

Family Solicitor (Legal Aid)

Job pack

Thank you for your interest in working at North & West Kent Citizens Advice and Kent Law Centre. This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work at Citizens Advice.

In this pack you will find information about:

- About North & West Kent Citizens Advice and Kent Law Centre
- The role profile and person specification
- Benefits of working for us
- How to apply

About North & West Kent Citizens Advice and Kent Law Centre

North & West Kent Citizens Advice and Kent Law Centre (CAKLC) is an independent charity affiliated with national Citizens Advice and the Law Centre Network. **We are a dynamic, forward-thinking organisation delivering a wide range of high-quality advice services across the area.** Our work gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward — whoever they are and whatever their problem.

Through our **generalist advice services**, we support a population of more than 650,000 people across North and West Kent. We operate from seven permanent offices in Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks, Swanley, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Folkestone, alongside a number of in-person and video outreach services across the county. Our **specialist legal advice** covers immigration, housing and homelessness, welfare benefits, debt, family, employment, and fuel poverty. We currently hold legal aid contracts in housing, debt and welfare benefits, and immigration and asylum; ensuring that vulnerable people across Kent can access high-quality, free legal advice.

Demand for our services continues to grow, and we have responded by adopting innovative and flexible ways of engaging with hard-to-reach communities while maximising the impact of our limited resources. Last year, we supported over 19,000 clients, helping them to resolve their immediate problems, build knowledge to prevent future issues, and feel empowered to take control of their own situations.

This is an exciting time to join our organisation. We have deep roots in our local community, dating back to World War II, and have been providing free advice to residents of North and West Kent ever since. While our status as a Law Centre is more recent — having joined the Law Centre Network in November 2025 — it builds on decades of experience in social justice work and reflects our ambition to become a genuine ‘one-stop shop’ advice service for the county.

We hope you will want to be part of this journey with us.

The role

Job Title	Family Solicitor (Legal Aid)
Hours	Full or part-time considered
Salary	£40,000 – £50,000 per annum, depending on experience, pro-rata for part-time.
Status	Permanent
Location	A CAKLC office: Gravesend, Dartford, Swanley, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells or Folkestone. Some travel will be needed within Kent for meetings with colleagues and clients. There will be scope for 1-2 days/week home working, dependent on needs of the service.

Are you a Family Solicitor who wants to use your legal expertise to make a real difference — and help shape a new legal aid service for people who need it most?

This is a rare and exciting opportunity to join North & West Kent Citizens Advice and Kent Law Centre at an important stage in our development. We are expanding our family law work with the aim of securing a family legal aid contract, creating a service that will improve access to justice for vulnerable people and families across Kent.

Kent is widely recognised as a “legal aid desert”, where many people struggle to access specialist legal advice at some of the most difficult points in their lives. We want to change that. Building on many years of family advice within our Citizens Advice service, we are now looking for an experienced **Family Solicitor** to help us develop a high-quality, publicly funded family law service rooted in our communities.

This newly created role offers the chance to do meaningful casework while also helping to shape how the service grows. You will bring strong family law experience, a sound

understanding of Legal Aid Agency requirements, and a commitment to accessible, client-centred legal support. In return, you will have the opportunity to work within a values-led organisation, contribute to the development of a growing Law Centre, and help build a service that has a lasting impact.

Our Law Centre status, achieved in November 2025, marks an ambitious new chapter for our organisation. We are strengthening free, high-quality legal advice across Kent and developing a more joined-up model of support for clients with complex and overlapping needs.

If you are passionate about access to justice, committed to publicly funded legal work, and excited by the opportunity to help build something new, we would love to hear from you.

Job Purpose:

The purpose of this role is to provide high-quality, specialist family legal advice, casework and representation to clients across Kent.

Main Duties:

Own Casework

- Manage a caseload of family law matters, including Private Law Child Arrangements Orders, Public Law Care Proceedings and domestic violence.
- Provide legal representation at all stages of the case, including representation at court as appropriate.
- Meet agreed annual targets for legal aid billing, once contract is secured.
- Once a family legal aid contract is secured, you will need to comply with the requirements of a Family Legal Aid contract including making sure that work is accurately recorded, and funding secured at each stage of the case, including:
 - Complete public funding forms via CCMS and paper applications where appropriate.
 - Liaise with the Legal Aid Agency in respect of funding applications and claims.
 - Assist with the prompt billing and costing of files

- Adhere to CAKLC and other relevant agency policies and procedures for quality standards.
- Comply with all applicable standards and regulations, including those of the SRA.
- Maintain accurate and detailed case records of clients for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval and statistical monitoring.

Development of the Family Advice Team

- Carry out supervision of our highly experienced CILEX qualified Family Adviser to support compliance, authorisation, and case oversight.
- Carry out file reviews as appropriate.
- Integrate our family law work in our holistic advice model, ensuring joined-up support for clients with overlapping housing, immigration, welfare, and family needs.
- Ensure that the appropriate Legal Aid systems are implemented and maintained for case recording, statistics, follow up and quality control.
- Work with colleagues to ensure a high quality of service.
- Bring to the attention of the Senior Management Team any issues which may be affecting performance of the family advice service.
- Ensure client complaints, data breaches and any confidentiality issues are reported to the Deputy CEO on a timely basis in line with CANWK guidelines.

