

Job Description

Job Title:	Finance and Operations Manager
Service:	Coram Children's Legal Centre
Reporting to:	Managing Director of Legal Practice and Children's Rights
Salary Range:	£38,000 - £45,000
Work Pattern:	Full-time (although part-time 4 days per week will be considered)
Contract Type	Permanent

Coram is the UK's oldest children's charity founded by Thomas Coram in London helping vulnerable children and young people since 1739. Today, the Coram group helps more than one million children, young people, families and professionals every year by providing access to the skills and opportunities they need to thrive.

Part of the Coram group, Coram Children's Legal Centre (CCLC) is the UK's specialist centre for children's rights in education, immigration, community care and family law, and provides significant international legal systems consultancy. The centre is located on the Coram Campus in central London with a base in Colchester. We champion access to justice through information and advice, legal practice and representation, policy and strategic litigation. Our Legal Practice Unit (LPU) provides advice and representation primarily under legal aid contract. Our Migrant Children's Project (MCP) promotes the rights of refugee and migrant children, young people and families through the delivery of advice, practice change through training and capacity building to professionals and systems change through research, policy and advocacy. We use our broad and significant experience and expertise to promote and protect the rights of children in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Purpose of the role:

This role will provide financial and operational leadership and management for CCLC particularly focussed on the Legal Practice Unit and the Migrant Children's Project but with support for the Child Law Advice Service and Coram International where required. Managing a small finance team, the role will hold primary responsibility for core financial functions within CCLC including legal aid billing and management and tracking of grant and other charitable funding. Through systematic and efficient financial management, the post holder will play a pivotal role in CCLC's financial sustainability. The role will also oversee the smooth running of the London and Colchester offices through line management of operations and administrative staff. The role will act as a key point of contact with Coram's central finance team and a range of internal and external stakeholders on financial matters.

Main duties & Responsibilities

Legal Aid Billing and Financial Management

- To systematically manage, oversee and track all elements of Legal Aid billing including reporting on a monthly basis to the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), the submission of uploads and escape fee claims, completion of relevant payments on account and the reconciliation of variable monthly payment income from LAA. To ensure cash flow is prioritised through legal aid billing.
- Working with the Managing Director of Legal Practice and team heads, to develop overall and project specific budgets and to have oversight of the management accounts.

- To effectively manage and oversee grant-funded income: ensuring all payments are made and received on time, monitoring expenditure including salaries against grants and delivering financial information for grant reporting.
- To oversee and coordinate inter partes billing including the organisation of files and where required preparation of instructions for costs drafts people, monitoring progress, preparation of matters billed for assessment at court and securing relevant payments from the LAA and other party and CCMS processing.
- Where appropriate, liaising and negotiating with third parties, debtors, counsel, experts and local authorities with regard to billing.
- To develop and maintain knowledge of Legal Aid contractual and billing requirements, disseminate updates to fee earners and to act as a key point of contact and liaison with the Legal Aid Agency.
- To oversee all invoicing and disbursements processes conducted by the finance team.
- Ensure compliance with SRA accountants' rules and lead on the annual SRA audit.
- To manage and maintain oversight of the case management system and filing systems and take key decisions on development and processes supported by the operations officer.
- To monitor and track credit control matters, create invoices on our accounting system and proactively chase if necessary.
- To prepare bank reconciliations on the relevant organisational and client bank accounts and reconcile the interbank accounts between accounting systems and our case management package.
- Ensure all VAT accounts are reconciled and VAT returns for the charity are completed and submitted to Coram Finance team promptly.
- To assist Coram Finance and ensure monthly PAYE&NI Payments are made to HMRC on time.

Line Management:

- To lead the finance and operations team and maintain oversight of recruitment, induction, line management and support for staff including accounts assistants, operations officers, administrators, interns, apprentices and administration volunteers. Currently direct line management includes the billing and accounts officers and operations officer who in turn line manages the London administrator.

Office and Operations Management:

- To maintain ultimate responsibility for general office matters carried out by support staff in the London and Colchester offices including equipment and purchasing of goods and services to ensure running of the offices.
- To maintain oversight and responsibility of the administrative and casework support functions delegated to the operations officer to ensure smooth running of our services and a high quality of client care.
- To maintain general oversight of IT systems and responsibility for budget, delegated to the operations officer and with support from Coram's central IT team.
- To support the Managing Director and heads of teams to ensure the delivery of quality services in compliance with legal, regulatory and contractual requirements as well as CCLC and Coram group wide policies where appropriate delegated to the operations officer.
- To maintain oversight and line manage the operations officer in the delivery of HR support functions including in recruitment, inductions, training and staff departures.

Other duties:

- To occasionally provide cover for general office administration tasks when required (telephones, Post etc)
- To recognise and challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice in the workplace.
- To treat everyone with respect, dignity and fairness and to acknowledge and celebrate diversity.
- To maintain an awareness of your own and others' health and safety and comply with Coram Group Health and Safety policy and procedures.
- To maintain confidentiality of information; it will be necessary to comply with all requirements related to the Data Protection Act/ General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)