

Job Description and Person Specification

CHILDCARE LAWYER PO3 – PO5

A Lambeth to be proud of



Job Title: Childcare Lawyer

Grade: P03 – PO5

Department: Communities, Governance & Change

Division: Legal and Governance

Business Unit: Legal Services

Reports to: Senior Lawyer

Responsible for: No direct reports

Context

Our One Lambeth agenda recognises the need for a significant shift in the way we work – a stronger grip on delivery, promoting shared ownership of our priorities across the council; changes to how we empower and work with our communities; and putting equity and justice at the heart of all we do.

As part of the council's Legal & Governance division, Legal Services play a critical role in enabling and supporting delivery of services across the council. Our strategy is to:

- Understand our 'client' departments and increase collaboration to ensure we meet their existing and future needs; and support the democratic processes to improve governance, decision making, and promote good Member / Officer relations.
- Be strategic, proactive and commercial in the advice we give, the way we behave and in developing our culture and identity in the Council to enable and support Members, partners and front line services.
- Develop a diverse, engaged and motivated workforce, which is adaptable, flexible, embraces change with disciplines and standards that mark us out as an excellent professional service.
- Implement efficient systems and processes to deliver a responsive, value for money and agile service embracing the move to a hybrid way of working.

Job Purpose

- To support the Principal and Senior Lawyers in ensuring that the council receives cost-effective high-quality solutions focussed housing related legal advice, and in providing an advisory, litigation and advocacy service and such areas and projects that are allocated from time to time.
- To ensure that all such work is carried out to the requirement of relevant client departments and to appropriate professional and quality assurance standards

Responsibilities

PO3

1. To provide high quality, solutions focused legal advice and competently manage a wide ranging and varied caseload in the areas dealt with by the childcare legal team,
2. To undertake all work necessary for the making and progressing of applications before the Court with a degree of autonomy as relevant to experience including, but limited to, the preparation and drafting of legal documents such as, applications, threshold, case summaries and orders, preparation for hearings, provision of advice and representation of the Council in all courts, Tribunals and Inquiries as required by the Senior Lawyer, to the appropriate professional standards.
3. To proactively report to Children's Services on the progress of that work and ensure agreed deadlines and timeframes are met
4. To keep updated of and to ensure implementation and adherence to legislation, regulation, case law, codes of practice and policy relating to relevant areas of work and provide advice to the Council on changes in legislation and case law that may have an impact on the Council.
5. To liaise with professional bodies, research institutions, Counsel, the Council's Chief Officers, elected members and other external organisations as required from time to time.
6. To undertake tasks and projects as allocated by the Senior Lawyer in accordance with instructions.
7. To maintain effective relationships with client departments.
8. To assist in the development of and to operate and be conversant with all information technology systems used for the work of the team.
9. To provide professional support for less experienced colleagues, and oversee effective completion of their work as delegated by you and as required
10. To use the case management system, templates and the processes and procedures put in place and as required by the Principal Lawyer including appropriate utilisation of support staff within the department
11. To ensure, as required, duty cover for urgent legal matters is provided to the client department.
12. To ensure that performance targets set by the Senior Lawyer are met.
13. To undertake any other duties that may be required to meet the exigencies of the service, and these may be varied from time to time to meet the needs of the service.
14. To carry out the duties of the post with regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policies and Anti-Racist Strategies. To undergo such training as may be required in respect of these policies.
15. To carry out all duties in accordance with the Council's Policies, Standing Orders, Codes of Practice, and Financial Regulations and undergo such training as may be required.

PO4

All of the responsibilities for PO3 as well as:

16. To provide legal advice to Committees, sub-committees and working parties and to write reports to such bodies or provide legal advice on such reports as required by the Senior Lawyer from time to time.
17. To participate as directed by the Senior/Principal Lawyer in the recruitment of staff.

PO5

All of the responsibilities for PO3 & PO4 as well as:

18. To demonstrate substantial experience of legal work within the post holder's area of responsibility and ability to demonstrate significant specialism or depth of knowledge in a particular area.
19. To make a professional evaluation of all legal aspects with minimal supervision and guidance.
20. To present complex arguments before courts, tribunals, committees or sub-committees effectively.
21. To liaise effectively with clients and instil confidence and trust in respect of service provision.
22. When required, to supervise Trainees and other staff who may be assigned to the team from time to time.
23. To represent Legal Services on Corporate projects and initiatives involving both legal and policy work at a senior level as required from time to time.

Structure Chart attached.