Development of a Family Legal Aid Service

- Support the development and delivery of a family legal aid service, including into areas of family law which we do not currently offer.
- Help to build strong referral partnerships with local organisations including DAVSS, domestic abuse services, and Family Hubs, ensuring sustained client flow and early intervention.
- Help to ensure our family law service complies with our legal aid contract, Legal Aid Agency requirements as well as other quality standards such as SQM.
- Support our research and campaigns work through various channels including case studies, data collection and client consent.

Professional development

- Keep up to date with legislation, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training including where necessary CPD.

- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as required.

Other duties and responsibilities

- Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
- Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of Citizens Advice.
- Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.

Person Specification

	Essential / Desirable
Education and Qualifications	
Qualified Solicitor or Chartered Legal Executive with Practice Rights with 3+ years PQE (as defined by the Legal Services Act 2007).	Essential
Able to meet the Legal Aid Agency Supervisor requirements for family law.	Essential
Hold, or be able to hold, one or more of the following accreditations: (a) a member of the Law Society's Family Law Accreditation Scheme; or (b) a member of the Law Society's Family Law Advanced Accreditation; or (c) a member of the Law Society's Children Law Accreditation Scheme; or (d) a Resolution Accredited Specialist or have successfully completed Part I (core assignment) of the Resolution Specialist Accreditation Scheme.	Essential
Knowledge & Experience	
At least 2 years' recent experience of working under a Legal Aid Agency contract for family advice and representation under the legal help and legal aid schemes.	Essential
Substantial experience of managing your own caseload of complex family law cases.	Essential
Proven ability to meet financial targets within a legal aid family contract.	Essential

Strong knowledge of relevant family law legislation, procedure and practice, including children law and domestic abuse proceedings.	Essential
Experience of providing supervision and support to case workers / paralegals.	Essential
A sound knowledge of the compliance aspects of legal aid funded family work.	Essential
Awareness of safeguarding responsibilities and issues affecting vulnerable adults and children	Essential
Experience representing clients in urgent domestic abuse and protective injunction applications.	Desirable
Experience acting for parents, children or other family members in care proceedings.	Desirable
Experience conducting contested hearings, finding of fact hearings or longer family court hearings.	Desirable
Experience of working in the voluntary or community sector	Desirable
Skills & Abilities	
Ability to work sensitively and professionally with vulnerable clients, including clients affected by domestic abuse, trauma, safeguarding issues or language barriers.	Essential
Ability to relate well and communicate clearly and respectfully with clients from diverse backgrounds.	Essential
Ability to work independently with minimal supervision whilst contributing positively to a team environment.	Essential
Strong organisational skills and ability to manage a busy and varied caseload.	Essential
Excellent verbal and written communication skills	Essential
Strong legal drafting skills, including applications, statements, position statements, instructions to counsel and correspondence.	Essential
Ability to conduct appropriate family court advocacy, including interim and directions hearings.	Essential
Ability to maintain files to a high standard and comply with legal aid, regulatory and quality assurance requirements.	Essential

Ability to build positive relationships with clients, colleagues and external partners	Essential
Good problem-solving skills and ability to respond calmly to unexpected issues	Essential
Confident using IT systems (e.g. Microsoft Office, email, databases)	Essential
Ability to use case management systems and digital working platforms effectively	Essential
Personal Attributes	
Commitment to access to justice and values of Citizens Advice and the Law Centre Movement	Essential
Commitment to client-centred service delivery	Essential
Commitment to collaborative working, professional development and continuous improvement	Essential
Friendly, empathetic and non-judgemental approach	Essential
Flexible and adaptable to meet changing service needs	Essential
Reliable and responsible with a strong sense of accountability	Essential
Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion	Essential
Other Requirements	
Willingness to undertake training relevant to the role	Essential
Understanding of confidentiality and data protection requirements	Essential

Benefits of Working for Us

At North & West Kent Citizens Advice and Kent Law Centre, we aim to offer a friendly and supportive work environment and the chance to make a real difference to the lives of people in Kent.

We want our staff to feel appreciated and well rewarded for the valuable work they do, so we try to offer generous benefits to our employees including:

- Payment of professional fees and memberships.
- A 35-hour working week, with flexibility where needed.
- 30 days annual leave days (including bank holidays) for full time staff, plus four additional days leave between Xmas and New Year.
- Policies that support a healthy work-life balance.
- Pension scheme.
- Commitment to continued professional development, with opportunities to build skills in new areas.
- Comfortable offices in town centre locations.

Promoting equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively are integral to our ethos as an employer and service provider. We 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.

We are a Disability Confident Employer.

How to apply

To express an interest in this position, please send your CV to:
ann.starke@nwkent.cab.org.uk

There is no closing date for this role. We will remain open to applications until a successful appointment has been made, so if you are interested in the role, we would encourage you to apply as soon as possible.