

MONEY ADVICE TEAM

COST OF LIVING CRISIS VOLUNTEERS X 5

Organisation summary

SWLLC is a community based, Legal Aid practice and a registered Charity. Our history dates back to 1974 when the first Law Centres in Wandsworth were created. We became SWLLC in 2004 through the merger of a number of Law Centres in South West London. We now work across six boroughs, Croydon, Merton, Kingston, Richmond and Sutton and Wandsworth, helping people to access, understand and enforce their legal rights. SWLLC helps around 8,000 people per year.

- 1- SWLLC provides full legal casework, representation and advice in the following areas of social welfare law: Community Care, Debt, Employment, Housing, Immigration and Asylum and in a very limited way in Welfare Rights.
- 2- Our housing solicitors are also duty solicitors at the County Court Duty Scheme, giving emergency advice and representation in possession hearings at Croydon, Kingston and Wandsworth County Courts.
- 3- In addition to our busy daytime casework and court services, SWLLC runs the largest pro bono clinic service in the UK through a network of volunteer solicitors and trainees.

Overall responsibility

Our busy Cost of Living Crisis Navigation team assists vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community with a range of money problems, such as rent arrears, utility debts (gas, electricity and water debts), Council Tax arrears, unsecured loans (credit cards, payday loans), among many other things. The cost of living crisis that the entire nation is currently experiencing has only exacerbated the need for this service. As a result, the team is expanding and is looking for a proactive and enthusiastic volunteer with great organisational and customer service skills to provide administrative/casework support for caseworkers and advisers, with a large caseload of clients.

Overall Tasks

As a Cost of Living Crisis Volunteer, you may be asked to support vulnerable clients to ensure the smooth running of their case. This will include gathering information on their behalf to write legal letters to creditors, or to assist them applying for Welfare Benefit they are entitled to and to apply for charitable grants on their behalf. You may be asked to assist them with Benefit appeals and witness statements and may need to carry out some legal research in support of their matters.

You may also be asked to carry out surveys and questionnaires to clients who have been assisted through crisis and prospective clients referred to the service. This will include contacting clients on the phone to ask questions about their circumstances and financial situations, about their

expectations of the service for new clients, and whether these expectations were met to clients who have already benefited from the project services.

As such, you must enjoy and be confident and comfortable to engage with people from all walks of life, and able to use your emotional intelligence to assist people from disadvantaged background who may be struggling to make ends meet.

The role does not require any previous similar experience as full training will be given.

You will receive full training and have access to further training and events provided within the Law Centre during the time that you are volunteering.

Person Specification

Key skills:

- Good attention to detail and high levels of accuracy
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel and Outlook)
- Positive, proactive approach to team work
- You should have a professional telephone manner, able to remain calm under pressure
- Strong communication skills, both written and oral
- Good organisational skills
- IT literacy

Commitment

We are seeking someone who can commit to volunteering at least one full day a week (9.30 am to 4.30 pm), from the Croydon office for at least six months, on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

Location

This is an office-based volunteering role. You will be required to attend the Croydon office weekly.

Remuneration

While this is a voluntary, unpaid position, we can reimburse your reasonable expenses for up to £15 per working day when travelling and volunteering in the office.

Start date

We are seeking someone who can start as soon as possible.

Application process

Please apply by sending your CV to volunteers@swllc.org. This is a rolling recruitment and so your application will be considered as soon as we receive it.