



## Candidate Information

# Policy and Community Engagement Officer (Maternity Cover)

(Ref: PENGO-MC-07-26)



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# Foreword from CEO

Thank you for considering developing your career at the Law Centre.

The Law Centre (LCNI) is a regional not-for-profit legal organisation working across all communities in Northern Ireland, in pursuit of our vision of a more just and equal society. Our mission is to use the law to change people's lives.

As a regional infrastructure support organisation within the community and voluntary sector in NI, we work not only to ensure that individuals can access justice, but also to support the front line advice agencies to support people in their communities. Our work specialises in social security and anti-poverty, asylum, immigration and employment rights.

For almost 50 years, LCNI has delivered meaningful, impactful outcomes in all our areas of work. You can read more about our impact over the last year here:

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/f07ceceddb.html>

By joining us you will become part of an award-winning team making a real and lasting difference. Our work is deeply rewarding and you will have the opportunity to gain excellent professional development opportunities and contribute to shaping the social justice landscape. If you are self-motivated with the passion, skill and commitment to join our team and can help make a difference to people right across NI, please consider an application - we'd love to hear from you.



Julie Wilkinson  
Interim Chief Executive Officer

## Background to the Law Centre

Thank you for your interest in joining Law Centre (NI). Law Centre NI (LCNI) is an award-winning organisation and for 49 years, LCNI has been using the law to drive change in Northern Ireland. We are constantly innovating, working in communities, and using the law to transform people's lives. We are fiercely independent and unrelenting in our pursuit of justice. With a strong track record of strategic litigation and policy advocacy we make change through a unique blend of legal, training, education, community engagement and policy advocacy work.

The Law Centre's work is focused primarily on three distinct key projects.

- ❖ The ***Migration Justice & Refugee Project*** works with asylum seekers, refugees and victims and survivors of trafficking and domestic abuse to uphold their legal rights and campaigns for a fairer and more humane immigration system. We lead the Refugee and Asylum Forum, a network of organisations with direct experience of providing support and services to asylum seekers and refugees. Our policy advocacy and influencing work draws heavily on our community engagement and our legal expertise, so decision makers know and understand the impact of how law and policy is working on the ground.
- ❖ The ***(Social Security Rights) Project*** works to address poverty in NI by ensuring the social security system delivers an effective safety net for people when they need it. Our impact litigation in the public interest has been at the cutting edge of changes to law and policy, making life better for many people and not just in NI. As a second tier support organisation we support frontline advice organisations by delivering an advice line and boosting capacity by providing extensive legal information resources and specialist training on all aspects of social security law. Our important policy interventions includes the convening of the *Cliff Edge Coalition* to advocate for the retention and strengthening of the NI Executive's 'welfare reform mitigations' that are an essential bulwark against some of the harshest elements of social security change. We deliver extensive legal information resources and training to advisers on all aspects of social security law and our *Social Security Law & Practice Conference* keeps advisers up to speed on law and policy changes.
- ❖ The ***Employment Rights Project*** supports workers across Northern Ireland to challenge unfair working practices and uphold their employment law rights. Our team provides a dedicated employment law advice line, providing free and confidential advice to workers. We provide legal representation to claimants at the Employment Tribunal in Northern Ireland and produce regular public legal education resources to empower people to understand their legal rights. As a regional support organisation, we provide specialist employment law advice and

practitioner led training to the Northern Ireland advice. We also contribute to the development of employment law and policy in Northern Ireland with our policy advocacy work.

Law Centre NI work is supported by both government funding and a range of philanthropic foundations. Our work is Lexcel-accredited and regulated by the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA). The Law Centre is registered with the Charity Commission NI and is governed by a Board, all of whom give their time and expertise freely in support of our mission.

## About the role

This is a key role within Law Centre NI. Working collaboratively with the LCNI legal teams you will proactively identify and advocate for systemic policy changes that will seek to strengthen the NI social security system and social economic landscape in NI. You will work to help tackle inequality, so that people and families are able to uphold their social economic rights and live a life of dignity.

The Law Centre NI is committed to ensuring that the impact of law and policy within communities in NI is evidenced and understood across government and more widely. This is a period of significant change in NI and you will have the opportunity to make a real difference to people's lives by engaging and influencing the development of social security and social economic policy in NI.

