

Job Title: Public Law Paralegal

Reports to: Public Law Team Head

Location: Birmingham (regular travel to Coventry)

Salary: £23,614

Hours: 37 hours

Purpose:

Central England Law Centre operates a busy office in Coventry and Birmingham where we provide support to clients seeking support for legal issues ranging from immigration and housing through to employment and health and social care.

The Public Law team at Central England Law Centre (CELC) provides legal advice and representation to clients across the Coventry and Birmingham area under a Legal Aid contract.

The Public Law paralegal will play an essential and pivotal part in ensuring the smooth running of the day-to-day work within the team. They will be required to provide administrative and casework support to their colleagues within the team, ensuring the needs of clients are put first and foremost in the work they do.

This is a fantastic opportunity to play an essential role in a friendly organisation that is trying to make a difference to the lives of those people in our communities that are most vulnerable.

The successful candidate will be to a basic DBS check.

Responsibilities

Working alongside other members of the Law Centre, the Public Law paralegal will:

- Provide an excellent front-line service to clients visiting the law centre
- Assess client enquiries using sensitive listening and questioning skills allowing individuals to fully explain their issues
- Identify and summaries key information about client issues including time limits, key dates and any requirements for urgent advice or action
- Assess and agree the appropriate level of service, taking into consideration the client's ability to take the next step themselves, the complexity of the issue and the organisation's resources

- Refer clients internally, informing them of what to expect and making all necessary arrangements
- Signpost clients to external organisations where appropriate
- Assess eligibility for legal aid where available
- Maintain detailed case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation
- Adopt a flexible, responsive and problem-solving approach to working with clients
- Undertake legal research
- Direct incoming post to team members
- Maintain the Law Centre reception enquiries database
- Maintain files in accordance with the standards as set by Central England Law Centre and other relevant regulatory requirements

General

- 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 and CELC away days as required
- Work with other staff to ensure that the office is run smoothly and efficiently, covering the work of others where required
- Any other task reasonably required within the context of this post

Essential

- A demonstrable commitment to social justice
- A non-judgemental attitude
- Ability to work sympathetically and effectively with a wide range of clients
- An understanding of the importance of confidentiality
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to organise and prioritise workload, ensuring excellent service to your team and clients at all times
- Ability to get on with people, be polite under pressure and to work co-operatively as part of a team
- Ability to be adaptable, self-motivated and work independently
- Detail focused with numeric ability to complete legal aid and costing forms
- Willing and able to learn quickly and develop new skills
- Experience of using Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook

Desirable

- Experience of working with the public and in a busy and demanding environment
- Experience of working with people who experienced disadvantage and/or trauma
- Experience of using case management systems
- A commitment to continuous professional development, including a willingness to develop knowledge and skills in advice topics.
- Ability to research, analyse and interpret complex information and produce and present clear reports verbally and in writing
- Knowledge of the work of Central England Law Centre
- Ability to foresee and solve problems – before and after they occur

To apply for the post you will need to provide

- A completed Public Law Paralegal 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 will allow you to 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 would like to use the law and community participation to bring about positive change in your community. If possible, please relate your answer to your experience to date
- A completed equality and diversity form (section 3 and 4 of the Billing Paralegal form)

Please email your completed application to recruitment@centralenglandlc.org.uk by **1pm on 7th August 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 12th or 19th August 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.