

# Housing Caseworker/Solicitor (Court)

## Job pack

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

In this pack you'll find:

- An overview of North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre
- An overview of the role
- The job description
- The person specification
- What we give our staff

### Want to chat about this role?

If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact Laura Holland by emailing [laura.h@northyorksca.org.uk](mailto:laura.h@northyorksca.org.uk) or calling 01653 695542



# Overview of North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre

We provide free, confidential and impartial information and advice on a range of issues including money, benefits, housing and employment, and campaign on big issues affecting people's lives. Our goal is to help everyone find a way forward, whatever problem they face.

We're an independent charity and part of the Citizens Advice and Law Centre networks across England and Wales. Our main offices are located in the heart of our communities in Harrogate, Malton, Northallerton, Richmond, Scarborough, Selby, Skipton and Whitby. We also have a number of outreach locations that we deliver advice from across North Yorkshire and #WeComeToYou in our Advice Bus and Advice Van.

Often, people are in crisis by the time they reach out to us, unable to see a way out of the situation they find themselves in. We provide one to one advice to tackle their immediate problem and address any underlying and overlapping issues through specialist one to one advice provided by experienced and qualified advisers and highly skilled volunteers.

We give advice face to face, over the phone, and via web chat and email. We help around 25,000 people a year on all types of issues. Our Law Centre provides specialist legal advice on housing, immigration, employment and family matters.

As an independent charity, we raise all our own money, and each of our offices has its own identity within the local community.



## The role

The Housing Caseworker/Solicitor will provide high quality advice, dealing with cases from our generalist service and supporting clients with their housing issues. You will help clients faced with eviction, possession proceedings, poor quality housing and in establishing their rights to housing. This role would suit either an experienced housing caseworker or someone with a keen interest in issues related to housing law. The role has an emphasis on advocacy, and you will be attending our court duty sessions at least once most weeks.

The role can be based in any of the following North Yorkshire offices: Harrogate, Malton, Northallerton, Richmond, Selby or Scarborough, and you must be able to travel regularly to all our duty courts, which are in York, Harrogate and Scarborough, and attend other offices when needed.



## Job description

### Advocacy and Casework

- Provide assistance and advice covering the full range of housing advice both at court and at the early stages of advising
- Attend court to assist both duty and own clients
- Work under different funders and in collaboration with our wider team to ensure clients receive holistic advice
- Assist clients where necessary by negotiating and/or drafting on their behalf
- Liaise with external firms/organisations, as appropriate, to advance clients' housing issues. This may include landlords, solicitors, local authorities and/or support agencies
- Maintain case records, in line with internal, Lexcel and LAA requirements for the purposes of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation
- Ensure that all work confirms to the expected quality standard

### **Research and Campaigns**

- Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances
- Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to management

### **Professional Development**

- Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures relating to housing and undertake appropriate training
- Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager

### **Administration**

- Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production
- Liaise with statutory and non-statutory bodies and represent the service as appropriate

### **Other**

- Carry out any task that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.



## **Person specification**

1. Be able to commit to, and work within, the aims, principles and policies of the service
2. Demonstrable knowledge or ability to develop an excellent knowledge of housing advice/law including the ability to research, analyse and interpret complex information, produce and present clear reports verbally and in writing, and check accuracy of calculations
3. Recent experience advising clients in social welfare law
4. Demonstrable ability or willingness to develop an ability to attend court on housing matters to advise and represent clients
5. Effective oral and written communication skills with particular emphasis on negotiating, representing and preparing reviews and advocacy

6. Have excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills to get to the root of issues and empower clients, whilst maintaining structure and control of meetings
7. Demonstrate an ordered approach to legal work and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures
8. Ability to systematically manage a varied workload, prioritise and meet deadlines under pressure
9. Ability to use IT systems and electronic resources in the provision of advice, administrative support and in the preparation of reports
10. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team, give and receive feedback objectively
11. Demonstrate an understanding of the issues affecting society and the implications of these on the client and the service
12. Have an understanding of equality and diversity and its application to the provision of advice.



## What we give our staff

- Workplace pension scheme
- Healthy work/life balance with a 37 hour working week and flexible approach to working arrangements
- Generous annual leave of 5.6 weeks holiday and an additional 4 days at Christmas plus all public bank holidays
- Commitment to health and wellbeing – access to employee assistance programme, discounts on shopping and dining, lifestyle and entertainment
- Work related travel above mileage to designated office paid at 45p per mile
- Commitment to ongoing development – regular training workshops and personal development opportunities

**In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy we may need the successful candidate to be screened by the DBS. However, a criminal record will not necessarily exclude you from being able to take up the job.**

**We are a disability confident employer and welcome candidates who will be using access to work.**