

November 2022

Dear Applicant

Re Finance and Compliance Manager, East Croydon

Thank you for your interest in this post.

I am pleased to enclose:

1. Job Description and Person Specification for Finance and Compliance Manager
2. Guidelines for Applicants
3. Organisation Summary

To apply, please complete the application form which can be downloaded [here](#) or from our website at www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs/. Applications should be sent by email to recruitment@swllc.org. The closing date for receipt of applications is **5pm on 6 January 2023**. Interviews will take place soon after.

Yours faithfully

Patrick Marples
South West London Law Centres
Patrick.marples@swllc.org

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES
Legal Action for Local Communities

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Please read these notes carefully before filling in your application form, as the decision to shortlist for interview will be based solely on the information provided on the application form. You can find more details on the law centre at our website – www.swllc.org along with a copy of our last annual report.

General Guidelines

Your application form will need to address how you meet the person and job specification.

Selection Criteria – The Person Specification

The skills, experience and qualification described in the Person Specification are the criteria against which you will be assessed and short-listed. Make sure you have covered each section of the Person Specification in your letter.

Finally – take a copy of the form and keep it to remind yourself of what you have said if you are called for an interview. Good Luck!

Legal Action for Local Communities

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST:	Finance and Compliance Manager
Salary:	Up to £38,000 + 4% Pension.
Hours:	Full Time
Reports to:	CEO and part of the Senior Management Team
Line Manages:	Finance Assistant
Functional Links:	Treasurer, Board of Trustees, CEO, Senior Management Team, and Costs Coordinator
Term:	Permanent
Based at:	East Croydon - head office – but post involves visiting our other sites.

Key Tasks

- 1) To manage, maintain and develop comprehensive financial records and systems for South West London Law Centres;
- 2) In conjunction with the Treasurer to liaise with the appointed auditors to complete the process of producing SWLLC's annual accounts;
- 3) To administer statutory reporting duties to our regulated bodies
- 4) To develop the wider collection of compliance and data reporting across the services of SWLLC through systems such as Compliance Champion;
- 5) To draft financial reports for Board and Finance Sub-committee meetings;
- 6) To prepare other financial information as required;
- 7) In conjunction with the Treasurer to periodically review and develop financial policies, systems and procedures to ensure they are the best they can be and service the law centre well.

Duties & Responsibilities

Finance

- 1) Maintain the accounts and financial records of SWLLC in a correct manner and in accordance with SWLLC's Financial Regulations and statutory requirements;
- 2) To line manage, supervise and support the finance assistant to:

- a) Process all transactions, payments, income and regulatory returns in a timely and efficient manner and ensure that all transactions are recorded on the current system SOS and any other package used;
 - b) Reconcile SWLLC's bank accounts, including Client account, liaise with the bank on BACS payments, changes to authorisations and payment instructions, and manage on-line banking facilities as appropriate;
 - c) Ensure that invoices are raised promptly and that amounts due are received in full and without delay;
 - d) Ensure that all invoices received from suppliers are recorded on the accounting system as soon as they are received, notify the relevant members of staff, ensure that payment documentation is properly prepared and authorised, and that payment is made within the period allowed for payment;
 - e) Deal with all supplier enquiries, answering calls and emails promptly;
 - f) Process staff expense claims;
 - g) Operate a system to control disbursements, matching payments to income receipts and ensuring that, where Payments on Account can be claimed, this is done at the same time as the expenditure is incurred
- 3) Maintain individual ledgers on the Client Account for all cases where payments of client funds are received; ensure that funds received on behalf of clients are paid out to the appropriate recipients as quickly as possible so as to minimise the average balance on the Client Account;
 - 4) Liaise with the Costs Coordinator to assess the likely amount and timing of income from litigation activities, and use this information to update SWLLC's cashflow forecast;
 - 5) Reconcile the XERO accounts package against the data held in CLIO case management system making sure that they accurately reflect each other;
 - 6) Provide timely and accurate information to SWLLC's outsourced Payroll provider to ensure staff salaries are paid on the due dates, and that monthly and annual salary information is provided to all staff as appropriate;
 - 7) Liaise with statutory authorities on all tax matters, including VAT, PAYE and National Insurance;
 - 8) Manage the processes for making regular claims to HMRC for Gift Aid income and issue letters/emails to donors as appropriate;
 - 9) Maintain SWLLC's financial procedures manual, ensure that these procedures are complied with, and train other staff to follow the financial procedures.

