

HACKNEY COMMUNITYLAW CENTRE

JOB DESCRIPTION

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|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| JOB TITLE: | Solicitor (Full time) |
| SALARY: | £x (subject to experience) |
| ACCOUNTABLE TO: | Board of Directors & Manager |
| LINE MANAGED BY: | Senior Solicitor |

Purpose

We are now seeking a supervising senior solicitor who meets the requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) COLPA standards and the LAA supervisory standards and act as authorised litigator.

The housing unit represents clients in all areas of housing law (including homelessness, possession proceedings, disrepair, warrants, and unlawful eviction). The unit operates a legal aid contracts in Hackney. As part of this contract the solicitor will be required to provide drop-in and appointment services to residents.

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

- To act as an authorised litigator for the organisation and carry out supervision in accordance with the SRA and Lexcel requirements
- To provide line management to the Law Centre's Caseworkers.
- To provide advice and casework in housing law.
- To bill effectively in accordance with LAA requirements.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. To act as approved authorised litigator across the practice.
2. To ensure that all advice, assistance and representation complies with the requirements of our Lexcel quality mark and where publicly funded complies with the requirements of the Legal Aid Agency.
3. To ensure all casework is recorded within our Advice Pro case management system and prompt billing and payment of work undertaken. The post holder will be expected to meet billing and time recording targets which are set in accordance with the overall requirements of the Law Centre's annual budget and our contracts.
4. To ensure that the terms of all Law Centre funders are kept to in relation to advice & casework including providing reports as required. To report on the work of the Law Centre to the Board of Directors as required.
5. To participate in team meetings and carry out file reviews in accordance with Lexcel requirements.

6. To be responsible for your own word-processing, filing and case recording with the Advice Pro case system and be familiar with digital dictation.

Personnel:

3. To carry out supervision responsibilities as required including staff and volunteers.

Casework

4. To ensure all casework is carried out in accordance with LAA and Lexcel requirements.
5. To promptly bill files in accordance with LAA requirements and meet individual billing target. This will include:
 - i. being costs conscious during the course of the case
 - ii. negotiating costs with the other side
 - iii. sending the file to the costs draughtsman (CD) within 14 days of the order or authority for assessment
 - iv. dealing promptly with CD enquiries
 - v. taking personal responsibility for bringing in the costs due on the file
 - vi. Completing the Claim 1 or 2
 - vii. all LAA returns are dealt with promptly
14. To provide training and support to other agencies as required.
15. Be familiar with and be able to conduct legal aid casework in accordance with the LAA's Client and Cost Management System (CCMS) requirements.
16. To provide representation at the county court duty scheme at Clerkenwell & Shoreditch in accordance with the duty rota requirements.

Supervision and support

17. To act as a mentor in terms of guidance on legal issues and casework to other staff and to workers in other agencies.
18. To assist with recruitment and training of staff as required.
19. As part of authorised litigator duties to authorise all use of public funding devolved powers for all housing and immigration work and to approve all Claim 1s, Claim 2s POAs and bill of costs.
20. To provide and support internal and external training provision where needed.

General

21. To observe the Law Centre's Confidentiality Policy at all times.

22. To undertake all duties within the letter and the spirit of the Law Centre's Equal Opportunities Policy at all times.

23. To undertake any other duties as may be reasonably required.

Conditions of employment - main terms

The postholder will be based at the Law Centre but you must be prepared to relocate within Hackney if required.

This is a full-time post (35 hours a week). Holiday entitlement will be 27 days plus public holidays.

All appointments are subject to a 6 month probation period.

Level of responsibility

The postholder will be accountable to the Law Centre Manager and will report to and be accountable to the Law Centre Board of Directors.

Level of contact

The postholder will be required to represent the organisation in meetings with funders and external bodies.

Responsibility for assets

The postholder will be a keyholder.

Person Specification

| | Knowledge and Experience | Essential (E) or Desirable (D) | Method of Assessment |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 3 years PQE experience and current practicing certificate. | E | AF/I |
| 2 | Sound knowledge and experience of all areas housing law. | E | AF/I |
| 4 | Experience of working under the legal aid scheme (both Legal Help and certificated) | E | AF/I |
| 5 | Knowledge and experience of working within the LAA Contract requirements | E | AF/I |
| 7 | Experience of exercising devolved powers | E | AF/I |
| 8 | Sound understanding of the SRA Professional Conduct Rules, Lexcel standards and Solicitor's Accounts Rules and ability to apply them as necessary. | E | AF/I |
| 9 | Proven experience of running a varied caseload to meet billing and financial targets (currently £70,000 per annum) for certificated and legal help work. | E | |
| 10 | Ability to supervise and support volunteers. | E | AF/I |
| 11 | Ability to work collaboratively with HCLC and as part of a team. | E | |
| 12 | An understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities issues and its relevance to legal advice. | E | AF/I |
| 13 | Ability to communicate effectively with the organisation's client group. | E | AF/I |
| 14 | Excellent written and verbal communication skills | E | AF/I |
| 15 | Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines. | E | AF/I |
| 16 | Ability to prioritise and work efficiently under pressure, including willingness to undertake urgent work , sometimes necessarily out of hours (judicial reviews/injunctions) | E | AF/I |
| 17 | Ability to work as part of a team. | E | AF/I |
| 18 | Ability to speak another language relevant to our client base | D | |
| 19 | Excellent IT skills | E | AF/I |