This role at the Law Centre NI is supported by the Department for Communities.

## General Candidate Information

The successful candidate will be expected to take up post as soon as practicable, and within 1 month of offer. The successful candidate will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months which may be extended in accordance with LCNI policy.

Holiday entitlement is 24 days annually, building to a maximum of 30 days. This is in addition to 14 statutory and other days. The leave year runs from April – March.

We're looking for a committed, enthusiastic and skilled professional who shares our values and our commitment. If that sounds like you and you're self-motivated with the passion, skill and resilience to support our work for some of the most disadvantaged people, we'd love to hear from you. If you would like to have an informal discussion to find out more about LCNI or this post, please contact us at [humanresources@lawcentreni.org](mailto:humanresources@lawcentreni.org) and we'll get in touch.

### **Benefits are:**

- 35 hour working week;
- Opportunity to be part of making change happen;
- Access to career enhancing training opportunities;
- Flexible working arrangements;
- Employee Assistance Programme;
- Health & Wellbeing Initiatives.

## How to Apply

Please note the following important information about the application process:

- Please complete the application form **in full**. You should ensure that you give examples that **demonstrate** how you satisfy the relevant criteria, including relevant dates. CVs will not be considered.
- Please ensure that you remain within the word limit specified. Any excess will be disregarded by the panel.
- Please return your application form as a **Word** document by email to the email address specified in the application form. Please also return a completed monitoring form as directed.
- Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.
- Applications should be submitted by email to: [humanresources@lawcentreni.org](mailto:humanresources@lawcentreni.org) by the closing date.
- We will communicate with candidates by email so candidates should ensure that they regularly check their inbox.
- The panel reserves the right to enhance the criteria as appropriate in the event of a large volume of applications.
- Please be advised that further appointments may be made from this competition should similar posts arise within the next 12 months.

Closing date for receipt of applications: **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026 at 12 noon**  
Interview date: **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2026.**

In the event that a candidate is invited to interview and is unavailable on the proposed date and time due to reasons beyond their control, the panel may try to accommodate an alternative arrangement subject to their own availability, although this is not guaranteed unless an adjustment is required in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

We are an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons. However, as Protestants are currently under-represented in our workforce, we would particularly welcome applications from the Protestant community.

## Job Description

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Community Engagement Officer</b>
<b>Location</b>	Law Centre NI, Belfast
<b>Post</b>	Full-time (35 hours per week)
<b>Term</b>	This is a fixed term role for a period of 12 months (maternity cover)
<b>Salary</b>	SO2, £36,124 + 5% employer pension contribution
<b>Reports to</b>	Head of Social Security and Employment Rights

### Purpose of job

This is a key role within Law Centre NI. Working collaboratively with the LCNI legal teams you will proactively identify and advocate for systemic policy changes that will seek to strengthen the NI social security system and social economic landscape in NI. You will work to help tackle inequality, so that people and families are able to uphold their social economic rights and live a life of dignity.

### MAIN DUTIES

#### POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TASKS

- 1.1 Develop and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders and lead on LCNI's collaborative policy advocacy work; building your own profile and the profile of LCNI as the go to policy experts in the sector;
- 1.2 Work with the LCNI legal teams to proactively identify and advocate for systemic policy changes that will seek to strengthen the social security system and social economic landscape in NI;
- 1.3 Engage with community organisations to understand the social and economic issues affecting the communities they support. to identifying the policy issues that need to be resolved and develop evidence-based solutions;

- 1.4 Collate and analyse data from across the voluntary and community sector that will effectively demonstrate the experiences of people facing poverty in NI and identify trends that will support evidence;
- 1.5 Effectively represent LCNI's position on policy issues and influence officials and policy makers in relation to the development and implementation of law, policy and practice on social economic rights in NI;
- 1.6 Represent LCNI as appropriate at relevant external meetings and events, for example, give evidence to NI Assembly Committees, other parliamentary committees, present conference papers, develop and maintain appropriate effective relationships with elected members and officials;
- 1.7 Produce high-quality policy and consultation responses and briefing papers;
- 1.8 Write and produce policy materials on relevant issues for the LCNI website and other outlets e.g. blogs/journal articles/conference papers etc. and work with colleagues and others to produce relevant public legal education tools that support community organisations;
- 1.9 Build the capacity of community and voluntary sector organisations to advocate for progressive change on social economic issues and identify issues amenable to legal resolutions and make timely referrals for legal help.