PERSON SPECIFICATION
Childcare Lawyer PO3 – PO5

<p>It is essential that in your written supporting statement you give evidence or examples of your proven experience in each of the short-listing criteria marked Application (A)</p> <p>You should expect that all areas listed below will be assessed as part of the interview and assessment process should you be shortlisted.</p> <p>If you are applying under the Disability Confident scheme, you will need to give evidence or examples of your proven experience in the areas marked with “Two Tick” (✓) on the person specification when you complete the application form.</p>			Shortlisting Criteria
<i>For link/career graded post, please mark knowledge, experience, and behaviours clearly for each grade.</i>			
Qualification	Q1	<p>Qualified Solicitor, Barrister or FCILEX (or equivalent qualification)</p> <p>Membership of Law Society Children’s Panel or Higher Rights of Audience desirable but not essential</p>	✓A
Key Knowledge	K1	Thorough up to date knowledge of all aspects of Children’s Social Care law including child protection, Public Law Outline, adoption proceedings and children’s judicial review matters.	✓A
Relevant Experience	E1	<p>PO3</p> <p>Post qualification experience working as a Solicitor, Barrister or FCILEX in the field of childcare and social services law, including relevant advocacy experience, preferably in local government.</p> <p>PO4</p> <p>Significant post qualification experience working as a Solicitor, Barrister or FCILEX in the field of childcare and social services law, including relevant advocacy experience, preferably in local government.</p> <p>Experience of preparing reports, and briefing notes. Membership of Law Society Children Panel.</p> <p>PO5</p> <p>Substantial post qualification experience working as a Solicitor, Barrister or FCILEX in the field of childcare and social services law, including</p>	✓A

		<p>relevant advocacy experience, preferably in local government. Significant specialism in depth knowledge in childcare law.</p> <p>Experience of supervising and managing junior staff.</p>	
	E2	Experience of using Word and electronic case management systems	✓A
Core Values and Behaviours		<p>Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the views of others and ask for their opinions making sure that everyone in my team inputs into the things that matter. • Ensure fairness and justice is at the heart of my decision making and support to my team and others. • Take time to build trust, building the respect of our stakeholders and ensuring as a team we take accountability for doing what we agree to do. • Develop others and ensure we work as one team for Lambeth, encouraging everyone to play their part • Take positive action to ensure everyone in my team has opportunities to learn and grow at work • Encourage everyone to be themselves at work and value who they are • I am inclusive and actively celebrate diversity, recognising everyone in my team as individuals. 	
		<p>Kindness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat each member of my team with respect and dignity just as I would want for myself. • Encourage each member of my team to do their very best work and am available to them to provide support and guidance. • Personalise my support to each team members and look out for them, lending a hand wherever I can • Encourage everyone to try and learn from mistakes and use integrity to take action with my team to put things right together • Work with empathy seeking to understand each and every member of team, their 	

		<p>unique perspective and circumstances and ensure everyone is heard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the time to communicate, being honest, open and genuine and taking the time to get to know team members as individuals. • Show compassion and patience recognising that everyone in the team has unique experience and celebrating the great work they do for Lambeth. • Look after the health and wellbeing of my team members and encourage open and regular discussions about the issues that impact on them, working together to find solutions. 	
		<p>Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I encourage and support my team to do the right thing even when it's tough and we communicate our decisions in a timely way • I ensure my team and employees take individual and collective accountability for performance and delivery, making sure that they have clear plans and performance objectives. • I ensure my team plan ahead, getting the basics right and take swift action when problems arise • I encourage my team to be risk aware and ensuring that our decisions and actions are informed and understood and communicated to others. • I provide regular, timely and constructive feedback to my team members on their performance and behaviours and act quickly when performance is not on track. • I share my learning, knowledge and skills with others thorough coaching and mentoring and encourage others to do the same. • I ensure that my team and I put residents, communities, customers and their needs at the centre of everything we do. • I encourage my team to learn and grow and ask questions to find the information they need to do their jobs 	
		Ambition	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am proud of our borough and my team and encourage everyone in the team to aim for the highest possible standards of excellence in everything we do. • Encourage my team to be flexible and try new things when it's appropriate to do so and tell me what could be improved. • Promote a one team for Lambeth approach reaching out to our stakeholders to face our challenges together • Encourage and support my team to be courageous for our residents and communities and stop at nothing to ensure they have the best possible outcomes • I make time for the team to Innovate and look for creative ways to do things better, being curious about possibilities. • Positively challenge and encourage the team to collaborate and look for solutions together across service and team boundaries. • Make time for my team to grow and develop taking advantage of opportunities to learn from each other and others. We plan our learning and career growth. 	
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