

Our ref: PM  
Your ref:  
Date June 2023

Dear Applicant

**Immigration Solicitor/Caseworker – IAAS Level 2 - Domestic Violence Project**

Thank you for your interest in this post to work in our Croydon office with outreach in Surrey .

I am pleased to enclose:

1. Job Description and Person Specification for Immigration Solicitor/Caseworker
2. Guidelines for Applicants
3. Organisation Summary

Applications should be made on our application form which can be downloaded [here](#) or from our website at [www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs/](http://www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs/)

The closing date for receipt of applications is at 9am 24<sup>th</sup> July. Applications should be sent by email to [recruitment@swllc.org](mailto:recruitment@swllc.org).

Yours faithfully

**Patrick Marples CEO**  
South West London Law Centres

**SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**  
***Legal Action for Local Communities***

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**JOB ADVERT – Immigration Solicitor/Caseworker IAAS Level 2**

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South West London Law Centres (SWLLC), one of the largest and most progressive Law Centres in the country, is seeking up to three experienced Level 2 IAAS accredited Asylum/Immigration Solicitors or Caseworkers to provide casework supporting clients who have been referred from a number of projects

Domestic Violence Project .

Migrant Homeless and Wandsworth Project

Work will be mainly under a Legal Aid Agency contract. We are looking for people who can work on either a full-time or part-time basis, Our immigration team is highly respected and was again rated as “Excellent” in a independent peer review by the Legal Aid Agency in January 2022. The Law Centre is well known and highly regarded, winning the Legal Aid Firm/Not for Profit in the 2020 LALY Awards. **When applying please indicated which post or posts you are applying for.**

We can offer flexible working and generous benefits.

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<b>POST:</b>	Immigration Solicitor/Caseworker IAAS Level 2
<b>Salary:</b>	Up to £36,377 p.a., depending on experience
<b>Term:</b>	Permanent
<b>Based at:</b>	Croydon with some outreach

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The closing date for the post is 24 July 2023 at 9am with interviews soon after. The post is available for an immediate start. If you would like to discuss the post further, please email [recruitment@swllc.org](mailto:recruitment@swllc.org). Applications should be made on our application form which can be downloaded [here](#) or from our website at [www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs/](http://www.swllc.org/about-us/jobs/).

**SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**  
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**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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<b>POST:</b>	Immigration Solicitor/Caseworker IAAS Level 2
<b>Salary:</b>	Up to £36,377 p.a. depending on experience with an employer and employee pension contribution of 4% each
<b>Reports to:</b>	Immigration Team Leader
<b>Holidays :</b>	29 days plus bank holidays
<b>Functional Links:</b>	Caseworker/Volunteers with the immigration team; Senior Management Team and Branch Administrators
<b>Term:</b>	Permanent
<b>Based at:</b>	Croydon with outreach in Surrey

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This post is open to women only (Equality Act 2010 Work Occupational Requirement Exception, Schedule 9 Paragraph 1). This is because the role requires engagement with female service users, including discussion of sensitive issues including sexual assault.

**Key Tasks**

1. The post-holder will predominantly work under a project to help victims of domestic violence from a number of refugees in Surrey. You will provide a range of immigration and asylum casework to help to improve their immigration status which will help those people supported to be better able to move from the refuge. This will involve the whole range of immigration and asylum cases including: settlement, variation and extension of leave, asylum, deportation, removal, nationality and EU cases. Most areas of work are undertaken under the legal aid scheme with areas out of scope being covered by grant funding under a project funded by Surrey County Council. - SWLLC Surrey DV Immigration Project. The post will involve office based work in Croydon as well as some outreach in Surrey at a range of locations.

**Duties & Responsibilities**

2. To ensure that all advice, assistance and representation complies with the requirements of our Lexcel quality mark and where publicly funded complies with the requirements of the Legal Aid Agency and Lexcel quality mark

3. To ensure all casework is recorded within our case management system and prompt billing and payment of work undertaken. The post-holder will be expected to meet billing and time recording targets which are set in accordance with the overall requirements of the Law Centre's annual budget and our contracts. The current target is £50,000 per annum . Against this an allowance will be made for grant funded work.
4. To ensure that the terms of all Law Centre grant agreements are kept to in relation to advice & casework including providing reports as required.
5. To report on the work of the Law Centre to the management committee as required.
6. To participate in team meetings and to carry out file reviews in accordance with Lexcel requirements.
7. To participate in staff meetings from time to time.
8. To be responsible for your own word processing, filing and case recording within our case management system and maintenance of an electronic file.
9. To advise and provide training and talks to Law Centre staff and volunteers and to frontline advice agency staff within the Law Centre's catchment area as necessary
10. To attend meetings of coordinating bodies as required.
11. To share the work of maintaining everyday necessities.
12. To provide cover for colleagues during absences.

