KARMA NIRVANA

Supporting victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage



Specialist Honour-Based Abuse Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (HBA IDVA)

Recruitment Pack

About Karma Nirvana

Karma Nirvana is the UK's specialist charity for victims and survivors of honour-based abuse (HBA) and forced marriage. We were founded in 1993 by survivor and campaigner Dame Jasvinder Sanghera, and survivors still shape how we are run and what we do.

Since 2008 we have run the government-funded National Honour-Based Abuse Helpline, the UK's only dedicated HBA helpline, handling around 11,000 contacts a year. We train thousands of professionals each year, including police forces across England and Wales, and we are the only specialist HBA charity to publish national data on this abuse.

Our voice reaches national policy. We are the only specialist HBA member of the Government's VAWG Strategy Advisory Board, we sit on the Forced Marriage Unit's Quarterly Partnership Board, and we lead an HBA sector group. We created the National Day of Memory, in memory of Shafilea Ahmed, and our End Child Marriage campaign helped make all child marriage a crime. Our Survivor Ambassador Panel of 40 survivors works with us on advocacy, advice and awareness.

About the service

Karma Nirvana is developing a new national service giving specialist one-to-one advocacy to victims of honour-based abuse across England and Wales. It will work alongside our National Honour-Based Abuse Helpline:

- IDVAs will give victims sustained, specialist support built around their own goals, with a safe exit planned from the start.
- Caseloads are deliberately protected, because HBA cases are complex and often involve several perpetrators.
- The service supports victims aged 16 and over of all genders, including men and LGBT+ victims.
- Support will be mainly by phone, video and secure messaging, with in-person support for court, safety-critical meetings, or when remote contact is not safe.
- Each IDVA will cover a region of England and Wales, building local links with police, MARAC, social care, health and other services.

We will share more about the service with shortlisted candidates.

If you would like an informal conversation about the role, please get in touch with ***jobs@karmanirvana.org.uk***

Job Description: HBA IDVA

Location: Remote-first, covering an allocated region in England and Wales, with travel required for in-person advocacy, court attendance and partnership meetings. Occasional attendance at Karma Nirvana's headquarters in Leeds will also be required. Reasonable work-related travel and accommodation expenses will be reimbursed in line with our expenses policy.

Hours: 37.5 per week

Contract: Fixed term to March 2029, with extensions dependent on funding.

Salary: £32,000 per year for qualified IDVAs. £29,000 per year for experienced HBA practitioners working towards the IDVA qualification, rising to £32,000 once qualified (see Applying without the IDVA qualification)

Reports to: Service Delivery Manager

Start: January/February 2027, depending on interview date and notice period

Number of posts: 4, covering England and Wales

Checks: Enhanced DBS check, right to work in the UK, and two satisfactory references

Early Application Date:	Application Closing Date:	In-Person Interview (early applicants):	In-Person Interview:
8 Dec 2026	5 Jan 2027	15-16 Dec 2026	w/c 11 Jan 2027

We may appoint candidates following the December interviews and close recruitment early if all positions are filled. We therefore encourage early applications.

Role Purpose: Specialist Honour-Based Abuse Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (HBA IDVA)

To give victims of honour-based abuse specialist, independent advocacy that keeps them safe and helps them rebuild their lives. You will hold a protected caseload, assessing risk and need, planning victims' safety, and standing with them through police, courts, housing, immigration, health and other services until they can leave the service safely.

Key Responsibilities

1. Casework and Advocacy

- Caseloads will be carefully managed, with an indicative caseload of up to 10 active cases per IDVA at any one time, recognising the complexity of Honour-Based Abuse and the need for sustained, specialist support. Caseloads will be reviewed regularly to reflect individual risk, complexity and safeguarding needs.
- Carry out needs and risk assessments, recognising that victims often disclose over several contacts.
- Agree a support plan built around each victim's goals, review it at every contact, and plan a safe exit from the start.
- Make safety plans that reflect how HBA works: several perpetrators, family and community collusion, and risks overseas, including forced marriage and removal from the UK.
- Work with the Forced Marriage Unit on cases with an overseas element, including risk of removal from the UK and repatriation.
- Help victims through police processes, protection orders (including Forced Marriage Protection Orders and FGM Protection Orders), family and criminal courts, immigration, housing and health, including going with them to court and key meetings.
- Refer victims on to specialist legal advice, refuge and safe accommodation, and longer-term support, and write support letters where needed.
- Support child dependants as part of the victim's case, working with children's services.
- Close cases when goals are met and the exit plan is safe, or in line with our disengagement procedure, and gather victims' feedback.

2. Safeguarding

- Follow Karma Nirvana's safeguarding policies, talking through safeguarding decisions with your manager or the designated safeguarding lead so no decision is made alone. In an emergency, act first and debrief afterwards.
- Act straight away when a victim is at imminent risk.
- Make sure anyone outside the service's remit, including under-16s, is given a safe next step and referred on, including to children’s services where needed.

3. Working with other agencies

- Attend MARAC for your cases as an active participant, bringing specialist HBA knowledge, and join child protection and adult safeguarding meetings where needed.
- Build and keep up two-way referral links in your region with police, social care, health, education, housing, refuges, and immigration and legal services.
- Help professionals recognise HBA, including through our free HBA Identification Tool, and promote the service locally.
- Work closely with Helpline colleagues so victims move smoothly between services.
- Provide occasional support to the National Honour-Based Abuse Helpline when required, subject to advocacy caseload priorities and agreement with management.

