Our ref: PM

 Your ref:

 Date October 23

Dear Applicant

**Re Head of Employment and Discrimination**

Thank you for your interest in this post to work in our Croydon office and remotely

I am pleased to enclose:

1. Job Description and Person Specification for Head of Employment and Discrimination
2. Guidelines for Applicants
3. Organisation Summary

You can download the application form from our website.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 27 November 23. Applications should be sent by email to recruitment@swllc.org.

Yours faithfully

**Patrick Marples CEO**

South West London Law Centres

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES

***Legal Action for Local Communities***

**JOB ADVERT – Discrimination and Employment Solicitor/Caseworker**

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC), one of the largest and most progressive Law Centres in the country, is seeking a highly motivated and experienced employment and discrimination solicitor/caseworker to make full use of our discrimination legal aid contract and to develop our employment team so that we can support more community members with legal advice in relation to their employment issues.

SWLLC won the highly prodigious Legal Aid Firm/Not for Profit of the year 2020 at the LALY Awards.

We can offer flexible working and generous benefits and will consider part time applications

**POST:** Discrimination and EmploymentSolicitor/Caseworker

**Salary:** Up to £40,000 according to experience. We would also consider an exceptional candidate with less experience but with a lower starting salary

**Term:** Permanent

**Reports to:** Head of Legal Practice,

Functional links SWLLC Caseworker/Volunteers within the employment team, Senior Management Team, Administrators and Receptionists.

**Based at:** Croydon with potential outreach and delivery at other locations

The closing date for receipt of applications is 20 November at 9am Applications should be sent by email to recruitment@swllc.org.

**SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**

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**ORGANISATION SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POST**

We are looking to recruit a highly-motivated and experienced employment and discrimination solicitor/caseworker who wants to help us manage the team and develop our legal aid contract in discrimination law We will consider part time applications

SWLLC is a community based legal practice and a registered charity. Our history dates back to 1974 when the first Law Centres in Wandsworth were created. We became SWLLC in 2004 through the merger of a number of Law Centres in South West London. The law centre won the highly prodigious Legal Aid Firm/Not for Profit of the year 2020 at the LALY Awards.

This is new post created with the aim of developing and expanding our capacity to undertake employment casework. We have one other caseworker as well as a team of volunteers, some of whom are very experienced including a retired KC and interns providing administrative and paralegal support. Our work is currently funded through legal aid, grant funding and charging. The post holder will continue to build up our legal aid discrimination contract and other methods of charging.

We have developed a partnership with BPP. Employment Law for London is a service to help community members access free legal advice about employment, by offering free 30 minutes employment. There will be opportunities to participate in this project and to develop pro bono work alongside legal aid and other methods of charging.

We want the post holder to manage this small team with a view to further growing the team. We are looking for the postholder to build up sufficient work in progress so that this post will generate £35,000 per annum in billing and legal aid income taking into account management responsibilities, to continue to make the role self-financing.

SWLLC works across six South West London boroughs (Croydon, Merton, Kingston, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth) helping people to understand and enforce their legal rights.  In doing so, we address the root causes of social injustice – poverty, family breakdown, unemployment and exploitation. SWLLC provides full legal casework, representation and advice in the following areas of social welfare law – Community Care,Debt, **Employment**, Housing, Immigration & Asylum and in a limited way in Welfare Rights. We represent clients in all courts and tribunals. We also provide the housing duty solicitor schemesat Kingston and County Court giving emergency representation in possession hearings for rented and owned homes and at the warrant stage for evictions.

SWLLC delivers an online pro bono clinics service providing initial advice on legal problems There are 16 firms involved with the clinics as well as individual solicitors.

Last year SWLLC worked with and assisted over 6,778 people, with 631 being dealt with by our employment and discrimination pro bono, advice and casework services.

SWLLC’s Croydon Office is a short walk from either East or West Croydon stations.

**SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**

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**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POST: Head of Employment and Discrimination**

**Salary:** Up to £40,000 according to experience.

**Term:** Permanent

**Functional Links** Other members of the Employment and Discrimination Team, Senior Management Team, Administrators and Receptionists, Employment Interns, Partners.

