

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES

Legal Action for Local Communities

JOB ADVERT – Administrator

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC), one of the largest Law Centres in the country, is seeking an administrator to work in our offices and remotely.

We are looking for a pro-active, positive person to provide administrative support in respect of our free community legal advice clinics. You will be a highly organised individual, with strong interpersonal and administrative skills, able to use your initiative and to develop new skills quickly.

Post: Legal Advice Clinics Administrator

Salary: £11.05 per hour plus 4% pension contribution.

Reports to: Volunteer and Pro Bono Co-ordinator

Functional Links: Board of Trustees, CEO, Deputy CEO, Volunteer and Pro Bono Co-ordinator, Communications Manager, Team Leaders, Branch Administrators

Hours: Monday to Friday, 12pm to 5pm with occasional evening work at our offices.

Term: Permanent

Based at: You will be initially based at our Croydon office, with travel to our other SW London offices as required, but there will be the ability to work remotely after the initial period of training has been completed.

Applications should be submitted by 12pm on Friday 24 June. Interviews will be held at our Croydon office during the week commencing 27 June. If you would like to discuss the post further, please email recruitment@swllc.org. Applications should be made on our application form available from our website at www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs and submitted to recruitment@swllc.org

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES

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ORGANISATION SUMMARY

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is a community based, Legal Aid 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. We now work across six boroughs, Croydon, Merton, Kingston, Richmond and Sutton and Wandsworth, helping people accessing, understanding and enforcing their legal rights. SWLLC helps around 8,000 people per year.

1. SWLLC provides full legal casework, representation and advice in the following areas of social welfare law: Community Care, Debt, Employment, Housing, Immigration and Asylum and in a very limited way in Welfare Rights.
2. Our housing solicitors are also duty solicitors at the County Court Duty Scheme, giving emergency advice and representation in possession hearings at Croydon, Kingston and Wandsworth County Courts.
3. In addition to our busy daytime casework and court services, **SWLLC runs the largest pro bono clinic service in the UK** through a network of volunteer solicitors and trainees. Last year, over 400 City and local solicitors or trainees took part in the scheme, providing free independent legal advice in areas of law no longer covered by Legal Aid, such as immigration, family, crime, employment as well as disputes between tenants and landlords, personal injury, general litigation, contract disputes, and help with small claims. The scheme runs weekly, between Monday and Thursday, with appointments available mainly in the evenings, with up to 100 free telephone consultations being offered to clients.. Through Pro bono, we helped over 4,000 people last year to understand and enforce their legal rights.

JOB ADVERT –Administrator

South West London Law Centres has run one of the largest Pro Bono advice schemes in the country for many years. Covid-19 necessitated a period of wholesale change to how the clinics are run and we are continuing this development into 2022. We are seeking a dynamic and resourceful person to help with managing hundreds of one-off, free telephone advice consultations a week, which we deliver in collaboration with a large network of volunteer advisers from City and local law firms, in different areas of law.

We are looking for a highly organised candidate with strong inter personal and administrative skills, able to communicate with empathy and compassion to triage complex legal matters and direct the service user to the most appropriate service.

As an Administrator, you will provide a professional and comprehensive support to solicitors and clients in relations to their appointments plus reception services to legal advice clinics service users, both electronically and on the phone. The main tasks will be triaging the many enquiries we receive for assistance by the clinics and booking suitable clients into the service. You will play a vital role in promoting a positive image for the organisation and ensuring clients and visitors receive a high level of customer service. You will also undertake a range of administrative tasks as identified by the Volunteer and Pro Bono Coordinator and the volunteer advisers.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Legal Advice Clinics Administration

- 1.1. To take overall responsibility for the general day-to-day organisation and administration of the legal advice clinics.
- 1.2. To triage enquiries from members of the public.
- 1.3. Ensuring their problem falls within the remit of the clinic, register/ book clients for the most suitable appointment or signpost.
- 1.4. Take responsibility for maintaining the legal advice clinics case management system.
- 1.5. To facilitate the exchange of documents between clients and advisers using the case management system.
- 1.6. To manage the weekly advisers rota, corresponding with advisers in regards to availability.
- 1.7. To record, collect, collate and help report statistics for the clinics.
- 1.8. To provide general administrative support functions to the coordinator and volunteer advisers.
- 1.9. To provide signposting and referral information to clients as appropriate.
- 1.10. Provide reception service for regular face-to-face evening advice sessions at our office locations.
- 1.11. To provide occasional cover for colleagues as required.
- 1.12. Contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the service.