### **Advice & Casework**

13. To provide immigration and asylum advice and casework service to clients of the Law Centre. This is to include interviewing clients, advising them of their rights and responsibilities, assessing suitability and effectiveness of alternative courses of action, advising on potential challenges and legal procedures. Your clients will predominantly come from the project with the refugees.
14. To provide one off advice and liaison with the referrers into the project.
15. To assist the refugees under this project in helping their clients resolve any immigration/asylum matters. This will involve providing advice and guidance other than through casework.
16. To assist clients in liaising with other people and organisations to resolve their immigration/asylum problems where possible.
17. To represent clients at Immigration Tribunals and do the necessary preparation and research.
18. To visit clients at their homes and in the refuges as appropriate.
19. To instruct and attend Counsel's chambers with clients as appropriate.
20. To supervise as required any immigration/asylum advice and casework conducted.

### **SWLLC Surrey DV Immigration Project**

21. To take an active role in the new partnership that is being set up to assist victims of domestic violence with their immigration problems
22. To take referrals from the designated refuges in Surrey and other sources as part of this project

23. To assist the senior management team in reporting and complying with the project reporting and monitoring requirements
24. To take part in project meetings and events as and when required

### **Professional Development**

25. To attend courses on new legislation, specialist skills and the use of information technology.
26. To keep up to date with the changes in relevant legislation.
27. To read the relevant law journals.
28. To maintain IAAS level 2 accreditation, DBS checks and relevant authorisation through the SRA or OISC.
29. To discuss regularly with the Immigration Team Leader your job performance and personal career development.
30. To be appraised regularly and to engage fully in this process to further personal development and maximise your contribution to SWLLC.
31. To undertake such training as is necessary to maintain your accreditations.

### **Social Policy**

32. To be alert at all times to the social policy implications of issues presented by clients.
33. To take appropriate action to influence social policy in regard to these issues.

### **Equal Opportunities**

34. To have regard at all times in the planning and execution of duties to SWLLC's Equality and Diversity Policy.

### **Other Duties**

35. To play a full role in the organisation supporting colleagues to maximise their effectiveness.
36. 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.

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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<b>POST:</b>	Immigration Solicitor/Caseworker IAAS Level 2
<b>Salary:</b>	Up to £36,377 p.a. depending on experience with an employer and employee pension contribution of 4% each
<b>Reports to:</b>	Immigration Team Leader
<b>Functional Links:</b>	Caseworker/Volunteers with the immigration team, Senior Management Team and Branch Administrators
<b>Holidays :</b>	29 days plus bank holidays
<b>Term:</b>	Permanent
<b>Based at:</b>	Croydon with outreach in Surrey

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This post is open to women only (Equality Act 2010 Work Occupational Requirement Exception, Schedule 9 Paragraph 1). This is because the role requires engagement with female service users, including discussion of sensitive issues including sexual assault.

**Essential Experience**

1. Experience of working under a Legal Aid Agency Contract specification for Public Funding (Legal Aid) and Legal Help with demonstratable billing targets.
2. At least two years' full-time equivalent experience of immigration/asylum casework and representation covering a wide range of cases to meet the IAAS Level 2 accreditation.
3. Ability to manage a varied caseload of sufficient appropriate matters to meet the billing target currently of a minimum £50,000 per annum.
4. Ability to draft appropriate documentation in all areas and procedures of Immigration/Asylum law.
5. Commitment to equal opportunities as set out in the principles and policies of South West London Law Centres.

**Essential Skills**

6. Registered IAAS Level 2 caseworker.
7. Relevant accreditation with SRA or OISC and Enhanced DBS check.

8. An intelligent and highly motivated person who is accustomed to taking significant decisions and having a high level of personal accountability.
9. Ability to work independently with a proven ability to prioritise work and to meet deadlines.
10. Ability to liaise and work effectively in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders.
11. Excellent communication skills: you must be able to relate well to colleagues, clients and third parties, in person, in writing and on the telephone, despite the pressures of the role.
12. Understanding of the problems which face diverse communities particularly the difficulties faced by those fleeing domestic violence and the strategies of successfully dealing with vulnerabilities of these victims
13. Ability to be self-servicing: you will be expected to manage most of your own typing, filing and billing and payment of cases.
14. Ability to use computer and information technology including management information systems and to be self-servicing. Must be proficient in Microsoft operating systems (Word, Excel, and Office).
15. Ability to working collaboratively within SWLLC.
16. You must be very well organised in order to work well under pressure without compromising standards.

#### **Desirable Experience and Skills**

17. Experience of dealing with domestic violence cases through the immigration and asylum system.
18. A wide range of representation experience in immigration tribunals and ability to recognise cases that could be subject to judicial review or to be taken through the higher courts
19. Current IAAS supervisor accreditation.

## **SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**

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### **ORGANISATION SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POST**

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#### **Context of the Post**

We are seeking up to 2 experienced Asylum/Immigration Solicitors or Caseworkers to provide casework under a partnership project with Domestic Violence Refuges in Surrey. For a number of years, the law centre has taken a limited number of cases from a women's refuge in Surrey. These cases have predominately dealt with settlement applications. As well as casework, we have provided some one-off tier 2 advice to the clients and the women's refuges. The number of referrals has grown and there are other refuges in Surrey that need help as they have a growing number of clients who have immigration difficulties that make a move from the refuge more difficult. A successful funding application has been made to Surrey County Council to grow our capacity and they have agreed to fund the project whilst developing legal aid support. The post will involve some office-based work with the current in Croydon and is likely to involve some outreach in Surrey.

