



Job Description

Job title:	Homelessness and Housing Law Specialist Advisor
Department:	Client Services
Salary:	£38,585 (regions) or £42,746 (London) per annum
Hours:	35 per week
Location:	Based at any Crisis Skylight Service in England (Newcastle, South Yorkshire, Merseyside, Birmingham, Oxford, Brent, London, or Croydon)
Contract type:	Permanent

You will provide expert advice on homelessness legislation (the Homelessness Reduction Act) and relevant housing legislation to contribute to Crisis' mission of ending homelessness. Advice and assistance will be offered on an internal consultancy basis to Crisis Skylight staff to enable them to advocate for their clients. For complex cases, more direct involvement will be required including direct work (usually by phone/ digital means) with members and advocacy (through written, phone or digital means) to relevant agencies.

Aim and influence

- Improve Crisis' capacity to support members to prevent and relieve their homelessness, particularly in complex cases, including those with different immigration status
- Train and develop staff and volunteer's knowledge of the application of relevant homelessness and housing legislation in England
- Contribute to the development of best practice, policy and campaigns work by providing insights and examples of where poor implementation of the HRA, or other housing legislation contributes to perpetuating or creating homelessness
- Use Crisis' case management systems and tools to record and monitor any direct work with members

Financial and supervisory responsibility

- Support for volunteers may be required.
- Working within agreed budgets.

Other key details

- An ability to manage workload and communicate effectively will be key as in the first instance these roles will be supporting several teams. Over time, we may invest in additional roles and so the balance between advice and internal consultancy and direct casework may change.

- A satisfactory enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service is required for this role as Crisis Skylights work with vulnerable adults and young people aged 16 and 17.

Organisational chart



Please note structure is subject to change

Job responsibilities

- Provide expert advice, information and training to Crisis Skylight staff on homelessness and housing legislation in England, and its implementation
- Provide consultancy and advice to Crisis Skylight staff about the rights and entitlements members have within existing accommodation (in the social or private sectors) and on their rights to housing, and the prevention and relief of homelessness under the HRA and any subsequent duties owed.
- Conduct assessments of individual members' entitlements under homelessness legislation where the level of complexity (including age, disability, care leaver status, immigration status etc) requires expert involvement
- Use a coaching methodology to support staff to advocate for members to enable them to retain accommodation (e.g. avoid threatened evictions) or have their homelessness prevented or relieved, including where the full housing duty is owed.
- Develop template and bespoke letters/ emails for Crisis staff to use to improve the effectiveness of their work in retaining and securing access to accommodation
- Identify and develop good working relationships with statutory and other organisations operating in and linked to the housing and homelessness system and signpost members and Crisis staff to relevant services
- If needed to undertake advocacy on behalf of members to enable them to access their entitlements including supporting members to make applications to review or appeal local authority decisions

- Follow-up developments with members where direct involvement in their case has been required and monitor progress

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Fully engage with the monitoring and evaluation process by collecting the relevant information, updating records on Crisis' case management system and liaising with other relevant staff to avoid duplication
- Ensure that members' feedback is recorded and where appropriate, acted upon, including supporting members seeking to make a complaint through the formal complaints process

Contribution to the team

- Contribute to the continuing development of the service by contributing ideas for activity and service innovations
- Encourage and support member involvement and influence on the service offer, through contacts with member forums and experts by experience panels.
- Contribute expertise to the development of training for internal and external audiences on homelessness legislation in England

General responsibilities

- Ensure that any safeguarding concerns are identified and reported in line with Crisis' procedures
- Actively encourage and support member involvement within Crisis
- Develop an understanding of homelessness and Crisis' aims
- Follow Crisis policies and procedures, including health and safety
- Carry out other reasonable duties that may be required

Person Specification

Essential

- 1 Demonstrable track record of successfully preventing and relieving people's homelessness through advocacy and the application of relevant homelessness and housing law, including complex cases such as people with different immigration status.
- 2 Expert knowledge of relevant homelessness and housing legislation, including Housing Act 1996 Parts VI and VII, Homelessness Act 2002 Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Protection for Eviction Act 1977, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- 3 Knowledge of the issues affecting homeless people and the impact and interaction of welfare and immigration policies on homelessness
- 4 Familiarity with local authority housing options services and their processes