2. General Administration

- 2.1. To work with the organisation's administrative systems to ensure that all data is recorded in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.
- 2.2. To keep all systems up to date in accordance with the necessary procedures.
- 2.3. To undertake ad hoc administrative activities as required.

3. Personal and professional development

- 3.1. To collate and exchange examples of good practice to share across SWLLC to promote consistently high standards.
- 3.2. To be an active member of the Volunteer Services team and take part in administration and other Law Centre meetings as required
- 3.3. To undertake training and development activities to ensure a high quality service is delivered, as agreed with the Volunteer and Pro Bono Coordinator and the Senior Management Team.
- 3.4. To actively participate in supervision and appraisal and team activities to promote high standards and continuous development.

4. Equal opportunities

- 4.1. To have regard at all times in the planning and execution of duties to the Law Centre's equal opportunities policy.

5. Other

- 5.1. To attend SWLLC staff meetings as required.
- 5.2. To undertake other duties which are generally compatible with the functions of the post as designated by Volunteer and Pro Bono Coordinator and the Deputy CEO.
- 5.3. To comply with SWLLC policies and procedures, particularly those relating to health and safety, confidentiality and security, as set out in the Office Manual.
- 5.4. Travel to our other SW London offices as required.

Person specification

Essential Skills and Experience

1. At least six months of experience in an administration role.
2. Educated to at least A Level standard, with GCSEs in Maths and English.
3. Ability to communicate clearly in writing, in person and on the telephone.
4. Ability to work well as part of a team and form effective working relationships with others.
5. Good IT skills and, in particular, confident with Microsoft Office (Teams, Word, Excel and Outlook) and databases.
6. Must be available to travel to work in offices and work some evenings.
7. Excellent organisational skills, including maintaining paper and electronic filing systems.
8. Ability to work to tight deadlines
9. Ability to work well under pressure and prioritise effectively when there are competing demands on time.
10. Supportive of the objectives of SWLLC, including a commitment to equal opportunities.
11. Ability to work on your own initiative.
12. Ability to maintain confidentiality.
13. Flexible attitude – open and willing to learn new things, able to make adjustments to suit transitions in the workplace.

Desirable

1. Good knowledge of the services SWLLC provides.
2. Experience of working with volunteers.
3. Experience of working in a legal or advice environment.
4. Lived experience of the issues faced by SWLLC service users.

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ORGANISATION SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POST

Context of the Post

As an Administrator, you will provide professional and comprehensive support to solicitors and clients in relation to their appointments plus reception services to legal advice clinics service users, electronically, face to face and on the phone. The main tasks will be triaging the many enquiries we receive for assistance by the clinics and booking suitable clients into the service. You will play a vital role in promoting a positive image for the organisation and ensuring clients and visitors receive a high level of customer service. You will also undertake a range of administrative tasks as identified by the Volunteer and Pro Bono Coordinator and the volunteer advisers.

You will gain valuable experience of working within a legal environment as well as a great deal of client contact and experience in triaging complex legal issues which will put you in a position to pursue a legal career in the future.

The objective of the post is to consolidate the administration of the clinics into one post in order to improve efficiency and to deliver a positive experience for clients and advisers. This is a new post and will require you to use your initiative and to assist us in developing and implementing new systems.

South West London Law Centres

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 prestigious Legal Aid Firm/Not for Profit of the year 2020 at the LALY Awards.

SWLLC now 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 schemes at Croydon, Kingston and Wandsworth County Courts giving emergency representation in possession hearings for rent and owned homes and at the warrant stage for evictions.

SWLLC delivers 15 to 18 pro bono clinics each week to provide initial advice on legal problems. There are 16 firms involved with the clinics as well as individual solicitors.

SWLLC works with and assists around 7,500 people per year.

Since COVID most of our casework has been done remotely at home or from our offices. We are starting some direct contact with clients and this will expand as our offices work towards being fully open again.

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

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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!