3. Recording and quality

- Keep accurate, timely case records on our case management system, so we can monitor and report on the service.
- Take part in supervision, clinical supervision, case reviews and case audits.
- Contribute to service improvement.

3. Learning and development

- Hold the Level 3 IDVA qualification or, if appointed without it, complete it, funded by Karma Nirvana, within 6 months of starting.
- Complete Karma Nirvana's internal HBA and forced marriage training, Helpline induction, observed practice, and annual safeguarding training.
- Take part in regular CPD.
- Work with survivors and service users to improve how the service works.

This description covers the main duties. You may be asked to take on other reasonable tasks that fit the role.



Person specification

We will assess candidates against these criteria through the application form (A), interview (I) and checks (C).

Knowledge	Essential /Desirable	Assessed by
Understanding of honour-based abuse and forced marriage, and how they differ from other forms of abuse	**Essential**	**A, I**
Knowledge of risk assessment, safety planning and safeguarding for adults and children	**Essential**	**A, I**
Understanding of the criminal and family justice systems, protection orders (including Forced Marriage Protection Orders) and MARAC	**Essential**	**A, I**
Knowledge of how immigration status, including no recourse to public funds, affects victims	**Desirable**	**I**
Awareness of how faith, culture, gender, disability, sexuality and other needs shape a victim's experience	**Essential**	**I**
Knowledge of the Welsh legal and policy context, including the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 (for the post covering Wales)	**Desirable**	**A, I**

Qualifications	Essential /Desirable	Assessed by
Level 3 accredited IDVA qualification (or equivalent)	**Essential**	**A**
Significant frontline experience supporting victims and survivors of Honour Based Abuse or other forms of VAWG (ideally two years or equivalent experience), with a commitment to completing the Level 3 IDVA qualification within six months of starting.	**Alternative to the above**	**A**

Experience	Essential /Desirable	Assessed by
Supporting victims of domestic abuse, HBA, forced marriage or other VAWG	**Essential**	**A, I**
Managing a caseload of high-risk clients	**Essential**	**A, I**
Working with police, social care, health or other agencies on behalf of clients	**Essential**	**A, I**
Attending MARAC or other multi-agency meetings	**Desirable**	**A, I**
Supporting people remotely by phone, video or messaging	**Desirable**	**A, I**

Skills	Essential /Desirable	Assessed by
Builds trust with people who are frightened or isolated, working at their pace	**Essential**	**I**
Advocates confidently and assertively with professionals	**Essential**	**I**
Writes clear, accurate case notes and letters	**Essential**	**A, I**
Organises a busy caseload and meets deadlines	**Essential**	**I**
Uses case management systems and Microsoft Office confidently	**Essential**	**A**
Speaks a community language such as Punjabi, Urdu, Mirpuri, Hindi, Bengali/Sylheti, Gujarati, Arabic, Kurdish, Farsi or Pashto	**Desirable**	**A, I**

Personal Qualities	Essential /Desirable	Assessed by
Commitment to Karma Nirvana's survivor-led values and to equality and inclusion	**Essential**	**I**
Works calmly under pressure and looks after own wellbeing	**Essential**	**I**
Keeps clear professional boundaries	**Essential**	**I**

Other	Essential /Desirable	Assessed by
Satisfactory enhanced DBS check	**Essential**	**C**
Right to work in the UK	**Essential**	**C**
Two satisfactory references	**Essential**	**C**
Able to travel across your region, sometimes at short notice	**Essential**	**A**
Full driving licence and access to a car	**Desirable**	**A**

Applying without the IDVA qualification

The Level 3 IDVA qualification is a requirement for this role. If you do not hold it yet but have substantial experience supporting victims and survivors of honour-based abuse, we would still like to hear from you, and please tell us about that experience in your application.

If you are appointed on this route, Karma Nirvana will enrol you on an accredited IDVA course so that you qualify within 6 months of starting. Karma Nirvana pays for the course. Your starting salary on this route is £29,000 per year, rising to £32,000 once you qualify. Where Karma Nirvana funds the Level 3 IDVA qualification, employees will be required to enter into a training agreement setting out any applicable repayment arrangements should they voluntarily leave within 12 months of qualifying. Full details will be provided before employment begins.

What we offer

- A protected caseload, so you have the time to do the work well.
- Specialist HBA training, regular CPD, and a fully funded route to the Level 3 IDVA qualification for experienced HBA practitioners who do not hold it yet.
- Supervision, clinical supervision, and debriefs after difficult cases. Safeguarding decisions are always shared, never carried alone.
- Laptop and phone provided.
- The chance to help build a new national service from the start, alongside a team with 18 years of Helpline experience.
- 24 days' annual leave plus public/bank holidays, workplace pension, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and access to regular clinical supervision and wellbeing support.

How to apply

Please complete our application form, including details of two referees, and send it to jobs@karmanirvana.org.uk.

Early application deadline: 8 December 2026

Applications received by this date will be considered for early interviews on 15 and 16 December 2026. Interviews may be offered on a rolling basis to candidates who meet the essential criteria.

Final application deadline: 5 January 2027

If vacancies remain, applications will continue to be accepted until midnight on 5 January 2027, with interviews taking place during the week commencing 11 January 2027.

We may appoint candidates following the December interviews and close recruitment early if all positions are filled. We therefore encourage early applications.

Any offer will be conditional on satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check and right to work checks.

Karma Nirvana is committed to equality and to reflecting the communities we serve. We particularly welcome applications from people with lived experience of honour-based abuse, and from people who speak community languages. We support victims of all genders and welcome applications from everyone. If you need any adjustments to apply or to attend an interview, please tell us.