Budgets and Accounts

- 1) Work with the Treasurer and the members of the Senior Management Team to prepare a detailed Annual Budget for approval by the Trustees, and to update it as necessary;
- 2) Monitor income and expenditure against budgets - liaising with key staff - and meet regularly with other staff and the finance committee to review this;
- 3) Prepare a monthly detailed cashflow forecast with a forward forecast;
- 4) To ensure that all payments and other obligations are met in full as they fall due;
- 5) Prepare quarterly management accounts;
- 6) Liaise with and prepare information required by the auditors for the completion of the annual accounts.

Legal Aid

- 1) Liaise with both the Cost Coordinator and Finance Assistant to process all legal aid transactions, undertake and maintain the ledgers of income due and received from the LAA, and keep records of any changes made by the LAA to sums claimed; reconcile any unidentified payments received from the LAA with SWLLC's records

Compliance

- 1) Make timely returns of the annual accounts as required by the Charity Commission, Companies House, Information Commissioner, Financial Conduct Authority, OISC and any other regulator we need to comply with;
- 2) Develop, maintain and update a compliance register such as Compliance Champion to collate all the information needed to maintain Lexcel quality accreditation;
- 3) Liaise with the Head of Legal Practice over the maintenance and full collation of quality compliance records such as file reviews, complaints undertakings etc.
- 4) Assist the Head of Legal Practice in preparation for annual Lexcel audit;
- 5) Maintain HR records, keeping records of all leave, sickness, appraisals, references, accreditations and job leaving records;
- 6) Maintain health and safety records and checks.

Data and Reporting

- 1) Set up and maintain a funding profile database diarising all reporting requirements. Liaise with the SMT over reporting requirements;
- 2) Collate data from all projects and sources of work so that we can provide demographic data of the people who come to us, who we assist, the types of work and the outcomes achieved;
- 3) Report on the law centre's data in different formats so that we can report to our various funders and other audiences.

Board Meetings

- 1) Prepare papers including management accounts, cashflow forecast and budget preparation and monitoring and any other financial reports required by the Treasurer to SWLLC's Finance Sub Committee and Board of Trustees;
- 2) Prepare up-to-date compliance and data monitor reports.

Other Financial matters

- 1) Assist CEO and other SWLLC staff by preparing financial information to support funding applications, and provide financial reporting information which may be required by funders, or in respect of other types of income or payment made to the charity.

Administrative and Other Duties

- 1) To carry out a share of administrative tasks including those detailed in SWLLC`s Quality Manual;
- 2) Play a full role in supporting the Senior Management Team to maximise its effectiveness;
- 3) Attend meetings of the SWLLC Trustee Board and sub-committees as required;
- 4) In addition to the tasks and duties listed in this job description, to undertake such duties as may be identified and which are generally compatible with the functions of the post;
- 5) Ensure that work conforms to Solicitors Regulation Authority, Lexcel and Legal Aid Agency Quality Assurance standards and other SWLLC approved policies and procedures;
- 6) Have regard at all times, in the planning and execution of duties, to the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy;
- 7) To carry out any other matters that would be reasonably expected of the role.

SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES
Legal Action for Local Communities

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST:	Finance and Compliance Manager
Salary:	Up to £38,000 + 4% Pension.
Hours:	Full Time
Reports to:	CEO and part of the Senior Management Team
Line Manages:	Finance Assistant
Functional Links:	Treasurer, Board of Trustees, CEO, Senior Management Team and Costs Coordinator
Term:	Permanent
Based at:	East Croydon - head office – but post involves visiting our other sites.

