

Housing Supervisor (Legal Aid)

Thank you for your interest in working at Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre. In this job pack you will find information about:

- Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre
- The job description/person specification and the team the role is within
- Benefits of working for Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre
- Our approach to equality and diversity
- The application process

Timescale for applications:

Closing date: Thursday 23rd May at 5.00pm.

Interviews: Applications will be reviewed as they arrive, and interviews may be conducted before the closing date. Therefore, early applications are strongly encouraged.

Due to high levels of interest in our roles, we are unable to respond individually to applicants who are not invited to interview.

CV and covering letter should be sent to:

jobs@citizensadviceleeds.org.uk

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre is a local charity working for a fairer society where people are free from the effects of poverty and social injustice. We help individuals, families and communities by offering free advice and representation and challenging systemic injustice.

We have deep roots in the local community, dating back to 1939 when we first opened our doors, and have been providing advice to Leeds residents ever since. Our status as a Law Centre is more recent, having joined the Law Centres Network in 2024, but is built on our long experience in working for social justice, locally and nationally.

We're now focussed on building our legal advice team to respond to the needs of local people. Our initial focus is on Housing and Immigration advice, with ambitions to develop capacity in Discrimination, Community Care and Public Law.

Alongside our legal advice team, we have caseworkers and advisers delivering a wide range of services including:

- Benefits & Debt casework
- Advice for people experiencing mental health issues
- Energy advice (addressing fuel poverty and energy efficiency)

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre is the largest provider of free and independent advice in the city, helping 30,000 people a year through telephone, online and face-to-face services. Our friendly and diverse team consists of 80 employees and 30 volunteers, and we offer flexible and family friendly working arrangements.

We have strong partnerships with organisations in Leeds and across the region, working together to increase access to justice and strengthen the advice sector as a whole.

The role

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Job title | Housing Supervisor |
| Location | Leeds/Hybrid |
| Salary | £40,000 - £45,000 per annum, dependent on experience |
| Hours | Full Time. Some out of hours working, with time off in lieu. |
| Reports to | Specialist Services Director |

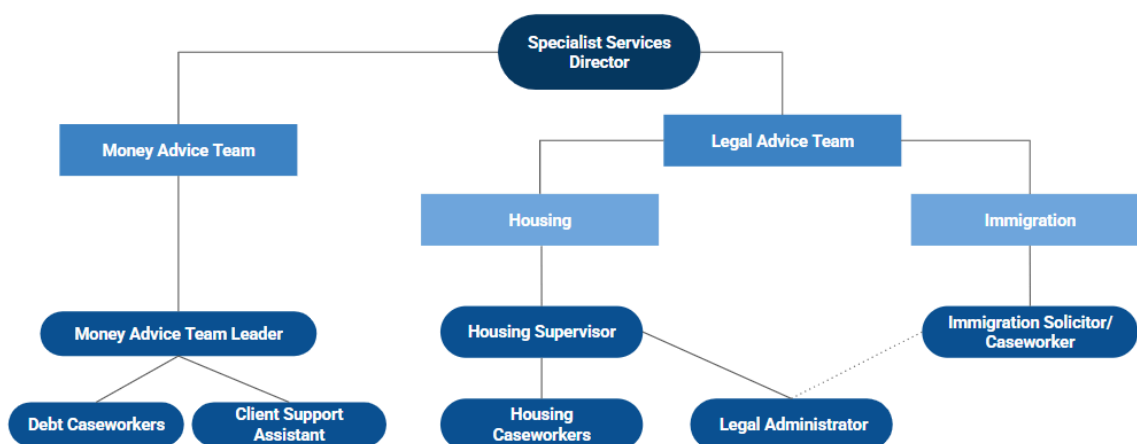
Background to the role

Leeds has been experiencing a shortage of specialist advice services for a number of years, with cuts to legal aid and other funding leading to the loss of solicitors and caseworkers offering free legal advice in social welfare law.

At Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre we are committed to addressing this shortage and it's an exciting time for our organisation as we launch our new combined Citizens Advice & Law Centre status to the public in 2025. We are seeking an experienced Housing Solicitor or CILEx who holds Legal Aid supervisor status, or is able to quickly achieve this, to continue building our housing team, including training and developing caseworkers, and ensuring that the service operates to required standards.

The legal advice team is part of the Specialist Services department which includes solicitors, specialist caseworkers, support workers and administrative support. The department is funded through a mix of funding from Leeds City Council, Legal Aid and the Money and Pensions Service.

As Housing Supervisor, you will carry your own caseload, ensuring that you demonstrate competence to deliver advice to a high standard (LCALC currently holds Specialist Quality Mark) and have experience in providing a full range of housing advice, representation and advocacy. You will support the Specialist Services Director and other colleagues to shape the legal service, leading and managing a small team. You will have a good understanding of legal aid contracts, including accurate and timely billing of cases.. This role is subject to an Enhanced DBS check.



