

HACKNEY COMMUNITYLAW CENTRE

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Housing Solicitor (Full time)
SALARY:	£38,000 - £45,000 Negotiable subject to experience
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Board of Directors & Manager
LINE MANAGED BY:	Manager

Purpose

- To undertake fee earning work
- To make a positive contribution to the work of the Department and to the Law Centre

Key responsibilities

The fee earner is responsible to the Housing Supervisors in the team, and to the Law Centre as a whole, for the effective and efficient conduct of cases on behalf of clients in accordance with the overall policies and objectives of the organisation.

For fee earning and case management purposes, the fee earner is responsible to the housing supervisors and the Manager/COLP.

The post primarily involves the following:-

- Dealing effectively and efficiently with enquiries from prospective new clients.
- Accepting instructions from new clients and advising them on costs and funding and the Law Centre's terms of business and confirming that advice in writing in accordance with practice requirements of the Legal Aid Agency/Solicitors Regulation Authority.
- Maintain effective and professional contact with all other parties involved in the case and maintain all necessary correspondence.
- Undertake all necessary preparation of the case or matter.
- Maintain a full and orderly file with comprehensive attendance notes of all meetings, attendances and telephone calls.
- Use fully and record all chargeable and non chargeable time on the Law Centre's time recording system.
- At conclusion of any case, provide all relevant advice to the client and deal with the proper file closing arrangements and storage.
- Comply with the Solicitors Regulation Authority's and Lexcel standards of professional conduct and ethics and, in particular, with the strict requirement of confidentiality of client's affairs, at all times.
- Maintain such financial records and financial information as may be required by the Solicitors Regulation Authority or the Law Centre, including providing calculations of work in progress from time to time;
- Adhere so far as possible to annual billing and performance targets (which would be calculated after consultation with the fee earner) and with performance measures.

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- Become familiar with and observe the internal requirements of the Law Centre for file opening and closure, accounting procedures, and maintenance of all necessary records and other administrative requirements.
- Work effectively and efficiently with the non fee earning staff.
- Become familiar with and make the most effective use of the Law Centre's equipment.
- Attend meetings within the Department or the Law Centre to review case work or for the purposes of supervision.
- Attend training internally and externally as agreed with the housing supervisors and maintain a record of all training undertaken and CPD points.
- To complete and maintain as necessary any professional documentation or records (such as a Practising Certificate) as the Solicitors Regulation Authority or any other professional body may require.
- In privately funded cases obtain payments on account of costs at all relevant stages and keep client advised of costs throughout the course of the case. Delivery of regular bills to the client.
- Practice development responsibilities for the department and your own practise, including contributing to the department's overall practice development strategy and its implementation during the year.
- taking all necessary steps to obtain public funding (and/or Legal Help cover) for the client; or subject to approval, enter into a conditional fee agreement with the client;
- At all times, having strict regard to any constraint or requirement of the LAA Public Funding scheme;
- Liaison within the Law Centre with other fee earners engaged in similar and / or related cases matters or clients with a view both to maximising efficiency and avoiding conflicts of interest;
- It would also be expected that the new fee earner will be actively involved in marketing to help ensure that sufficient work is generated within the department to maintain a larger team.

Conditions of employment - main terms

The postholder will be based at the Law Centre but you must be prepared to be transferred to another office should the need arise. We work on a hybrid basis, with all home working arrangements made subject to case work and needs of the organisation.

This is a full-time post (35 hours a week). Holiday entitlement will be 27 days plus public holidays.

All appointments are subject to a 6 month probation period.

Level of responsibility

The postholder will be accountable the Law Centre Manager and Senior Solicitor and will report to and be accountable to the Law Centre Board of Directors.

Level of contact

The postholder will be required to represent the organisation in meetings with funders and external bodies.

Responsibility for assets

The postholder will be a keyholder.

Person Specification

	Knowledge and Experience	Essential (E) or Desirable (D)	Method of Assessment
1	Qualified Solicitor	E	AF/I
2	Thorough knowledge and understanding of the law and practice relating to all areas of housing.	E	AF/I
3	Experience of working under the legal aid scheme (both Legal Help and certificated)	E	AF/I
4	Knowledge and experience of working within the LAA requirements	E	AF/I
6	Sound understanding of the SRA Professional Conduct Rules, Lexcel standards and Solicitor's Accounts Rules and ability to apply them as necessary.	E	AF/I
7	Proven experience of billing, meeting financial targets and time recording requirements systems	E	
9	An understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities issues and its relevance to legal advice.	E	AF/I
10	Experience of working with vulnerable clients.	E	AF/I
11	Excellent written communication skills	E	AF/I
12	Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.	E	AF/I
13	Ability to prioritise and work efficiently under pressure, including willingness to undertake urgent work , sometimes necessarily out of hours (judicial reviews/injunctions)	E	AF/I
14	Ability to work as part of a team.	E	AF/I
15	Advocacy experience	D	AF/I
17	Ability to speak another language relevant to our client base	D	
18	Excellent IT skills	E	AF/I