

Job Title: Housing caseworker/solicitor

Reports to: Housing team head

Salary: £35,948

Hours: Full-time (37 hours per week)

Location: Tyseley, Birmingham (with some potential for hybrid working)

About this role

Central England Law Centre (CELC) provides a vital service to clients across Coventry and Birmingham, providing support for all aspects of housing law through a team of dedicated solicitors, caseworkers, paralegals and support workers.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced caseworker or solicitor to join the team, supporting our clients across Birmingham in the delivery of casework through the Law Centre's Legal Aid contract.

The successful candidate will be subject to a basic DBS check.

Responsibilities

With responsibility for a caseload of clients across Birmingham, the successful candidate will:

- Advise clients on all aspects of housing law through face-to-face and telephone appointments
- Undertake casework and represent clients at court as appropriate
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the Law Centre to provide a high quality, holistic service for clients
- Accurately and consistently record time spent on casework, maintaining records to the standards required by the Law Centre
- Conduct casework in compliance with Legal Aid Agency requirements
- Liaise with the Legal Aid Agency in respect of funding applications and claims
- Complete public funding forms via CCMS and paper applications where appropriate
- Promptly cost and bill closed cases in order to meet individual and team targets

- Carry out file reviews
- Work in partnership with other organisations who are supporting our client group
- Keep up to date with current legislation, case law and policy in relation to housing
- Identify opportunities for strategic litigation work, to influence the local authority and others public bodies.

General

The housing caseworker/solicitor will also:

- Demonstrate commitment to the vision, mission and aims of Central England Law Centre
- Abide by policies and procedures as set out in the office manual and staff handbook
- Attend team meetings, CELC away days and external event as required
- Undertake any other task reasonably required within the context of this post

- A solicitor or caseworker with proven experience of the delivery of casework through a legal aid contract
- A demonstrable commitment to social justice
- The ability to work sympathetically and effectively with a wide variety of clients
- Experience of advocating for clients in court and with other agencies
- Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of legal aid eligibility requirements and legal aid applications
- Experience of the completion of public funding forms via CCMS and in hard copy
- Proven ability to meet cost targets
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- An understanding of the importance of confidentiality
- A non-judgemental attitude
- Experience of using specialist legal case management systems, and of MS Outlook, Word and Excel
- Sound organisational skills with the ability to organise and prioritise workload, ensuring excellent service to your clients at all times
- The ability to get on with people and be polite under pressure and to work co-operatively as part of a team.
- Ability to work as part of a team and with partner agencies

To apply for the post you will need to provide

- A completed Housing Caseworker/Solicitor form (link on our website)
- An up-to-date CV which should include the names and addresses of your referees
- A covering letter of no more than two sides of A4 which should include:
 - Please describe how your skills, qualities and experiences meet the requirements set out in the Job Description. Where possible, provide examples (which could be from a professional, voluntary or personal context) which demonstrate those skills, qualities and experiences
 - Explain how you have used, or how you would like to use, the law and community participation to bring about positive change in your community. Where possible please relate your answer to previous experience, which could be in paid or voluntary work
- A completed equality and diversity form (section 3 and 4 of the Housing Caseworker/ Solicitor form)

The deadline for the application is **12:00 pm on 15th May 2024**

Please do not submit any additional papers. We will only consider the information in the CV and personal statement.

We really want you to give you an opportunity to demonstrate your abilities and skills. We therefore strongly suggest that you pay particular attention to the job description and person specification when completing your application.

We will confirm receipt of your application by email. We will then shortlist applications and successful applicants will be contacted by email and telephone and invited for interviews.

We expect to hold interviews on the week commencing **20th or 27th May 2024**.

Please let us know of any arrangements we may need to make to enable you to attend for an interview. Our Coventry office is wheelchair accessible and has disabled toilet facilities, If you are attending an interview at our Birmingham office please let us know whether you need any assistance prior to coming to your interview.

The interview will last for approximately one hour. The interview panel usually consists of two people which would normally include the relevant team head. You may be asked to provide a short presentation or complete a written test. If this is the case you will be notified prior to your interview and provided with any further information. We will take up references only after interview. We require references from two people who will be able to comment on your suitability for the role. Usually, one should be your previous employer.

We monitor our selection process for compliance with our statement of commitment to equal opportunities. The first and last page of the application form is not available to those shortlisting and considered only after the appointment has taken place and then only for the purpose of ensuring that our selection process is fair.