- 5 Excellent communication skills, with the ability to listen, analyse, advise, and put across complex information accessibly through different media (one to one consultancy in person or by phone/ digitally, written materials, training materials)
- 6 Excellent at networking with strong advocacy skills to improve access to entitlements for our members wherever necessary
- 7 Organised and able to deal with conflicting priorities
- 8 Strong team player who is driven to work within a team, whilst also able to work on own initiative
- 9 Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office packages and experience of data entry using a case management system
- 10 Knowledge of and ability to comply with Health and Safety (including adherence to lone working and social distancing protocols) and safeguarding procedures
- 11 Commitment to Crisis' purpose and values

Desirable

- 12 Experience of supporting / defending people in possession cases

We encourage applications from all sections of the community and particularly from people who have lived experience of homelessness.

Supporting your application

Thank you for your interest in working for Crisis.

Before you apply, please take a moment to read through the frequently asked questions below which are designed to support your application and help you understand our recruitment processes.

The person specification requires a qualification or experience that I do not have. Is it still worth me applying?

The person specification has the key knowledge, skills, experience or behaviours needed to carry out the job successfully and you will be scored based on any information you provide. If you don't quite meet the criteria, for example if you have an understanding of something rather than experience of doing it yourself, you may still pick up points for explaining your understanding or how you might approach it. However, some of the person specification points, for example specific qualifications, are critical to the role so if you don't meet those requirements, you are unlikely to be shortlisted.

Can I apply by sending my CV?

Occasionally we accept CVs and a covering letter but only if this is requested in the advert for the post. We don't accept speculative applications or hold CVs on file.

What should I do if I can't complete an online application?

If you would like to apply in a different format, for example in a Word document, because you are unable to use the online process, please contact the Recruitment Team jobs@crisis.org.uk. It is helpful if you provide details of your requirements or suggestions about how we might best support you to apply so that we're able to consider alternatives.

Does Crisis use Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology for shortlisting?

Crisis does not use AI technology for shortlisting applications or throughout our recruitment process.

Can I use Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology for my application?

We strongly discourage applicants from using AI technology at any stage of the recruitment process. This is so we can run a fair, transparent process which gives all applicants an equitable chance of success. We want to hear about your own experience and perspectives in your application and if shortlisted, during the interview too.

How can I maximise my chance of being shortlisted?

It is important that you complete all sections of the online application form to ensure that the recruiting panel understand your interests, skills, behaviours, knowledge and experience.

Shortlisting is mostly based on the information you provide in the assessment form section.

A strong application will also be in line with the **Crisis Values** that you can find on our website.

Please note! If you don't provide full responses against the person specification points, the panel won't be able to score your application fully and it will be unlikely there is enough information for you to be shortlisted.

How quickly will I know if I have been shortlisted?

Every recruitment campaign will be different depending on how quickly the shortlisting panel can review applications but if you have not been shortlisted, you will receive an email from us confirming that.

If I am not shortlisted, can I get feedback on my application?

Unfortunately, we are not able to offer feedback on your application if you are not shortlisted for interview.

Can I get feedback after my interview?

We appreciate that information about where you did well or less well can be useful, so if you are not successful following interview we are able to provide feedback.

Will you notify me of future vacancies?

Once you have registered via Crisis Jobs Online, you can sign up to receive notifications of new vacancies based on the criteria you select. We also recommend that you check our website regularly for details of new vacancies.

I recently applied for a role and was not successful, but have seen the role re-advertised. Is it worth me applying again?

If the gap between advertising has been short, we would normally advise that candidates need not apply again, unless you have re-written and enhanced your application. Some examples might be that you have strengthened your examples using the STAR technique above.

Crisis Jobs Online

I have typed my personal statement answers into the online form, but it won't let me save them. What should I do?

There is a word limit of 400 per answer so it could be that you have exceeded the limit and that is what is preventing you from saving your work.

I filled in the personal statement section and tried to save it/submit it. However, it wouldn't do this and my information was lost. Is there any way to retrieve it?

You are encouraged to record your answers in a Word document first before copying and pasting your answers into the online application form, using the keyboard shortcuts Ctrl + C to copy and Ctrl + V to paste. The application form has a strict time out limit and so if you take longer than that limit you will lose your work and we are unfortunately not able to retrieve it.

Where can I get help?

If your query has not been answered above, you can contact the Recruitment Team jobs@crisis.org.uk for support.