

July 2025

Dear Applicant

Re: SWLLC Operations Manager

Thank you for your interest in working with South West London Law Centres.

I am pleased to enclose:

- Organisation Summary and context of the posts
- Job Description and Person Specification for the Operations Manager post

To apply, please forward to recruitment@swllc.org your up-to-date CV together with a cover letter of no more than two pages of A4, setting out how you meet the person specification and why you would like to work with South West London Law Centres.

Please note that applications without a cover letter will not be considered.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5 pm on 29 July 2025

If you would like to have a brief informal chat to discuss the role, please contact us at recruitment@swllc.org

Yours faithfully



Patrick Marples CEO
South West London Law Centres

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES

Legal Action for Local Communities

JOB ADVERT –Operations Manager

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is one of the largest Law Centres in the country, dedicated to supporting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals in our communities. Our services range from emergency legal advice to full casework to representation in social welfare law matters at courts and tribunals. While many of our services remain free of charge, we have started charging for some.

We are recruiting for a new Operations Manager to take on a broader and more strategic version of an existing role, with overall responsibility for the operational delivery of our services across three office locations.

This is a hands-on and varied role at the heart of the Law Centre's day-to-day functioning, ensuring that our teams are well supported to deliver vital legal advice to the communities we serve. The successful candidate will oversee HR, facilities management, IT, and our volunteer programme. You will lead a small but dedicated administrative team and work closely with colleagues at all levels as part of our Senior Management Team (SMT).

We are seeking a practical, solutions-focused and detail-oriented individual who thrives in a fast-paced environment and enjoys improving systems, processes and ways of working—especially within a charity context and with limited resources. You will be confident working with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, including major City law firms who support our pro bono work.

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST:	Operations Manager- full time
Salary:	£ 38,700 per annum, plus 4% pension contributions
Reports to:	CEO, Trustees, Finance Board of Trustees, and SMT
Term:	Full-time- 35 hours a week, permanent
Based at:	SWLLC's Croydon Office / Hybrid

Organisation Summary and Objectives of the Post

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.

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. In 2023/24 we assisted 5,868 people. We represent clients in all courts and tribunals and worked on 2,505 cases in 2023/24.

We continue to run one of the largest pro bono clinic services across England. We deliver around 100 free clinic appointments per week offering initial advice on a wide range of civil/legal problems; over 400 pro-bono lawyers helped 2,800 clients last year.

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.

Working at South West London Law Centres

South West London Law Centres has served the communities of South West London for 50 years. Today, we continue to meet the needs and address the disadvantages of around 6,000 clients per year. They include women fleeing domestic violence, people who are in a housing crisis, people with no income or recourse to public funds, those with complex benefits challenges, and people mistreated by unscrupulous employers.

Joining the law centres is a chance to be a part of the law centres movement and to make a real impact with every case. We have a generous leave allowance of 29 days per calendar year, rising to 34 days after five years of continuous service, as well as a range of discretionary leave to cover emergencies.

We offer opportunities for training and progression and support staff wellbeing through an employee assistance program. Our offices are centrally located close to transport hubs.

About the Role

We are seeking a hands-on, analytical and detail-oriented Operations Manager to ensure the smooth and effective running of the Law Centre.

This is a varied and senior role that combines leadership, operational delivery, and service improvement. You'll manage a small admin team and be part of the Senior Management Team, helping shape how we operate and deliver services.

You will have oversight of the following core functions:

- **Admin and Reception Team Management (currently 2.5 FTE)**
Leading the team who triage and signpost over 4,000 enquiries per year, ensuring clients are directed to appropriate legal services or support.
- **Volunteer Programme**
Coordinating volunteer engagement across both the core legal services and the pro bono advice clinics, overseeing the delivery of around 3,000 appointments per year, connecting clients to volunteer solicitors who provide initial advice across a range of legal issues.
- **Human Resources**
Managing day-to-day HR functions for a staff team of around 40 people, with external support from YESS Law for complex issues or legal advice.
- **Facilities and IT Infrastructure**
Maintaining safe, functional and welcoming premises in Croydon, Merton and Wandsworth, as well as overseeing IT systems and office equipment.
- **Systems, Procedures and Compliance**
Managing policies and processes related to data protection, IT security, health and safety, Lexcel compliance, archiving and risk management.
- **Senior Management Team (SMT)**
Contributing actively to organisational strategy, planning, and cross-team leadership.

We are looking for someone who is not only operationally strong and reliable but also keen to identify improvements, solve problems and innovate within the constraints of a small charity.

We don't expect every candidate to meet all the criteria listed. If you feel you meet many of the requirements and are keen to learn and grow within the charity sector, we would love to hear from you.

We welcome applicants from diverse backgrounds who can bring different perspectives to our work and are committed to supporting staff development.

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES***Legal Action for Local Communities*****JOB DESCRIPTION**

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Reports to:	CEO, Trustees, Finance Sub Committee, Board of Trustees, Billing Coordinator and Senior Management Team
Term:	Full time- 35 hours per week- Permanent
Based at:	SWLLC's Croydon Office/ Hybrid arrangements can be considered.

Key Tasks**1. Staff Management**

- Line management of the reception and administration staff, delegating and managing tasks appropriately within the team
- Working with the administration team to develop new procedures to support the smooth running of the offices and the triage of people seeking help from the law centre.
- Oversight of the administration of the pro bono clinics by reception staff, housing supervisor and volunteers.
- Dealing with complaints from enquirers and clients of the pro bono clinics when escalated by reception staff and volunteers.