Job description

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Legal advice services & line management

- 1.1. Provide housing advice and casework. Maintain an active caseload sufficient to retain LAA supervisor status, representing and advocating for clients at court and tribunal hearings where required.
- 1.2. Manage, supervise and develop the housing team to deliver an effective and efficient housing advice service.
- 1.3. Ensure compliance with relevant professional and quality standards e.g. Specialist Quality Mark (SQM), Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA), Legal Aid Agency (LAA), Chartered Institute for Legal Executives (CILEX), etc.
- 1.4. Ensure that work in progress and billing targets are met.
- 1.5. Ensure that case recording is carried out to required standards and accurate records of work and time are maintained for the housing team.
- 1.6. Oversee administrative functions to ensure the smooth running of the housing service.
- 1.7. Work with other colleagues across the service to deliver holistic advice to clients covering a range of social welfare law subjects, deliver information briefings and training on housing issues to other teams where required.
- 1.8. Hold regular team meetings and maintain high standards of conduct in the housing team.
- 1.9. Monitor individual and team performance to ensure KPIs are achieved and to address underperformance where necessary.
- 1.10. Contribute to internal and external monitoring reports as required.
- 1.11. Maintain professional standards and competencies and demonstrate these in all dealings with clients, colleagues and stakeholders.
- 1.12. Support the Specialist Services Director in securing and retaining funding and contracts, maintaining quality standards, and achieving other relevant accreditation.
- 1.13. Assist in maintaining a quality of advice manual that ensures compliance with SQM and other relevant quality standards.

2. General responsibilities

- 2.1. Manage staff and other resources to ensure the delivery of advice services in accordance with organisation plans and the requirements of service contracts and agreements.
- 2.2. Ensure that information assurance procedures are adhered to in the housing team.
- 2.3. Attend and contribute to organisational meetings as required.
- 2.4. Adhere to all the organisation's policies and procedures, including Health & Safety, Confidentiality and Equality & Diversity Policies, and ensure they are implemented in the legal advice team.
- 2.5. Foster good relations with advice agencies and other organisations and individuals with the aim of promoting effective partnership working to meet local advice needs.
- 2.6. Represent Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre at relevant external meetings and events.
- 2.7. Identify own training and development needs and agree with the Specialist Services Director on appropriate training and development activities to be undertaken.
- 2.8. Maintain an awareness of legislative developments, social trends and local issues likely to impact on advice needs and future service development, and identify ways to address them.

2.9. Promote the aims, policies and membership standards of the Citizens Advice service and Law Centres Network.

2.10. Present a professional appearance, help maintain an orderly working environment and act at all times to uphold the good reputation of Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre.

This job description cannot cover every issue or task that may arise and the post-holder will be expected to carry out other duties from time to time which are broadly consistent with those in this document. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

Person Specification

| Essential criteria | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1 | Qualified Solicitor or CILEx with 3 years' PQE in Housing law. Meets the supervisor standards for the Legal Aid Agency or quickly able to achieve this. |
| 2 | Experience of working under a legal aid contract and supervising the work of other solicitors/caseworkers. |
| 3 | Experience of managing, supervising, developing and coaching others, including appraisal and performance management. |
| 4 | Good understanding of legal aid contract requirements, and the ability to manage cases effectively and submit accurate bills in a timely manner. |
| 5 | Evidence of the ability to prioritise your work and the work of others, meet competing deadlines and manage workload in a demanding environment. |
| 6 | Proven ability and willingness to meet appropriate targets, including time recording, billing and financial targets, set by funders and the organisation. |
| 7 | Excellent written and verbal communication skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people. |
| 8 | Evidence of a commitment to challenging discrimination and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. |
| 9 | Ability to analyse and interpret complex information and excellent attention to detail. |
| 10 | Ability to work independently and build successful relationships with staff, volunteers and external stakeholders and networks. |
| 11 | Confident in using IT to carry out day to day duties (the Legal Advice Team uses Google Workspace and AdvicePro). |
| 12 | In good professional standing (e.g. SRA, CILEX, etc) and evidence of meeting high standards and competencies. |
| 13 | Evidence of continuous professional development and learning relevant to this post. |
| 14 | Enhanced DBS check prior to start date will be required for this post and failure to voluntarily disclose a criminal record will result in the withdrawal of the offer. |
| 15 | Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service and Law Centres Network. |

Benefits of working for Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre offers a competitive remuneration package with additional benefits that support a positive work-life balance:

- Flexible and hybrid working policies.
- Defined contribution pension scheme
- Employee assistance programme with access to 24/7 telephone support
- Annual leave entitlement starting at 25 days p.a. (plus bank holidays) and increasing with long service
- We are a Disability Confident Employer and a Mindful Employer
- Located in the city centre, directly opposite the Combined Courts centre, with good transport links

Our commitment to equality and diversity

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive culture for our employees, volunteers, service users and other stakeholders.

We recognise the positive value of diversity, promoting equality and fairness, and challenging discrimination. We value the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates practicable, ensuring that employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit.

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre is a Disability Confident Employer and a Mindful Employer and we are committed to showing a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with disabilities or mental health issues and our employee policies and benefits support that commitment.