## **COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION**

- 2.1 Work with the LCNI team to ensure that LCNI's social economic policy work is communicated effectively, including through social media and ensure that relevant policy updates are communicated effectively;
- 2.2 To represent LCNI's policy position in the media as required (eg. TV and radio).

## **ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 Identify community organisations that will benefit from LCNI training and organise & contribute to training;
- 3.2 Work collaboratively across teams to promote knowledge sharing that achieves positive results;

3.3 Ensure timely and accurate management information is provided through work reports to management as required;

3.4 Act as an ambassador for LCNI.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 Ensure that knowledge of social welfare issues is maintained and kept up to date through continuing professional development.

4.2 Build stakeholder confidence in LCNI activities through high standards of personal and professional accountability;

4.3 In consultation with line manager, identify training and professional development needs and source appropriate support.

## **OTHER DUTIES**

5.1 Be available to work outside standard business hours on occasion in order to meet the demands of the role;

5.2 Undertake relevant administrative duties in the performance of this role;

5.3 Undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time.

**\*NOTE: this role description will be subject to review from time to time in line with the changing needs of the organisation.**

**July 2026**

# Person Specification

## Policy & Community Engagement Officer (Maternity Cover).

(PENGO-MC-07-26)

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<b>Qualifications, Knowledge &amp; Experience</b>	<p><b>*E1</b> Degree in social policy, law or other related discipline <b>and</b> at least two years demonstrated experience of social policy advocacy and/or research on behalf of an organisation.</p> <p><b>*E2</b> Knowledge of welfare, poverty and social economic issues currently affecting individuals in NI</p> <p><b>E3</b> Experience of writing and presenting policy consultation responses</p> <p><b>E4</b> Experience of providing representation at external meetings, events or forums.</p>	<p><b>D1</b> Experience of achieving progressive law and policy change.</p> <p><b>D2</b> Knowledge of UK and NI government structures</p> <p><b>D3</b> Experience of undertaking research on social welfare law or policy</p> <p><b>D4</b> Experience of providing social welfare advice</p>
<b>Abilities &amp; Skills</b>	<p><b>E5</b> Excellent oral and written communication skills with a diverse range of stakeholders.</p> <p><b>E6</b> Administratively self-supporting, proficient with ICT and able to prioritise to meet tight deadlines, working independently to achieve results.</p>	
<b>Aptitudes/Commitment</b>	<p><b>E7</b> Self-motivated with a passion for affecting progressive social change, commitment to on-going professional development and Open to self-reflection and growth</p> <p><b>E8</b> Aptitude for building and maintaining good interpersonal relationships</p>	

	<p>with colleagues and external stakeholders and for responding proactively to immediate challenges</p> <p><b>E9</b> Commitment to aims of LCNI</p>	
<b>Circumstances</b>	<p><b>*E10</b> Available for occasional out of hours work in accordance with the requirements of the post.</p> <p><b>*E11</b> Willingness to travel as required</p> <p><b>*E12</b> Current UK driving licence with access to a car (note this will be waived where applicants can demonstrate suitable alternative arrangements or in response to disability needs)</p>	

**Please note criteria marked \* will initially be assessed at shortlisting stage**

## Our Vision

A just and equal society where people live in the dignity of their rights.

## Our Mission

We use the power of law for social change. To stand for everyone's rights by informing and educating people about their rights and by protecting and advancing people's rights, working collaboratively for social justice.

## Our Values

The following values underpin all aspects of our work with each other, with clients and with other stakeholders.

<i>Authentic</i>	we act consistently with our commitment to social justice
<i>Integrity</i>	we honour our word
<i>Independence</i>	we work without fear or favour
<i>Expert</i>	we are driven by learning and we bring expert knowledge of the law and evidence of people's experiences of the law to all our work
<i>Cutting-edge</i>	we test the boundaries of law and policy to advance the rights of people in NI. We are creative in developing new solutions for social justice.
<i>Inclusive</i>	we work with and for others. We innovate to make sure our services are accessible to our clients.
<i>Trusted</i>	we are credible and respectful. We build trusted relationships. We care for our clients and each other and when we commit, we can be trusted to see it through.
<i>Professional</i>	we deliver quality services.