2. HR Management

- Working with the CEO and other staff to recruit staff including developing job descriptions/job packs and advertising roles
- Participating in the recruitment process by sitting on interview panels, developing assessments and preparing interview questions.
- Dealing with the collection of references

- Induction and onboarding of new personnel.
- Managing probation reviews, appraisals and exit interviews as well as collating records and trends from these.
- Being the point of contact for all staff with HR queries or concerns. Supporting managers with guidance and practical support in relation to HR matters. Communicating with staff about new policies and procedures
- Investigating grievances, complaints and other HR issues. Supporting managers in meetings with employees about HR matters.
- Keeping under review arrangements for leave encouraging staff to take up their leave entitlements, monitoring levels of sickness and other leave, liaising with the team leaders over the monitoring of this.
- Keeping up to date a central organogram of all staffing including their flexible working arrangements – making sure that this is available to all staff
- Dealing with apprenticeships at the law centre. Working with partners in relation to apprentice levy transfers. Registering employees for apprenticeship training courses. Administration of the law centre's apprenticeship account.
- Maintaining accurate records of new starters and leavers, as well as any extra hours worked, in order to communicate this to the Finance Manager for payroll.

3. HR Strategy

- Working with the HR Sub-Committee to review HR policies and develop new policies and procedures
- Keeping abreast of developments in employment law in order to be able to inform staff and adjust policies.
- Leading on Diversity and Inclusion.
- Leading on staff wellbeing and development.

4. Volunteer Management

- Reviewing and redeveloping the volunteer strategy
- Leading on volunteer recruitment, induction, management and collecting feedback from volunteers
- Working with the SMT to incorporate volunteering into projects.
- Developing internships
- Working with the SMT to secure funding for volunteer projects.
- Maintaining and developing direct relationships with the supporting firms

- Taking a lead in developing the scope of the clinic programme.

5. Office management

- Taking responsibility for maintaining the office environments, dealing with the facilities, utilities, landlords and agents
- Managing and maintaining the cleaning of the offices through external cleaners
- Promoting a clean office environment and helping work towards a paperless work environment.

6. Information Technology

- Acting as centre lead for the purposes of our IT support contract with AspiraCloud.
- Leading on new technology initiatives such as the implementation of Windows 11, with the support of AspiraCloud and Law Centres Network.
- Maintaining oversight of the devices owned and maintained by the organisation.
- Raising IT support tickets on behalf of all staff.
- Purchasing new devices on behalf of the organisation, ensuring value for money at all times.
- Completing the annual Cyber Security audit and return.
- Maintain the organisation's IT plan and update it annually.
- Work with the Finance Manager to develop processes and procedures towards a paperless work environment including adapting our Clio and Advice Pro case management systems

7. Archiving

- Overseeing the organisation's archiving process and supervising staff and volunteers to send files to archive regularly.
- Proactively managing our offsite archive so that files that have passed their destroy date are regularly destroyed.

Maintenance of our systems and procedures

8. Data Protection and health & safety

- Overall responsibility for the data protection obligations of the organisation.
- Keeping abreast of changes and updates to Data Protection legislation.
- Completing annual returns to the Information Commissioner's Office.
- Delivering regular training to staff on Data Protection.

- Participating in discussions and workshops facilitated by LCN in relation to information governance and Data Protection.
- Work with the Strategic Development Manager to develop, analysis and improve the collection of data within the organisation including the collection of triage and pro bono clinic data.
- Be the lead person for health and safety
- Carry out any review of health and safety for Lexcel audits
- Make recommendations on health and safety adjustments and in relation to disability adjustments.

9. Lexcel Manual

- Taking a lead in our annual Lexcel quality audit. Co-ordinating the annual review and update of the office manual
- Taking a lead in the production of the annual audit reviews in conjunction with other members of the SMT

10. Strategic Management

- Being an active and visible member of the Senior Management Team (SMT).
- Working with the SMT and the Board of Trustees to develop and implement the strategic plan for the organisation.
- Participating in regular strategic planning meetings.
- Reporting to the Board of Trustees in relation to all operations matters.

Other

- To carry out other tasks as directed relevant to the post
- To attend and participate in Board and Sub Committee meetings
- To collaborate with the CEO and SMT to foster a culture of openness and cooperation with staff, developing regular communication, exchange of information and ideas relating to the development and operation of the Law Centre.

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES***Legal Action for Local Communities*****PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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Essential Experience and Skills

1. Working experience in a similar role (office manager/ project manager/ volunteer manager)
2. Excellent IT skills with extensive experience working with all Cloud based platforms (Microsoft 365, Teams, Share Point) and some experience of using computerised packages such as account, case management systems, etc...
3. Ability to develop, maintain and report on data and compliance records, including the ability to impart information in an understandable way
4. Conflict resolution: experience in handling complaints, grievances etc..
5. Highly organised with strong organisational and planning skills. Self-reliant, capable of taking the initiative and working autonomously Able to set priorities, meet goals and evaluate the process and results. Have an eye for detail and concern for accuracy,
6. Professional manner, able to develop good working relationships with people both internally and externally at all levels

Essential Knowledge

1. Good understanding of HR best practice around recruitment, onboarding, probation, appraisal, performance management and exit process
2. Understanding of data protection (UK GDPR), information governance, cyber security, and how to deliver basic staff training on these topics.

3. Experience with managing IT contracts and suppliers, and overseeing hardware inventory.
4. Knowledge of facilities management, including dealing with landlords, utilities, leases, health and safety requirements (risk assessment, fire safety...)
5. Demonstrable experience of project management

Desirable Experience and Skills

- 1) Up to date, practical knowledge of Employment Law and EDI principles
- 2) Understanding of the importance of access to justice including social welfare law and the legal aid environment, especially issues facing vulnerable clients
- 3) Understanding of voluntary sector operations and charity governance
- 4) Understanding of volunteer management best practice
- 5) Ability to build relationships with law firms, volunteers, community stakeholders, universities etc, to maintain and grow the volunteer network