**Vacancy Information Pack**

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| Job Title | **Family Solicitor**  |
| Full time - Permanent  |
| Salary**Competitive** | Responsible to**Senior Solicitor**  |

Deadline for applications: 1st July 2022 at 5pm

Interviews will be arranged shortly after the closing date to suit candidates’ availability.

**To start asap**

**Information for candidates**

Please send your completed application form by email to:

**recruitment@nelawcentre.co.uk**

Please take care to read the full application pack and to answer the questions carefully. Only candidates who can demonstrate and evidence their commitment to social welfare law will be considered for this role.

This post involves working with vulnerable adults and requires an enhanced DBS check. You may also be subject to further vetting. References are required that are satisfactory to us and will be considered prior to confirming any appointment.

**Job Description**

**Main Purpose of Job:**

North East Law Centre (NELC) is urgently looking to recruit an experienced Family Solicitor to support our Family team. The team has a varied portfolio of work with some unique and exciting projects, and the ideal candidate will take a lead role in increasing access to justice in family law matters. We are committed to widening the provision of specialist Family law advice in the North East and the successful candidate will be an experienced practitioner who is able to support our strategic aim of increasing access to justice. The suitable candidate will have experience of general family law supporting people on low income to include victims of domestic abuse, litigants in person, injunctions, private children matters, and drafting of agreements.

A successful candidate must be a qualified solicitor or a chartered legal executive with excellent verbal, drafting and interpersonal skills; high standard of client care; good organisational skills; ability to produce consistently high quality work as he/she will be expected to manage their own caseload.

The candidate will be required to support all our funded projects that provide free advice sessions to people on low income. They will also be required to provide training and workshops, as well as second tier advice to partner organisations and professional bodies.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

* Deal with new enquirers who contact the Law Centre by telephone or by dropping in without an appointment or in outreach in the community). S/he will speak to them, assess their needs for Family advice and/or assistance, and refer them appropriately either to Law Centre projects or to another more appropriate source of help.
* Ensure all relevant work undertaken is of a high standard.
* Develop and maintain a register of contacts and organisations to which clients can be referred as appropriate.
* Run a caseload of clients, dealing with Family law queries under supervision from the senior solicitor.
* Build links with other organisations working with clients or potential clients of the Law Centre.
* Maintain accurate records of clients and referrals and signposting to enable the Director to monitor and evaluate the services provided.
* Work closely with other advisers and solicitors
* Data entry, maintenance and retrieval of computerised information for cases, to include opening and closing case files.
* Provide support for legal surgeries and workshops as required.
* Assist with the preparation of marketing materials, including leaflets, annual report, website and other publications.
* Deal with reporting IT queries to IT support and be liaison where required.
* Work alongside law centre volunteers offering support and guidance where required.
* Maintain accurate records and filing systems in accordance with agreed procedures.
* Assist with day to day petty cash transactions.
* Support preparation for any external events or training, including room booking and set up, compiling materials, dealing with bookings.
* Contribute to Quality Assurance procedures and maintain a high level of confidentiality.

Other

* To provide excellent customer service at all times, to staff and clients.
* To attend team meetings and undertake tasks allocated at such meetings.
* To have regard at all times to the planning and execution of duties outlined in the Law Centre’s Equal Opportunities Policy.
* To attend regular supervision meetings with your supervising solicitor to discuss job performance and personal career development and to prepare suitably for these meetings.
* In addition to the tasks and duties listed in the job description, to undertake such duties as may be identified from time to time and which are generally compatible with the functions for the post.

**NOTE:** The above duties are not an exhaustive list. In consultation with the appointee, it may be subject to variations made by the management to reflect or anticipate changes in or to the role.

**Person Specification**

We are looking for a Solicitor with genuine compassion towards vulnerable clients, a passion for access to justice and an approachable and unflappable manner. You should be able to clearly demonstrate your interest in Family law and supporting the work of the Centre.

### Experience

1. Case involvement over 3 years ***(essential)***
2. Extensive experience of representing clients in court *(****essential****)*
3. Experience of supervising others *(****desirable****)*
4. Experience of working in partnership with other organisations, and making presentations to small and large groups *(****essential****)*
5. Hold current membership of the Law Society Family Panel Accreditation Scheme/Current Resolution Specialist Accreditation Scheme (**desirable)**

### Skills/Knowledge

1. Extensive knowledge of legislative framework relating to family law
2. Ability to identify social policy issues arising from casework
3. Excellent client care skills
4. Knowledge of case management software and word processing, preferably with Microsoft Word (desirable)
5. Self motivated, able to work independently and on own initiative
6. Time management skills, able to organise own workload and understand the importance of meeting deadlines
7. Excellent negotiating skills

### Personal Attributes

1. Ability to work as part of a team.
2. Able to form and maintain constructive relationships with organisations outside the Law centre
3. Commitment to and understanding of the aims and objectives of the Law Centre.
4. Good oral and written communication skills.
5. Understanding of the importance of confidentiality in a Law Centre.
6. Commitment to equal opportunities.
7. Non-judgemental attitude

Candidates should also have:

* Commitment to delivering a high standard of customer service.
* Commitment to the Law Centre’s policies and to work within the Equal Opportunities Policy.
* Ability to work within the policies and guidelines as decided by the Board of trustees, and the ability to promote and defend the aims, interests and policies of the Law Centre within other organisations and the community.
* Willingness to work occasional evenings and weekends.

