

Job Description

POST TITLE:	Lawyer
DIRECTORATE:	Chief Executive's
SERVICE:	Legal & Governance Services
GRADE:	PO5
LOCATION:	Within the London Borough of Hackney
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Senior Lawyer

PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

- To contribute to the development and delivery of Corporate & service strategies, policies and operational plans that secure the achievement of service and council objectives.
- To manage a caseload of routine and non-routine legal matters with minimum supervision.
- To provide clear, consistent and accurate legal advice to clients in the Council's services.

MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

- To undertake advocacy on behalf of the Council in courts and tribunals, where this is part of the work of the team.
- To draft complex reports and legal documentation.
- To deliver seminars or briefings to clients, colleagues, service users, Members and others.
- To research and analyse the law.
- To comply with the Service's practice management standards and manage cases within that framework.
- To use the case management system and to record the chargeable hours per annum required for the post or such other outcome focused targets as may be set by the Head of Service or Director of Legal and Governance.

- To provide any performance data required by the Service promptly and accurately.
- To ensure that all work is carried out to the standards required by any formal arrangement with clients.
- To support the Council in achieving its strategic aims and delivering the corporate objectives.
- To play a full part in the team to which the post holder is assigned, attending team meetings, briefings etc and working co-operatively with colleagues.
- To participate in client liaison arrangements by providing information or attending meetings as required and to implement any client care procedures.
- To keep up to date with developments in relevant areas of law, legal practice and relevant local authority services and be able to assess the implication of these changes on the council. To take responsibility for self-development.
- To notify the Legal Partners, Head of Service and Director of Legal of any instructions or events that could result in a breach by the Council or an individual of any legislation, common law, standing order or rule of propriety or could constitute maladministration.
- To supervise junior staff when required to do so.
- To attend evening meetings as and when required. To attend and represent the Council at external meetings, Council committee meetings and working groups as necessary (which might fall outside of normal office hours), to advise on legal issues, governance and procedure.
- To work collaboratively with clients to ensure a customer focused and holistic approach to the delivery of services
- To demonstrate and be part of an ambitious, agile legal team with a sound grasp of the bigger picture, including the Council's key priorities and continually modernising programme.
- To undertake any other duties appropriate to the grade and character of the work as may be reasonably required by the Head of Service.

MAIN WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- The post holder will deal with officers across the Council (including senior officers), Solicitors in private practice, Barristers, Barristers' Clerks, other local authorities, the courts service, partners and members of the public and should be able to relate professionally to them.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- The nature of the job requires a high degree of confidentiality, tact and discretion when giving and receiving information which could be confidential.

NB: All employees are expected to adhere to the Council's Diversity & Equality and Health and Safety Policies.

Person Specification

EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE:

- Qualified solicitor or barrister (Supreme Court of England and Wales/English Bar) or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives
- Experience of undertaking a caseload of both routine and non-routine legal matters
- Experience of providing clear, consistent and accurate legal advice to clients on the interpretation of the law
- Experience of using a case management system.
- Experience of undertaking a caseload of complex legal matters
- Experience in one or more of the following areas of law relevant to the team in which the post holder will be working:
 - Adult social services
 - Children's Services
 - Employment
 - Environmental law
 - General litigation
 - Housing
 - Licensing
 - Local government
 - Planning
 - Policy
 - Procurement and contracts
 - Property
 - Prosecutions
 - Regeneration
 - Trading Standards and consumer protection
- Experience of advocacy
- Experience of researching and presenting complex legal arguments
- Experience of achieving chargeable hours targets.
- Experience of providing legal services to clients to agreed standards and of implementing client care policies and initiatives.
- Understanding of the workings of local government and the issues affecting a multi-cultural inner city area.
- IT literate

SKILLS

- Ability to provide high quality legal services to clients across the Council.
- Ability to manage a demanding caseload of legal matters
- Ability to achieve chargeable hours targets
- Ability to represent the Council in courts and tribunals

- Client care skills
- Ability to comply with practice management and other professional standards.
- To maintain files in accordance with Lexcel requirements and the Office Manual
- To comply with the Law Society and Solicitors Regulatory Rules
- Ability to use a case management system effectively and record at least 1200 chargeable hours per annum
- Highly developed communication skills both oral and written
- Influencing and negotiation skills
- Presentation skills
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to embrace and implement the Council's Equalities Policy

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Personal and professional demeanour which generates creditability and confidence amongst customers, Members, Chief Officers, managers, staff, external partners and all other stakeholders.
- Willing to be flexible and adopt new ways of working to manage a varied workload.
- Able to take own initiative to be proactive and work independently to ensure tasks are completed on time and to the required standard.
- Able to take personal responsibility for maintaining and developing professional knowledge and expertise.

CIRCUMSTANCES

- To be able to attend meetings, including evening meetings as and when required
- A DBS check will be required only if the post holder has unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults during the course of the job.

NB: All employees are expected to adhere to the Council's Equality & Diversity and Health & Safety Policies