

Date: March 2024

Dear Applicant

Employment and Discrimination Caseworker

Thank you for your interest in this post.

I am pleased to enclose:

- Organisation Summary and context of the post
- Job Description and Person Specification for Head of Employment and Discrimination

You can download the application form from our website [here](#).

The final closing date for applications to this role is 5pm on 29 April 2024, however, we will be evaluating applications as we receive them and so you are advised to submit your application as soon as possible.

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 – Employment and Discrimination Caseworker

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is one of the largest Law Centres in the country and we are seeking an experienced employment caseworker or solicitor to expand our employment team so that we can support more community members with legal advice and casework in relation to their employment issues.

We currently have one experienced employment caseworker working on a grant funded project. We have a discrimination legal aid contract that we want to make full use of and want to grow our team so that we can make better use of DBAs and other charging models.

You will either be a solicitor with experience of discrimination law under a Legal Aid contract, or an experienced employment caseworker with knowledge of Legal Aid.

We offer flexible working and generous benefits

POST:	Employment and Discrimination Caseworker
Salary:	Up to £41,000 according to experience.
Reports to:	Head of Legal Practice; CEO; Deputy CEO
Term:	Permanent
Based at:	Hybrid working, with a permanent base at one of our offices.
Hours:	Flexible – we welcome applications from those who wish to work part time and support a range of flexible working arrangements.

The final closing date for applications to this role is 5pm on 29 April 2024, however, we will be evaluating applications as we receive them and so you are advised to submit your application as soon as possible. If you would like to have a brief informal chat to discuss the role, please contact us at recruitment@swllc.org. Please see above for a link to our application form.

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES

Legal Action for Local Communities

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

We now work across six South West London boroughs (Croydon, Merton, Kingston, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth). 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 2022/23 we assisted 6778 people. We represent clients in all courts and tribunals and worked on 2,609 cases in 2022/23.

We continue to run one of the largest pro bono clinic services across England, we deliver around 100 free clinics appointments per week offering initial advice on a wide range of civil / legal problems over 400 pro-bono lawyers helped 2,954 clients last year.

We have a strong emphasis on quality – we are accredited to the Law Society's Lexcel standard for excellence in legal practice management and client care and our Immigration Team has been rated as "Excellent" in a Legal Aid Peer Review for three years running.

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 disadvantage of around 7,000 clients per year. They include women fleeing domestic violence, people who are in housing crisis, people with no income or recourse to public funds, those with complex benefit challenges, and people mistreated by unscrupulous employers.

Joining the law centre is a chance to be a part of the law centres movement and to make a real impact with every case.

As an employer we offer hybrid working and support a range flexible working arrangements, including compressed hours to a four day week or nine day fortnight. We welcome applications from those wishing to work part time.

We have a generous leave allowance at 29 days per calendar year, rising to 34 days after five years' 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 programme.

Our offices are centrally located close to transport hubs.

The context of the post

Our existing employment caseworker is grant funded and carries out casework and settlement negotiations for those who cannot afford a lawyer as well as providing one off advice. We have a discrimination legal aid contract and have successfully built up a discrimination practice which complements our grant funded project and represents considerable opportunity not only to grow and develop the team but also to make a real difference to community members.

Our partnership project with BPP, Employment Law for London, is a service to help community members access free legal advice about employment, by offering free 30 minutes employment advice. There will be opportunities to participate in this project and to develop pro bono work alongside legal aid and other methods of charging.

We are seeking an experienced employment lawyer to expand our team in order that we can continue to meet the growing demand within the community for employment and discrimination casework.

We work closely with community partners to develop referral links, meaning that we have a wide range discrimination casework from which Legal Aid caseworkers can draw their cases, as well as a significant number of settlement agreements. We have a dedicated legal administrator and billing coordinator as well as enthusiastic and highly capable volunteers to support the smooth running of the casework.

We are looking for a highly motivated and experienced employment and discrimination solicitor/caseworker who wants to take the next step in their career, so that we can continue to make a real difference within the community.

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES
Legal Action for Local Communities

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST:	Employment and Discrimination Caseworker
Salary:	Up to £41,000 according to experience.
Reports to:	Head of Legal Practice; CEO; Deputy CEO
Term:	Permanent
Based at:	Hybrid working, with a permanent base at one of our offices.
Hours:	Flexible – we welcome applications from those who wish to work part time and support a range of flexible working arrangements.

Key Tasks

- 1 To develop and undertake Discrimination and Employment caseload under a legal aid contract for eligible clients.
- 2 To develop and undertake casework under Damages Based Agreements and other charging methods.
- 3 The post-holder will advise and represent clients who live or work in South West London on employment and in all areas of discrimination work focusing on employment law taking cases as necessary to all levels tribunals and courts
- 4 To be or work towards being a LAA category discrimination supervisor. The post-holder will ensure maintenance of standards in accordance with Lexcel accreditation.
- 5 To work with the Senior Management Team to develop and report on projects associated with our employment and discrimination work.
- 6 To manage our involvement in Employment Law for London, including liaising with partners and considering the development and expansion of the project.

