

Legal Advice Centre (University House)

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Housing Solicitor & Paralegal/Caseworker
SALARY:	£44,000 or £30,000 respectively (FTE) (plus 5% contribution to Pension Scheme)
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	CEO/Directors
LINE MANAGED BY:	Housing Supervisor
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	Paid and voluntary advisers who may from time to time assist the project
LAST REVIEW DATE:	July 2024

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

- Provide in-depth Housing advice and assistance including representation for clients to Specialist Quality Mark standards.
- Provide LAA Contract housing advice and representation under the legal help and legal aid schemes in particular in the areas of disrepair, possession and homelessness.

Development and Support

- To engage in project work, campaigning, training, publicity and information work and support to other agencies as required.
- To identify agencies and work closely with and provide second-tier support to generalist advice agencies in Tower Hamlets & South Hackney.
- Where necessary to develop outreach sessions and partnership relationships in the target areas.

Casework

- To provide advice, information and practical support to clients on Housing matters including challenging adverse homelessness decisions and tackling cases of severe disrepair and other related work fundable through the Legal Aid scheme.
- To progress casework through negotiations with the local authorities and other relevant government and non-government organisations.
- To prepare submissions and provide representation at court level.

- To keep up to date with current legislation, case law and policy in relation to Housing law.
- To raise income for the Centre through funded casework.

Supervisory responsibilities

- To supervise the work of staff (paid or voluntary) who may from time to time be assisting the project.

General

- To undertake work in accordance with the Solicitors' Practice Rules with regard to the rules and principles of professional conduct and the agreed practices of the Centre.
- To work with professional supervision from the Housing Supervisor and with accountability to the CEO/Directors.
- To attend staff meetings convened by the CEO and/or Directors. Staff are also encouraged to attend meetings of the Trustees.
- To observe the Centre's Data Protection Policy at all times.
- To undertake all duties within the letter and the spirit of the Centre's Equal Opportunities Policy at all times.
- To assist in cover arrangements during the absence of other members of staff or at times of pressure.
- To undertake any other duties as may be reasonably required by the Centre.

Person Specification – Housing Solicitor/ Caseworker/Paralegal	
Eligibility (Essential)	<p>A qualified solicitor (England & Wales) with a current practicing certificate with at least 1-year PQE OR an experienced housing caseworker/paralegal.</p> <p>Ability to run case files in accordance with the Specialist Quality Mark.</p> <p>Recent experience of providing LAA Contract housing advice and representation under the legal help and legal aid schemes.</p>
Skills	<p>Highly developed sense of legal professionalism and a commitment to access to justice with excellent client care skills</p> <p>Effective written and verbal communication skills appropriate to a client facing role in a funded-led environment.</p> <p>Ability to communicate effectively with project partners and other key stakeholders</p> <p>Be able to prioritise workloads and work to tight deadlines</p> <p>Strong IT skills, specifically Microsoft Office, Skype</p> <p>Ability to produce and assist in delivering training courses</p>
Knowledge and Understanding	<p>Awareness of current social welfare issues, policies and procedures</p> <p>Keen interest and knowledge of diversity and equal opportunities procedures in recruitment and service provision</p> <p>Understand the issues and requirements of working within a small multi-disciplined team</p> <p>Knowledge of Tower Hamlets and other neighbouring boroughs advice and other frontline services</p> <p>Desire to help develop the Centre by being flexible and willing to undertake project management and development</p>
Personal Attributes	<p>Efficient, professional and friendly service to clients and colleagues</p> <p>Commitment to access to justice</p> <p>Dedication to equality and diversity</p> <p>Demonstrable empathy with our user group</p>