

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 national Citizens Advice service
- The Law Centres Network
- 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:

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis so we would encourage you to apply early.

Due to high levels of interest in our roles, we are unable to respond individually to applicants who are not invited to interview. If you do not hear from us within 3 weeks of your application, you should assume you are not being invited to interview on this occasion.

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 injustice. We help individuals, families and communities by:

- Empowering people to exercise their legal and human rights and;
- Campaigning for policy solutions to prevent and combat poverty and injustice

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 delivered at over 20 locations citywide. We have around 80 employees and 30 volunteers.

Our commitment to access and quality means that:

- We consistently achieve good and excellent scores in quality of advice assessments.
- We provide access to justice for people most at risk of social and financial exclusion, e.g.
 - o The majority of our clients come from areas of highest deprivation and poverty in the city;
 - o We deliver advice sessions in mental health services, GP surgeries, and provide free access to interpreters;
 - o 32% of our clients are from racially minoritised groups;
 - o 49% of our clients have a disability or long term health condition.
- We consistently demonstrate standards of excellence across all areas of governance, management, equalities and operational management.

We are one of nearly 200 local organisations who make up the Citizens Advice service, and in November 2024 we joined the Law Centres Network. Membership of both these networks helps us to serve our local community and provide a full range of advice, from simple information services through to complex casework, legal representation and advocacy.

The role

Job title	Housing Supervisor
Location	Leeds/Hybrid
Salary	£36,000 - £40,000 per annum, dependent on experience
Hours	Full Time (35 hours per week). Some out of hours working, with time off in lieu.
Reports to	Specialist Services Director

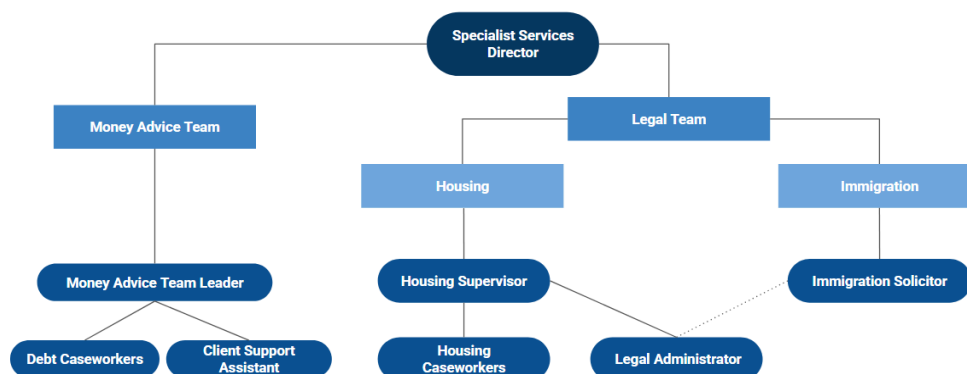
Background to the role

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 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, including an administrator. You will be passionate about social welfare law and the not for profit sector, and have a good understanding of legal aid contracts, including accurate and timely billing of cases. Experience of retaining and securing funding for housing advice would be an advantage. 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 (quality and quantity) 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 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:

- Full-time hours are 35 per week with a flexible working policy
- 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
- Incremental pay awards
- 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.



The application process

- You will find details about our vacancies and how to apply on our website www.citizensadviceleeds.org.uk on the *Working for us* page. On this page you will find:
 - Job descriptions for current vacancies
 - Guidance on how to apply
 - Diversity monitoring form
- Please email your CV and covering letter to us at jobs@citizensadviceleeds.org.uk
- You should also complete the anonymous diversity monitoring form on the *Working for us* page of our website
- If you are shortlisted for a role we will contact you to invite you to an interview. Interviews are carried out by a panel of 2-3 people and are usually face-to-face. Interviews may be carried out online if necessary.
- We may also ask you to undertake an exercise as part of the assessment process. This could include providing answers to case studies for advice roles, making a presentation for a management role, or other appropriate activity.
- Following the interview process you will be contacted to inform you if we are making an employment offer or not. This verbal offer will be followed by a written confirmation subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and completion of ID and other checks as required for the role.
- Verbal feedback will be offered to candidates who are unsuccessful at the interview but we do not provide written feedback.

How to Apply

Send a CV and covering letter to us by email. There is no requirement to send a hard copy in the post.

Your CV should include as a minimum: a full work history; details of qualifications and membership of professional bodies required for the post; how you have gained the skills and competencies set out in the person specification.

Your covering letter should explain what makes you suitable for the role and why you are interested in working for Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre.

Disability Confident Employer

As an organisation that values equality, fairness and diversity, Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre encourages applications from candidates from all backgrounds. We are a Disability Confident Employer and signatories to the Mindful Employer Charter.

We commit to invite to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum (essential) criteria for the role. To opt into this scheme, please tick the relevant box on the application form. The essential criteria for the role are shown in the person specification. Please let us know if you have any access or adjustment needs as part of the recruitment process.

If you are invited to an interview we will ask you about any access needs or adjustments to the interview/assessment process that you may need. Please be assured we will be supportive in discussing reasonable adjustments with you at any stage of the recruitment process, although we cannot guarantee to be able to meet all requests.

Shortlisting outcomes

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview. Some positions may require additional assessments (practical task/test or assessment centre) and information on this will be provided if you are invited to interview.

Entitlement to work in the UK

A job offer will be subject to confirmation that you are permitted to work in the UK in accordance with the provisions of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. If you are invited to an interview you will be asked to provide evidence of your entitlement to work in the UK at that time.

Diversity Monitoring

Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre encourages and welcomes applications from suitably skilled candidates from all backgrounds. Monitoring recruitment and selection procedures is one way of helping us to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination in the way that we recruit people. To do this we need to know about the diversity profile of people who apply for posts at Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre. This information is given in confidence for monitoring purposes only and is not seen by anyone responsible for making recruitment decisions. However, if you would prefer not to answer any of the questions we ask, please leave them blank.

References

All job offers are subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references. One should be from your current or most recent employer (or your course tutor if you have just left education). The other should be someone who knows you in a work related, voluntary or academic capacity. Both referees should be able to comment on your suitability for the role. References will only be taken up for successful candidates following a verbal offer.

Criminal convictions

Anyone who applies to work within Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre will be asked to disclose details of unspent convictions during the recruitment process.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for Leeds Citizens Advice & Law Centre but we are not able to employ anyone with a conviction for a sexual

offence against a child or vulnerable adult regardless of when the offence took place. All other convictions will be considered on an individual basis.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures are only requested where proportionate and relevant to the post concerned. If the post for which you are applying requires a DBS disclosure, this will be noted in the application pack.