples of how we put equal opportunities into practise:

Policies:

Recruiting staff – We advertise all of our jobs. We send all applicants standard information and give structured interviews. We guarantee interviews for disabled people who meet the essential needs for the job.

Birth and domestic leave – We include leave for partners, adoption leave and time off to look after sick children.

Complaints – We have a clear system for making complaints, including complaints about harassment or discrimination.

Equality Action Plans – AVHL benchmark equality information to monitor how they are helping to get into higher grades, what they are doing to increase the number of minority ethnic and disabled staff and how they are improving their services to meet the needs of all these groups.

Job Sharing – All of our jobs are open to job-sharing.

Domestic Violence – We have a positive policy of support and guidance for staff who are experiencing domestic violence.