Essential competencies

- 1) Excellent verbal and written communication skills;
- 2) Highly organised with strong organisational and planning skills. Able to set priorities, meet goals and evaluate the process and results;
- 3) Confident, self-reliant, capable of taking the initiative and working autonomously;
- 4) An eye for detail and concern for accuracy;
- 5) Resilient and calm under pressure, a flexible attitude with the aptitude to work well in a team;
- 6) Professional manner, able to develop good working relationships with people both internally and externally at all levels;
- 7) Exceptional problem-solving skills. Able to assess problems, identify causes, gather and process relevant information, generate workable solutions, and make recommendations and resolve the problems.

Experience and Knowledge

- 8) Relevant accountancy/financial qualifications. Knowledge of bookkeeping and preparation of management accounts;
- 9) A minimum of two years' experience in a similar role;
- 10) Excellent IT Skills with extensive experience of working with Excel, Microsoft Office applications and computerised accounting packages;
- 11) Experience of dealing with auditors and a clear understanding of their requirements preparing annual accounts and liaising with auditors;
- 12) Knowledge of financial planning, management and processes. Ability to understand accounts and to communicate financial information;

- 13) Ability to develop, maintain and report on data and compliance records including the ability to impart information in an understandable way;
- 14) Ability to attend some meetings outside office hours including Board meetings

Desirable

- 15) Experience and knowledge of charity accounting including SORP compliance
- 16) Experience of VAT
- 17) Experience of setting up financial procedures and implementing them with other staff
- 18) Legal Aid and Solicitors Accounts Rules 22.

ORGANISATION SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POST

About South West London Law Centres

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is a charity and community based, legal practice working to relieve poverty, suffering and distress for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities, in need of help at difficult times in their lives by resolving the legal problems they face. Our support ranges from free legal advice through to representation in social welfare law at courts and tribunals. Alongside a busy daytime service of end to end casework, with the support of city law firms and local solicitors we coordinate hundreds of professional volunteers for our free legal advice clinics across South West London each week.

We are able to trace our roots back to 1974; SWLLC itself was formed by a merger of four law centres in 2004 and now covers six London boroughs: Wandsworth, Merton, Croydon, Sutton, Kingston and Richmond. People also come from further afield to request our expert help.

We provide three main services directly assisting 6,000 – 7,000 people per year and receive over 60,000 calls for assistance. Our website, with its online triage forms, is widely used both by members of our community and referring agencies.

- Casework and representation in social welfare law covering, community care, debt, employment, housing, immigration & asylum, public law and in a limited way welfare rights - Typical case - “Our immigration solicitor has just reunited a severely disabled client with his 4 children after 7 years!! Our client is understandably overjoyed. Just another day at SWLLC” (we worked on around 2,000 cases last year)
- Provision of emergency representation in housing cases as part of the county court duty solicitor scheme in Wandsworth, Kingston and Croydon County Courts - Typical case – “Today one of our housing solicitors helped 3 tenants with a combined total of £14k in rent arrears and social landlords. Each with a bailiff appointment. All were women, and all had children. Every single one stopped their evictions today at court with the help of our solicitors” (we represent around 1,000 people per year)
- Pro bono clinics each week covering a range of civil issues. “An investigation into a Sec 21 Notice for possession found that a deposit hadn’t been protected allowing the client to remain and the debt team to resolve his debts” (we assist around 3,000 people per year)

We are funded through legal aid, grants, corporate donations and in a limited way now charge for some services in employment and immigration

Find out more on our website about our impact: www.swllc.org

About the Role

Context of the Post

SWLLC has a turnover approaching £1.7 million per annum. This will be around £2 million after the payment of disbursements. We still provide most of our services for free to our service users but have started to charge for some of them. Most of our income is derived from casework through cost income, certificated legal aid and contracts with the Legal Aid Agency. We also have an increasing number of projects funded through charitable grants and have a strong relationship with a number of city firms who support SWLLC. We are looking to build an individual donor base.

We are creating a new role to take over the finance roles currently undertaken by the Senior Management Team as well as develop compliance and data reporting functions. We are seeking to grow the work of the law centre and need help with the increasing reporting requirements.

You need to have a strong analytical mind and attention to detail to help maintain the law centres records. You will be working closely with the other members of the Senior Management Team and the Treasurer but will also need a strong sense of initiative to take on and develop projects yourself. This is a fast-paced and dynamic organisation.

We have recently moved to a new case management system CLIO and a separate accounts record XERO.