

Housing Caseworker Recruitment Pack

Closing date for applications Sunday 16 January 2022

Contents

1. Welcome from the Chief Executive
2. Service Overview
3. Job Description and Person Specification for the Post
4. How to Apply



Welcome

I am delighted that you are considering joining our Cambridge House team. This recruitment pack includes information about our organisation and this role that I hope you will find useful. Tackling poverty, social inequity and social injustice has been our mission since 1889 and in 2019/20 we provided services across London to 185,000 people. Our activities include:

Law Centre

Enabling people with complex needs to save their homes, keep their jobs, and protect their families: Free, independent, and expert legal services in housing, employment, discrimination, and benefit law.

Independent Advocacy

Protecting the voices, choices and rights of vulnerable adults and children: Statutory Care Act, Mental Health Act and Mental Capacity Act advocacy for adults and children.

Safer Renting

Making private renting safe for all: Specialist advice, support, and advocacy for vulnerable private rented sector tenants.

Youth Empowerment

Investing in young people so they thrive as adults: Medium to long-term, intensive, and wrap-around support for excluded 16 to 25-year olds.

Disabled Peoples' Empowerment

Supporting disabled children and adults to take control of their own lives and futures: Arts, sports, life skills and wellbeing clubs for disabled children and adults.

Research and knowledge exchange

Transforming society - a practice-based approach to social innovation: Activities that capture local knowledge, insights and lived experience of 'what works' to develop innovative solutions to poverty, social inequity, and social injustice.

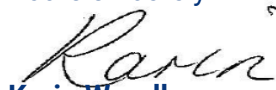
Community hub and social action centre

Embedding services and social action in the heart of our neighbourhood: Offices and venue hire spaces for civil society organisations and local people.

We value diversity and warmly welcome applications from disabled people, the LGBTQ+ communities, people from Black, Asian, and ethnic minority backgrounds and candidates who shared lived experience with our service users.

Working at Cambridge House is immensely rewarding. If you would like to be part of this very special organisation and believe that you can contribute to our mission, we welcome an application from you. For more information about us, please visit our website www.ch1889.org.

Yours sincerely



Karin Woodley
Chief Executive

Our Law Centre

Enabling people living with complex needs to save their homes, keep their jobs and protect their families.

Founded in 1893, Cambridge House Law Centre provides free legal advice and representation in the fields of housing, welfare benefits, public law, and discrimination.

Our Law Centre operates as part of Cambridge House (Charity number: 265103), an anti-poverty charity and community hub in the heart of the London Borough of Southwark, which provides a range of social welfare and crisis prevention services to local people.

In 2019-2020 we provided free, independent and expert legal services to 298 clients with responsibility for 959 dependents. Our team successfully:

- Defended 72 evictions.
- Challenged 4 homelessness cases.
- Concluded 16 disrepair claims.
- Concluded 26 welfare benefit appeals.
- Represented 1 client at an employment tribunal.
- Assisted 82 crisis navigation clients.

In the 2019-2020 financial year our income from legal aid fees was £298,911 and our legal aid contract with The Legal Aid Agency has recently been extended to August 2022.

In 2019 a new crisis navigator role was established within the law centre to support our service users to break cycles of disrepair and hardship.

We are a member of the Law Centres Network and partner of the Southwark Legal Advice Network from whom we welcome both referrals and regular training opportunities. We are recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the London Legal Support Trust.

Accredited by LEXCEL, our files undergo regular reviews and rigorously peer reviewed every year.

In 2015 we took a homelessness case to the Supreme Court permanently changing systems used for defining vulnerability and priority need.

Job Description

Job title:	Housing Caseworker
Reports to:	Head of Service
Contract:	Permanent
Location:	Cambridge House, 1 Addington Square, London, SE5 0HF
Salary:	up to £30,000 depending on experience.
Working hours:	35 (FT) hours per week (Monday to Friday)
Holiday:	30 days per annum pro rata
Special conditions:	- Enhanced DBS check.

Job Purpose

As a member of Cambridge House's Law Centre Team, led by the Head of Service, this role is responsible :

- i) To provide high quality advice, assistance and representation to users of the Law Centre in the field of housing law.
- ii) To contribute to the development of Cambridge House as a multi-purpose voluntary organisation addressing a range of community needs in flexible and imaginative ways.

