

Job Description

Post	Paralegal
Reports to	Cost of Living Crisis Clinic Consultant (Solicitor)
Salary	£20,880 per annum (FTE £28,107)
Hours per week	26 hours per week, over 4 days - Monday to Thursday - hybrid arrangement Cost of Living Crisis Clinic days are Tuesdays at Old Street and Wednesdays at Ladbroke Grove from 8.45am to 2.00pm
Contract type	12 months fixed term contract Job share will be considered
Location	North Kensington and Old Street

The Westway Trust is a unique charity that stewards the resources of a 23 acre estate under the Westway A40. The Board of the Trust is led by local people and the Westway Trust now works together with the local community to enable North Kensington to thrive.

In 2021 a new plan was created for the organisation. This plan set a new vision, mission and values and the Trust now has a clear transformation programme to achieve social, environmental and economic wellbeing and justice. Our leadership team is testament to our values as we strive for excellence and to deliver our ambition we work with a whole range of stakeholders including around 80 Member Organisations. You can see the organisations plan at: www.westway.org/about-us/horizon-plan/ We achieved well with our first Horizon Plan and we have just created a new one which sets out our direction to 2028. This will include a number of large refurbishment projects preparing for new buildings.

The estate is home to more than three acres of public green space, 120 tenants including more than 20 charities and non-profit organisations, two sports and fitness facilities, 48 light industrial units, 4 car parks, 34 offices, 32 shops, 2 entertainment venues, a Community Centre, and an Olympic-registered skate park. This role is critical to ensuring management of a vibrant, diverse and thriving estate.

We already receive more than one million visitors each year to the estate, and we want to expand the community, cultural, retail, sporting and enterprise opportunities here together so that it is a place the community is proud of and even more visitors can enjoy.

Job purpose

Reporting to and supporting our Clinic Supervisor, you will co-ordinate the delivery of our busy Cost of Living Crisis Clinic used by clients who need assistance with:

- making successful applications for welfare benefits and social housing, and
- advice and representation, pertaining to disability benefit appeal representation, and
- social housing disrepair and housing allocation legal advice, and
- reducing their utility and broadband costs, and
- applying for emergency and general grants to cover essential costs

You will work with a wide range of people internally and externally, providing support and supervision to volunteer advisers and helping clients, whilst co-ordinating the efficient service delivery of our clinics.

This role is central to Westway Trust's commitment to deliver activities and events to the benefit of the North Kensington community. You will also work from and help to co-ordinate the delivery of our Cost of Living Crisis Clinic at our outreach site, St Luke's Community Centre, London EC1V.

Principal accountabilities

The list below outlines the core principal duties and tasks related to this role. This list is not intended to cover every responsibility as by the nature of this role, the Paralegal will be expected to take ownership of the areas of accountability below, and to develop it in line with the needs of Westway Trust and the communities of North Kensington.

Cost of Living Crisis Clinic

You will be helping to deliver our twice weekly Cost of Living Crisis Clinic, where we help clients make successful applications for welfare benefits and social housing. Additionally, at this clinic we offer advice and representation to those who need disability benefits appeal representation, and social housing disrepair and housing allocation legal advice.

You will be responsible for the effective running of our clinics, including:

- Managing your own small caseload of welfare benefit and housing cases, and keeping up-to-date with relevant laws and policies.
- Being the initial point of contact for stakeholders, including receiving calls and emails from clients and referring agencies. Liaising in a positive manner with our stakeholders, e.g. clients, other teams within Westway Trust, our funders, including a City Law firm, and our hosts, Westway Trust and St Luke's Community Centre.
- Liaising with reception staff to facilitate the booking of client appointments in an efficient and timely manner.
- Setting up and clearing away after clinic sessions.
- Meeting, greeting and orienting (showing where the facilities are and H&S guidance) clients and volunteers.
- Triaging clients on to our database and referring clients who are out of scope to other relevant organisations.
- Assisting clients to, and supervising volunteers who, complete online and paper forms both face-to-face and remotely.
- Responsibility for monitoring our work, completing reports, writing case studies, making sure volunteers complete their data entry and case notes after advising clients, and running case management statistics using AdvicePro, our case management system, (training on AdvicePro will be provided).
- Recruiting, inducting, training and supervising volunteers both corporate (from the City) and lay (students and local residents).
- Publicising our service.
- Attending relevant meetings and training and keeping resources up-to-date.
- General administration including: photocopying, scanning and record keeping, and coordinating the general day-to-day activities of the clinics.
- Effectively contributing to make our clinics high performing in line with the values of Westway Trust.
- Any other duties as may reasonably be required.

Appeals & Representation Duties (full training will be given)

Responsibility for a small amount of appeal cases, including:

- Publicity.
- Triaging clients, including reading appellant's hearing bundles to assess the merits of their case.
- Having your own small caseload of disability benefit appeal cases, and keeping up-to-date with caselaw.
- Responsible for the smooth case management of appellants' appeal cases, from inception to post-hearing, (including: those referred to our sponsoring City law firm). This includes steering pre-hearing case conferences, attending hearings, representing appellants, and initiating post-hearing applications for leave to appeal on points of law.

Person specification

You will need to have the right blend and balance of strong administration, coordination and delivery skills, with excellent interpersonal and customer-facing skills, and legal knowledge, whilst working for a charity supporting and enhancing the lives of people in the local community.

Qualification

You will have or be working towards a law degree or equivalent. Wanting to become a solicitor is highly desirable.

Knowledge and experience:

- Previous experience of providing legal advice, with casework.
- A good understanding of the law in any jurisdiction.
- Experience of providing an efficient, customer focused service, with a personable and collaborative approach and ability to provide, develop and maintain friendly positive relationships with clients, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders.
- Good time management and organisational skills.
- Excellent administrative skills.
- High level of IT skills. Experience of using Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint and database software (we use AdvicePro)

Personal skills:

- Good communication and presentation skills, orally and in writing.
- Good people management/awareness skills.
- Ability to work independently and on own initiative with minimum supervision.
- Ability to work as part of a team in a multi-cultural and diverse environment.
- An inquisitive mind and good problem solver.
- Interest in civil law.
- Good memory and research skills.
- Demonstrable understanding and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Connections to/understanding of North Kensington or the surrounding area is highly desirable

The ideal candidate will demonstrate the Trust's Values: Courage, Equity, Integrity, Openness and Sustainability - at all times in their work and behaviour.