You will be taking referrals predominantly from the refuges and will take a lead in further developing the partnership with the refuges. As well as the casework there will one off advice and liaison with the staff and referrers from the refuges. We are looking for someone who can show the care and attention to our clients and the command of detail which is a hallmark of our work.

We are looking to recruit between 1.5 to 2 full time equivalent posts and welcome both full and part time applicants. These posts are open to women only (Equality Act 2010 Work Occupational Requirement Exception, Schedule 9 Paragraph 1). This is because the role requires engagement with female service users, including discussion of sensitive issues including sexual assault. The majority victims are women who prefer a female lawyer to talk about their past, sexual, physical and mental abuse which are the core parts of their cases.

The successful applicant will need to be able to demonstrate that they satisfy the Legal Aid Agency Standards to represent unaccompanied minors and be accredited at IAAS level 2 as they will need to be able to take on and develop a caseload. You will also need to get an enhanced DBS check.

Our immigration team is a small friendly, experienced and respected team of caseworkers and solicitors. We won Legal Aid Team of the Year - Solicitors Journal Awards 2017, where we were commended on our work with extremely vulnerable individuals, including victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors. One judge was said to have been highly impressed by our submission in the knowledge that our fellow short-listees were 'elephants against mice in terms of resources.' We were the only Law Centre to be shortlisted. We regularly get referrals from the Refugee Council, South London Refugee Association, Helen Bamber Foundation and Freedom from Torture (Medical Foundation).



We are part of a London wide partnership tackling immigration problems for homeless people.

We have a strong emphasis on quality – the team was again rated as “Excellent” in an independent Peer Review for the Legal Aid Agency in January 2022, Feedback from the review included:

“An exceptional level of client care was provided to vulnerable clients. A large proportion of the files reviewed related to clients who were vulnerable as a result of their youth, mental illness, physical illness, or experience of trauma (sometimes all of these).”

“There was evidence of good quality work being carried out on the files reviewed which led to some positive outcomes being achieved and on complex legal matters.”

#### The Law Centre

SWLLC is a community based legal 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 South West London boroughs (Croydon, Merton, Kingston, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth) helping people to understand and enforce their legal rights. In doing so, we address the root causes of social injustice – poverty, family breakdown, unemployment and exploitation. SWLLC provides full legal casework, representation and advice in the following areas of social welfare law: Community Care, Debt, Employment, Housing, **Immigration & Asylum** and in a limited way in Welfare Rights. We represent clients in all courts and tribunals. We help over 6,000 people per year through casework/representation, being the housing duty solicitor schemes at Croydon, Kingston and Wandsworth County Courts giving emergency representation in possession hearings for rent and owned homes and at the warrant stage for evictions, and through our pro bono schemes.

SWLLC has a long history of using volunteers and running one of the largest pro bono advice schemes in the country covering a wide area of legal problems. Since the pandemic these are now all run virtually.. We estimate in any one year over 400 volunteer lawyers will help with our clinics. There are 16 firms involved with the clinics as well as individual solicitors.

You can find out more from our website [www.swllc.org](http://www.swllc.org) of the scope and breath of work carried out by the Law Centre. .

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Our Croydon Office is a short walk from either East or West Croydon stations

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**GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

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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.

**General Guidelines**

1. Give only information, which is relevant to the post.
2. Complete all sections of the form. You will need to do this in order to be fairly compared to other candidates. All information given is treated as confidential.
3. Complete a rough draft first. This avoids mistakes and untidiness and enables you to organise and review the information you put on the form.
4. Get feedback from other people and make sure you give examples, which demonstrate your ability to do the job.
5. Complete the form in type, word processor, black ballpoint or ink.

**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 application form.

**Employment**

When completing this section include relevant part-time work or work taken on a voluntary basis. Outlining your previous work experiences or other responsibilities may help you to uncover relevant skills, which are clear signs of your ability to do the job.

### **Further Information**

In section four of the application form you should try to show how you are able to do the job. Rather than simply repeating your career history, look at the skills and experience required for the job and provide evidence that you possess them. Concentrate on the things you know and what you can do rather than on what other people in your group or workplace can do.

### **References**

Where possible at least one of your referees should be a previous employer; either you're present or most recent employer. If you have not previously been employed, or have not worked for some time, give the name of someone who knows you sufficiently well to confirm the information given and who can comment on your ability to do the job. (You must not provide a relative or partner's name as a referee).

### **Monitoring Information**

This section is included in order to monitor the effectiveness of SWLLC's Equal Opportunities Policy, which aims to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly. All information is treated in confidence and used only for statistical monitoring.

The monitoring section of the application form is not used as part of the selection process. Consequently, if for example you have a disability, and this is an item in the person specification, **do also mention it in the main part of your application form.**

**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!**