HR Manager (Casework and Employee Relations)

Citizens Advice Lewisham

Supervision: CEO

Hours: 26 per week

Venue: Remote-based working with some requirements to attend events and key meetings

Salary: £40,000 - £45,000 (based on full-time hours of 35 hours per week), pro rata for 26 hours per week.

Role purpose

This role is the first point of contact for all complex HR matters at Citizens Advice Lewisham. The HR Manager acts as the liaison between the organisation and our external HR support, is the lead for all formal investigations and casework, and keeps the Senior Management Team (SMT) informed of progress. The post holder also leads on behaviour and culture issues, manages long-term sickness cases, and has oversight of HR policies and processes. Specialist legal advice is provided by our external HR support; this role decides when to involve them, briefs them well and supports casework through to completion.

Key relationships

- CEO (line manager)
- Senior Management Team (SMT)
- External HR consultants and other advisers (e.g. ACAS, occupational health)
- Managers and staff across the organisation, and, where applicable, volunteers
- Business support team, who lead recruitment and onboarding

Principal tasks and responsibilities

First point of contact and liaison

- Act as the first point of contact for managers and staff on all complex HR matters, proposes to SMT for discussion what can be resolved internally and what needs external advice.
- Act as the liaison between Citizens Advice Lewisham and our external HR consultants, briefing them on cases, agreeing to actions on advice with the CEO and following up agreed actions.
- Keep a clear record of advice given and decisions taken on each matter.

Formal casework

- Lead on formal investigations for disciplinary, grievance and capability matters, including gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses and writing investigation reports.
- Lead on all case correspondence and documentation, including formal investigation paperwork and outcome letters using approved templates with support from the Executive officer.

- Ensure every case follows a fair, consistent and timely procedure, in line with our policies and the ACAS Code of Practice.
- Oversee Performance Improvement Plans, supporting managers to set clear objectives, hold review meetings and record outcomes.

Behaviour, culture and long-term sickness

- Lead on behaviour and culture issues, advising managers on early resolution and informal approaches, and managing cases where these do not resolve matters.
- Lead the management of cases where colleagues are on long-term sick leave, including regular contact, occupational health referrals, reasonable adjustments, capability and return-to-work planning.

Reporting and records

- Update the SMT regularly on HR casework, with clear and concise summaries of the progress of each case that protect confidentiality.
- Keep a casework tracker showing each case's stage, key dates, deadlines and next actions.
- Ensure complex case records are maintained and updated on the HR information system, in line with UK GDPR and our retention schedule.

Staff feedback forum

- Create and lead a regular staff feedback forum, gathering views and themes from colleagues.
- Report forum themes to the SMT, track the actions agreed and feed back to staff on what has changed.

HR administration

- Support contract changes, probation reviews, flexible working requests and other changes to terms as required.
- Monitor sickness absence, annual leave and other leave, and flag triggers to managers.

Policies and compliance

- Contribute HR-related policies and process review/development
- Identify when HR policies need reviewing as a result of legal changes or actions agreed at SMT or based on directives from National CitA, commission advice from the external HR support as needed, update policies and make sure staff are aware of changes once implemented.

General duties

- Treat all personnel matters with strict confidentiality and sound judgement.
- Undertake other reasonable duties as required by the line manager, in line with the organisation's mission and values.

Person specification

Essential

- Commitment to Citizens Advice Lewisham's aims and principles.
- CIPD Level 3 to 5 with evidence of experience of relevant experience of complex HR and employment law casework
- Experience of conducting or supporting formal disciplinary, grievance or capability investigations, including writing reports and case correspondence.

- Good working knowledge of UK employment law and the ACAS Code of Practice, and a commitment to keeping this up to date.
- Experience of managing sickness absence, including long-term sickness cases, occupational health referrals and reasonable adjustments.
- Ability to advise managers confidently and influence them without line authority, including on difficult behaviour and culture issues.
- Excellent written communication skills, able to produce clear, accurate and fair letters, reports and case summaries.
- Ability to manage several cases at once, track deadlines and report progress clearly and concisely to senior managers.
- Sound judgement and absolute discretion when handling sensitive and confidential matters.
- Good facilitation and listening skills, with the confidence to lead group discussions.
- Excellent attention to detail and well-organised record keeping, in line with UK GDPR.
- Competent IT skills and confident using an HR information system.
- Able to work independently, and to know when to seek specialist advice.

Desirable

- Formal training in workplace investigations.
- Experience of working with external HR consultants or legal advisers.
- Experience of leading staff forums, surveys or other engagement activities.
- Experience of mediation or conflict resolution.
- Understanding of the charity and advice sector.