**Reports to:** Head of Legal Practice

**Based at:** Croydon with potential outreach and delivery at other locations

**Key Tasks**

1. To manage and develop the work of the Employment and Discrimination Team
2. To develop and undertake Discrimination and Employment caseload under a legal aid contract for eligible clients.
3. To develop and undertake casework under Damages Based Agreements and other charging methods.
4. The post-holder will advise and represent clients who live or work in South West London on employment and in all areas of discrimination work focusing on employment law taking cases as necessary to all levels tribunals and courts
5. To be or work towards being a LAA category discrimination supervisor. The post-holder will ensure maintenance of standards in accordance with Lexcel accreditation.
6. To work with the Senior Management Team to develop and report on projects associated with our employment and discrimination work.
7. To manage our involvement in Employment Law for London, including liaising with partners and considering the development and expansion of the project.

**Duties & Responsibilities**

1. To ensure that all advice, assistance and representation complies with the requirements of our Lexcel quality mark and where publicly funded complies with the requirements of the Legal Aid Agency where funded by them
2. To ensure all casework is recorded within our Clio case management system and prompt billing and payment of work undertaken. The post holder will be expected to meet billing and time recording targets which are set in accordance to the overall requirements of the Law Centre’s annual budget and our contracts. This would include developing new work in progress of £35,000 (taking account management time – full target £50,0000) per annum from which can be billed
3. To ensure that the terms of all Law Centre funders are kept to in relation to advice & casework including providing reports as required. To report on the work of the Law Centre to the management committee as required.
4. To participate in team meetings and to carry out file reviews in accordance with Lexcel requirements.
5. To participate in staff meetings from time to time.
6. To be responsible for your own word processing, filing and case recording within SOS case management system.
7. To advise and provide training and talks to Law Centre staff and volunteers and to front line advice agency staff within the Law Centre’s catchment area as necessary
8. To help develop relationships and work arrangements with local partners to develop referrals
9. To attend meetings of coordinating bodies as required.
10. To share the work of maintaining everyday necessities.
11. To provide cover for colleagues during absences.

**Advice & Casework**

1. To provide discrimination advice and casework service to clients of the Law Centre. This is to include interviewing clients, advising them of their rights and responsibilities, assessing suitability and effectiveness of alternative courses of action, advising on potential challenges and legal procedures.
2. To assist other teams in the Law Centre in helping clients resolve any discrimination matters
3. To assist clients in liaising with other people and organisations to resolve their discrimination problems where possible.
4. To represent clients at Tribunals and Courts and do the necessary preparation and research.
5. To visit clients at their homes if appropriate.
6. To instruct and attend Counsel’s chambers with clients as appropriate.

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**Team Management**

1. To provide line management to the Employment and Discrimination Team, monitoring performance against targets and ensuring caseworkers under supervision comply with contractual requirements, our Lexcel accreditation, and SWLLC policies and procedures.
2. To supervise Employment and Discrimination Team Leaders formally at least every quarter and complete a formal appraisal annually. This includes checking files and monitoring standards of work, going through billing and time recording, ensuring that Lexcel standards are maintained
3. To monitor the assignment and allocation of new and existing casework within the Employment and Discrimination Team
4. Co-ordinate and carry out file reviews in accordance with the Lexcel Quality Manual with the Employment and Discrimination Team to ensure agreed quality standards are maintained.
5. To follow the underperformance procedure for any Employment and Discrimination Team member not meeting the performance targets within the guidelines set by the CEO.
6. To identify for the team appropriate professional development objectives and training or other routes to meet those objectives
7. To set up and maintain team meetings on a quarterly basis to update the team on operational issues, trends, procedure and practice, and training. To produce minutes of these meetings and to provide the Head of Legal Practice and CEO with a copy.

**Professional Development**

1. To attend courses on new legislation, specialist skills and the use of information technology
2. To keep up to date with the changes in relevant legislation.
3. To read the relevant law journals
4. To discuss regularly with your Team Leader your job performance and personal career development.
5. To be appraised regularly and to engage fully in this process to further personal development and maximise your contribution to SWLLC.
6. To undertake such training as is necessary to maintain and/or achieve the standards required of a Legal Aid Agency Category Supervisor in Discrimination.

### Equal Opportunities

### To have regard at all times in the planning and execution of duties to SWLLC’s Equality and Diversity Policy.

1. Play a full role in the organisation supporting colleagues to maximise their effectiveness.
2. In addition to the tasks and duties listed in this job description to undertake such duties as may be identified and which are generally compatible with the functions of the post.