Duties & Responsibilities

- 7 To ensure that all advice, assistance and representation complies with the requirements of our Lexcel quality mark and where publicly funded complies with the requirements of the Legal Aid Agency where funded by them
- 8 To ensure all casework is recorded within our Clio case management system and prompt billing and payment of work undertaken.
- 9 The post holder will be expected to meet billing and time recording targets which are set in accordance to the overall requirements of the Law Centre's annual budget and our contracts. This would include developing new work in progress of £55,000 per annum from which can be billed

- 10 To ensure that the terms of all Law Centre funders are kept to in relation to advice & casework including providing reports as required. To report on the work of the Law Centre to the management committee as required.
- 11 To participate in team meetings and to carry out file reviews in accordance with Lexcel requirements.
- 12 To participate in staff meetings from time to time.
- 13 To be responsible for your own word processing, filing and case recording within Clio case management system.
- 14 To advise and provide training and talks to Law Centre staff and volunteers and to front line advice agency staff within the Law Centre's catchment area as necessary
- 15 To help develop relationships and work arrangements with local partners to develop referrals
- 16 To attend meetings of coordinating bodies as required.
- 17 To share the work of maintaining everyday necessities.
- 18 To provide cover for colleagues during absences.

Advice & Casework

- 19 To provide discrimination advice and casework service to clients of the Law Centre. This is to include interviewing clients, advising them of their rights and responsibilities, assessing suitability and effectiveness of alternative courses of action, advising on potential challenges and legal procedures.
- 20 To assist other teams in the Law Centre in helping clients resolve any discrimination matters
- 21 To assist clients in liaising with other people and organisations to resolve their discrimination problems where possible.
- 22 To represent clients at Tribunals and Courts and do the necessary preparation and research.
- 23 To visit clients at their homes if appropriate.
- 24 To instruct and attend Counsel's chambers with clients as appropriate.

Professional Development

- 22 To attend courses on new legislation, specialist skills and the use of information technology
- 23 To keep up to date with the changes in relevant legislation.
- 24 To read the relevant law journals
- 25 To discuss regularly with your Team Leader your job performance and personal career development.
- 26 To be appraised regularly and to engage fully in this process to further personal development and maximise your contribution to SWLLC.
- 27 To undertake such training as is necessary to maintain and/or achieve the standards required of a Legal Aid Agency Category Supervisor in Discrimination.

Equal Opportunities

- 28** To have regard at all times in the planning and execution of duties to SWLLC's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 29** Play a full role in the organisation supporting colleagues to maximise their effectiveness.
- 30** In addition to the tasks and duties listed in this job description to undertake such duties as may be identified and which are generally compatible with the functions of the post.

Social Policy

- 31** To be alert at all times to the social policy implications of issues presented by clients.
- 32** To take appropriate action to influence social policy in regard to these issues

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES
Legal Action for Local Communities

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST:	Head of Employment and Discrimination
Salary:	Up to £41,000 according to experience.
Reports to:	Head of Legal Practice; CEO; Deputy CEO
Term:	Permanent
Based at:	Hybrid working, with a permanent base at one of our offices.
Hours:	Flexible – we welcome applications from those who wish to work part time and support a range of flexible working arrangements.

Essential Experience

1. At least two year's full time equivalent experience of Employment and Discrimination Law casework and representation.
2. Ability to manage a varied caseload of sufficient appropriate matters to meet the billing target currently of a minimum of £55,000
3. Ability to draft appropriate documentation in all areas and procedures of Employment and Discrimination law
4. A wide range of representation experience in the tribunal
5. Commitment to equal opportunities as set out in the principles and policies of South West London Law Centres

Essential Skills

6. An intelligent and highly motivated person who is accustomed to taking significant decisions and having a high level of personal accountability.
7. Ability to work independently with a proven ability to prioritise work and to meet deadlines.
8. Ability to take strategic overview and to plan for the long term.
9. Ability to liaise and work effectively in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders.
10. Excellent communication skills: you must be able to relate well to colleagues, clients and third parties, in person, in writing and on the telephone, despite the pressures of the role
11. Understanding of the problems which face diverse communities.
12. Ability to be self-servicing: you will be expected to manage most of your own typing, filing and billing and payment of cases.
13. Ability to use computer and information technology including management information systems and to be self-servicing. Must be proficient in Microsoft operating systems (Word, Excel, and Office).
14. Ability to working collaboratively within SWLLC
15. You must be very well organised in order to work well under pressure without compromising standards

Desirable Experience and Skills

16. Ability to meet LAA qualified category Discrimination supervisor standard.
17. Experience of working under a Legal Aid Agency Contract specification for Public Funding (Legal Aid) and Legal Help with demonstrable billing targets.
18. Experience of running cases through damage based and conditional fee agreements
19. Experience of giving successful training or talks.