

Job Description & Person Specification:

**Legal Advocacy Support Project (LASP) Coordinator and Caseworker**

**Hours: 28-35 hours per week (35 hours is full time)**

**Responsible To: Welfare Benefits Team Leader**

**Starting Salary: £27,538.72 (pro rata if part time) (to be reviewed after 6 months)**

**Fixed Term to March 2024**

**30 days’ annual leave + bank holidays (pro rata), plus office closure between Christmas and New Year. Generous pension. Office or hybrid working.**

LASP is a model for enhancing social welfare law services by recruiting and training law students to undertake PIP and WCA appeals preparation and representation. The LASP model has proved to be highly effective within welfare benefits appeals casework in Bristol and three other UK cities. We have an exceptionally high success rate (95%), our clients tell us that they feel very well supported and achieve better outcomes for them and our volunteers get hands-on legal experience unparalled in any other legal setting.

The postholder will manage the caseload of benefit appeals effectively and undertake all aspects of project co-ordination including volunteer management. The postholder would also work with the Law Centre’s CEO and development team on ways to improve the capacity, performance and inclusiveness of LASP.

**The principal duties of the postholder are as follows:**

1. To oversee all aspects of the operation of LASP, including volunteer recruitment, training, induction, and supervision.
2. To give effective, accurate and accessible Welfare Benefits legal advice to clients of the Project and to manage your own caseload.
3. To receive and respond to client enquiries, to communicate with clients face-to-face, video and by phone, email and post and ensure deadlines are met.
4. To supervise and be responsible for day-to-day line management of the Casework Support Officer.
5. Planning and co-ordination of the recruitment, training and supervision of new volunteers, with assistance from the Casework Support Officer.
6. Overseeing the allocation of cases to volunteers and ensuring that case preparation and representation by volunteers is carried out promptly, efficiently and to a good standard.
7. Co-ordinating the supervision of volunteers’ casework to ensure that it complies with case management systems, administrative procedures and quality standards as required by funding bodies and by the Law Centre.
8. Overseeing the effective use of LASP online operational systems and procedures and carrying out periodic adaptations and improvements.
9. Ensuring the effective maintenance of volunteer rotas and planning for absences including exam and holiday leave.
10. To liaise with the Team Leader and BLC development team over Project expansion and development.
11. To maintain records and information resources relevant to the Project.
12. Provide reports on the performance of the Project, working with the development team to best capture and report on outcomes and impact.
13. Overseeing the provision of appropriate references for LASP volunteers.
14. To liaise with internal teams and functions including triage, office manager and communications in relation to LASP capacity, resource needs and marketing.

**General Duties**

1. To comply with case management systems, administrative procedures and quality standards as required by funding bodies and by the Law Centre.
2. Actively contribute and participate in staff and team meetings, and to organisational work such as policy development, strategic planning and developmental activities.
3. To attend appropriate training courses and maintain readership of relevant sector and legal publications in order to maintain and develop professional expertise.
4. To ensure that the Equality and Diversity policy of the Law Centre is implemented.
5. To attend regular supervision meetings to discuss performance and career development.
6. To participate in training & development activities, including cascading learning internally to teams as appropriate.
7. To carry out such other duties as may be required.

**Person Specification**

**Essential aptitudes, skills or knowledge**

* Good organisational, prioritising and time management skills
* Ability to manage a busy caseload, working under pressure and meeting deadlines
* Excellent verbal and written communication skills
* Experience of working with vulnerable clients
* Knowledge of welfare benefits law
* Advocacy experience, preferably in WCA and/or PIP appeals representation
* Commitment to sharing learning, skills and knowledge
* An understanding of and commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
* Commitment to delivery of social justice, and to Law Centre’s mission

**Desirable aptitudes, skills or knowledge**

* Understanding of volunteer management principles
* Experience of day to day supervision of others
* Experience of working on grant funded projects
* Experience of working with cloud based systems and online video
* Experience, or a demonstrable understanding of partnership working
* Experience of effective team working
* Relationship management with a range of other organisations
* Ability to prepare and deliver training