Key Duties

1. To deliver specialist housing law services for the Law Centre in compliance with Legal Aid Agency and Lexcel standards, and including advice and casework involving:
 - a) Complex cases which break new ground and/or require representation at the County Court.
 - b) Providing advice and support to other members of the Law Centre Team to deliver an effective and efficient service and improve the quality of support to service users.
 - c) Undertaking outreach, advice and community education policy-related work.
2. Generating income for the Law Centre from housing cases to meet annual financial targets and objectives.
3. To work to financial, time allocation and case targets as required by the Head of Service including effective use of the Legal Aid Agency Cost and Case Management System and prompt billing of files.
4. To maintain administrative and case records in compliance with Law Centre Policies, Procedures and Quality Assurance Manual, external accrediting and funding bodies, and Cambridge House's internal reporting and financial management requirements, including:
 - a) Maintenance of comprehensive, accurate and up to date records, including:
 - i) Case records and files
 - ii) Time recording systems
 - iii) Case studies
5. Submission of activity and performance reports as required and in compliance with internal quarterly reporting and funder's requirements.

General Responsibilities

1. To keep abreast of the overall work of Cambridge House.
2. To be self-servicing and competent in the use of IT software.
3. To participate in regular supervisions and an annual appraisal, and to be committed to one's own professional development.
4. To participate in internal/external meetings as required, to attend conferences and other functions, and to contribute to general management decision making as necessary.
5. To comply with all of Cambridge House's corporate policies and procedures.
6. To carry out any other duties commensurate with the role.
7. To work occasional unsociable hours (evenings and weekends).
8. Travel across, and on occasions, outside of London.

This job description is provided as a guide to the role. It is not intended to be an exhaustive description of duties and responsibilities. It will be subject to periodic revision as the emphasis on and ways of working within the role changes.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate degree 2:2 or above. Relevant training and/or qualifications in housing law. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Part-trained solicitor or equivalent Training in additional areas of law.
Knowledge and experience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2-4 years' experience in providing legal advice in housing law and casework. Experience of possession proceedings, homelessness matters and disrepair casework. Demonstrable experience of working to the LEXCEL quality standard mark. Sound general knowledge of the law and ability to develop other areas of the law/legal expertise. Excellent working knowledge and comprehension of written English, including grammar, copy writing and editing. Proficiency in use of Microsoft Office including Excel and Word. Experience of successfully completing tasks in a fast-paced environment and to deadlines. Experience of working pro-actively and with minimal instruction. Experience of working with confidential and data. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of recovering Legal Aid Agency costs and inter-parties costs. Experience of fulfilling the Legal Aid Agency contract supervisory requirements. Working in a small team
Skills, abilities, and competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to react appropriately to short and long-term issues and to be decisive. Ability to prioritise conflicting tasks and manage a challenging workload. Confident and adept communicator with strong interpersonal and presentation skills. Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends. Ability to undertake and deliver training. Being self-servicing and able to use ICT programmes. To keep up to date with legal and social policy developments and changes in housing law. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proficiency in other languages
Personal Attributes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Honesty, reliability, and excellent timekeeping. Loyalty and a commitment to Cambridge House's work. Positive, enthusiastic, and friendly attitude. Problem solving and 'can-do' approach. Listening skills. Flexible, motivated, and adaptable to change. Discretion. Customer-focused. Inclusive team-player. 	

How to Apply

1. Please provide:

- a) An evidenced-focused **Supporting Statement** of no more than two sides of A4 explaining why this appointment interests you and how you meet the essential criteria in the person specification.
- b) Your **Curriculum Vitae** with your:
 - i) Full address, email, mobile, work and home telephone numbers.
 - ii) Education and professional qualifications.
 - iii) Full employment history.
 - iv) Details of your latest salary and your notice period.
- c) The names, positions, organisations, and contact details of **two referees**. These referees must include employers and/or academic supervisors covering the last five years. References will only be taken once your express permission has been granted.

2. A completed **Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**

The form will not be treated as part of your application and the information you provide will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only.

3. A completed **Criminal Records Declaration Form**

The post you are applying for is exempt from the provision of Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Orders 1975 and 2001 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared on Cambridge House's Criminal Record Declaration Form and submitted with your application.

4. As a Disability Confident employer, we will generally offer an interview to any applicant that declares they have a disability and meets the minimum criteria for the job as defined by the person specification. If you have a disability or long-term condition (such as dyslexia, diabetes, arthritis, a heart condition or mental health condition) and want to apply under the Disability Confident Scheme please let us know in the email to which you attach your CV, supporting statement and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. If you are invited to interview and require adjustments, don't worry, we will ask you about this within your invitation to interview.

Recruitment Timetable	
Closing Date for applications	Sunday 16 January 2022
Interviews	Week beginning Monday 31 January 2021
The interview dates may change but we will advise you in advance.	
Successful applicants will be asked to take up their appointments as soon as possible.	

Please email completed applications on or before midnight on Sunday 16 January 2022 to: recruitment@ch1889.org

If you do not hear from us within 14 days of the closing date, please assume your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion. Please note that we only provide feedback to shortlisted candidates.