**Conditions of Employment**

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| **1. Location** | The post is based at North East Law Centre, MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8XS but work will be required across the Northumberland and Tyne and Wear for which public transport travel costs will be reimbursed.We are currently trialing hybrid working and would welcome applicants from outside of the North East.  |
| **2. Hours** | The post is funded for 37 hours per week and is permanent. Office hours are 9:00 am - 5.00 pm Monday to Friday with an agreed lunch hour.  |
| **3. Holidays** | The holiday entitlement is 25 days per year plus bank holidays  |
|  |  |
| **4. Maternity /** **Paternity** | Details of maternity/paternity leave and other family friendly policies are available on request. |
| **5. Sick Pay** | Details of sick pay arrangements are available on request. |
| **6. Expenses** | Travel expenses are paid for necessary work-related journeys.  |
| **7. Notice** | Statutory notice periods apply. |

**About North East Law Centre**

North East Law Centre was established in 1978 as an independent legal resource for local individuals and communities. At present, our main areas of specialism are immigration, asylum, Family, Welfare Benefits, Education, Discrimination and Employment law.

The Law Centre’s funding comes from a range of sources including grants from the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Ministry of Justice, the Legal Aid Agency, and from charitable trusts and foundations.

The Law Centre was established to promote access to legal justice and promote social justice and serve the needs of oppressed groups and those whose access to the legal system is restricted. We seek to continue to achieve this by employing a variety of methods of work, including individual casework, advice work and training.

The Law Centre’s objective is to complement the traditional legal system and, within its priority areas of work (mainly social welfare law), concentrate on those areas that are not significantly covered by local advice agencies or private solicitors.

The priority areas for the Law Centre reflect the needs of our beneficiaries, and our remit to work against discrimination and increase access to justice. These priorities are set by the Board of Trustees and are regularly reviewed. Staff members take up cases and carry out other work in accordance with the priorities.

The Law Centre has a commitment to directing staff time to activities such as supporting other advice agencies (whether by training or back-up work for users); to provide information and publicity about rights in an accessible form; working with community groups and taking up legal issues that have an effect on members of those groups; working closely with other local advice agencies, statutory bodies, campaigning groups etc.

If you have any questions or require clarification on any aspect of the information provided please address your query to Michael Fawole via email: recruitment@nelawcentre.co.uk

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| **NORTH EAST LAW CENTRE** |

***The Law Centre is committed to promoting equal opportunities***

***Information on this front page will not be seen by the recruitment panel when short listing***

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|  | **APPLICATION FORM** | **[Please use F11 Key to move between fields]** |

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| Name |       |
| Address |       |
| Tel. no |       | Mobile no |       |
| Email |  |
| How did you find out about this post? |       |

**Referees**

***Please provide the name, address and telephone number of two referees, one of whom should be your current or most recent employer, if possible. Please state the capacity in which you are known by each referee. References from family and friends and open references are not acceptable. Please let us know if you do not want us to contact your current employer.***

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| **Referee 1:** |
| Name |       |
| Address |       |
| Tel. No. |       | Email: |  |
| Relationship to you |       |
| **Referee 2:** |
| Name |       |
| Address |       |
| Tel. No. |       | Email: |  |
| Relationship to you |       |
| **Period of notice:** If successful how much notice do you need to give in your current post? |       |
| If you were employed by North East Law Centre, would you be employed/self-employed in any other capacity? |       |
| If yes, please give details |       |
| Please give details of any spent or unspent convictions (this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act due to the nature of the work involved) |       |
| If yes, please give details |       |

***Please note: Canvassing of members of the Law Centre Board of Trustees either directly or indirectly for the appointment is prohibited and shall, if the appointing committee so declare, disqualify the candidate for the appointment. The withholding, falsification or omitting of relevant information by a successful candidate are grounds for disciplinary action being taken by the Law Centre Board of Trustees.***

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the particulars given on this form are correct and complete.

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| Signature |       | Date |       |

**Employment History**

***Please refer to the background information and job description carefully. If you need more space please use the reverse of the pages or additional sheets. Please note that assessment of candidates will be made on the basis of answers to the questions on the application form, and no account will be taken of CV’s.***

**Please list below your work over the last 5 years (paid and unpaid):**

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| **Job 1: paid/unpaid** |
| From |       | To |       | Job title |       |
| Name & address of employer |       |
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| Reason for leaving |       |
| Description of duties |       |
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| **Job 2: paid/unpaid** |
| From |       | To |       | Job title |       |
| Name & address of employer |       |
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| Reason for leaving |       |
| Description of duties |       |
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| **Job 3: paid/unpaid** |
| From |       | To |       | Job title |       |
| Name & address of employer |       |
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| Reason for leaving |       |
| Description of duties |       |
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**Training history**

**Please give details of any relevant training you have undertaken, including any relevant short courses**

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| **Training** | **Dates** |
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**Further/Higher Education & Qualifications**

**Please list any relevant academic, professional or vocational qualification**

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| **Course**  | **Qualification** | **Date** |
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**Supplementary information**

*Please provide information about your skills, knowledge, experience and expertise, which demonstrates clearly how you meet the requirements of the person specification for this post giving casework examples where possible. You may continue on additional sheets if necessary.*