### Social Policy

1. To be alert at all times to the social policy implications of issues presented by clients.
2. To take appropriate action to influence social policy in regard to these issues

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**POST: Head of Employment and Discrimination**

**Salary:** Up to £40,000 according to experience.

**Term:** Permanent

**Functional Links:** Other members of the Employment and Discrimination Team, Senior Management Team, Administrators and Receptionists, Employment Interns, Partners.

**Reports to:** Head of Legal Practice

**Based at:** Croydon with potential outreach and delivery at other locations

**Essential Experience**

1. At least two year’s full time equivalent experience of Employment and Discrimination Law casework and representation.
2. Ability to manage a varied caseload of sufficient appropriate matters to meet the billing target currently of a minimum £35,000
3. Ability to draft appropriate documentation in all areas and procedures of Employment and Discrimination law
4. A wide range of representation experience in the tribunal with the ability to take cases through the higher courts.
5. Commitment to equal opportunities as set out in the principles and policies of South West London Law Centres
6. Experience of supervising and managing others

**Essential Skills**

1. An intelligent and highly motivated person who is accustomed to taking significant decisions and having a high level of personal accountability.
2. Ability to work independently with a proven ability to prioritise work and to meet deadlines.
3. Ability to take strategic overview and to plan for the long term.
4. Ability to liaise and work effectively in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders.
5. Excellent communication skills: you must be able to relate well to colleagues, clients and third parties, in person, in writing and on the telephone, despite the pressures of the role
6. Understanding of the problems which face diverse communities.
7. Ability to be self-servicing: you will be expected to manage most of your own typing, filing and billing and payment of cases.
8. Ability to use computer and information technology including management information systems and to be self-servicing. Must be proficient in Microsoft operating systems (Word, Excel, and Office).
9. Ability to working collaboratively within SWLLC
10. You must be very well organised in order to work well under pressure without compromising standards

**Desirable Experience and Skills**

1. At least three year’s full time equivalent experience of Discrimination and Employment Law casework and representation covering a wide range of cases including ability to meet LAA qualified category Discrimination supervisor standard.
2. Experience of working under a Legal Aid Agency Contract specification for Public Funding (Legal Aid) and Legal Help with demonstrable billing targets.
3. Experience of running cases through damage based and conditional fee agreements
4. Experience of managing a team
5. Experience of giving successful training or talks

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES

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### GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Please read these notes carefully before filling in your application form, as the decision to shortlist for interview will be based solely on the information provided on the application form.

### General Guidelines

1. Give only information, which is relevant to the post.
2. Complete all sections of the form. You will need to do this in order to be fairly compared to other candidates. All information given is treated as confidential.
3. Complete a rough draft first. This avoids mistakes and untidiness and enables you to organise and review the information you put on the form.
4. Get feedback from other people and make sure you give examples, which demonstrate your ability to do the job.
5. Complete the form in type, word processor, black ballpoint or ink.

### Selection Criteria – The Person Specification

The skills, experience and qualification described in the Person Specification are the criteria against which you will be assessed and short-listed. Make sure you have covered each section of the Person Specification in your application form.

### Employment

When completing this section include relevant part time work or work taken on a voluntary basis. Outlining your previous work experiences or other responsibilities may help you to uncover relevant skills, which are clear signs of your ability to do the job.

Further Information

In section four of the application form you should try to show how you are able to do the job. Rather than simply repeating your career history, look at the skills and experience required for the job and provide evidence that you possess them. Concentrate on the things you know and what you can do rather than on what other people in your group or workplace can do.

References

Where possible at least one of your referees should be a previous employer; either you’re present or most recent employer. If you have not previously been employed, or have not worked for some time, give the name of someone who knows you sufficiently well to confirm the information given and who can comment on your ability to do the job. (You must not provide a relative or partner’s name as a referee).

Monitoring Information

This section is included in order to monitor the effectiveness of SWLLC’s Equal Opportunities Policy, which aims to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly. All information is treated in confidence and used only for statistical monitoring.

The monitoring section of the application form is not used as part of the selection process. Consequently, if for example you have a disability, and this is an item in the person specification, do also mention it in the main part of your application form.

Finally – take a copy of the form and keep it to remind yourself of what you have said if you are called for an interview. Good Luck!