

25/03/2025

Dear Applicant

**Finance and Operations Manager**

Thank you for your interest in working with South West London Law Centres.

I am pleased to enclose:

- Organisation Summary and context of the posts
- Job Description and Person Specification for the Finance and Operations Manager post

To apply, please forward to [recruitment@swllc.org](mailto:recruitment@swllc.org) your up-to-date CV together with a cover letter of no more than two pages of A4, setting out how you meet the person's specifications and why you would like to work with South West London Law Centres.

**Please note that applications without a cover letter will not be considered.**

The closing date for receipt of applications is 5 pm on 02/05/2025

If you would like to have a brief informal chat to discuss the role, please contact us at [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*

**JOB ADVERT – Finance and Operations Manager**

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South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is one of the largest Law Centres in the country, dedicated to supporting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals in our communities. Our services range from emergency legal advice to full casework to representation in social welfare law matters at courts and tribunals. While many of our services remain free of charge, we have started charging for some.

With an annual turnover of 1.7 million, a significant portion of our income comes from casework through cost income, certificated legal aid, and contracts with the Legal Aid Agency. In addition, we run a growing number of projects funded by charitable grants and maintain strong partnerships with City Firms, who make regular donations. As part of our ongoing efforts to increase revenue, we are working to build an individual donor base while continuing our fundraising initiatives.

We are seeking an analytical, detail-oriented individual to replace an existing post holder to ensure the smooth operation of our financial and legal aid reporting processes and the management of our office contracts. This includes invoicing, payments, maintaining accurate bookkeeping records, and helping us meet reporting requirements. The role will also involve overseeing contracts for our 3 offices.

You will be part of a small senior management team running the law centre.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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<b>POST:</b>	Finance and Operations Manager- full time
<b>Salary:</b>	£ 38,700 per annum, plus 4% pension contributions
<b>Reports to:</b>	CEO, Trustees, Finance Board of Trustees, and SMT
<b>Term:</b>	Full-time- 35 hours a week, permanent
<b>Based at:</b>	SWLLC's Croydon Office / Hybrid

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

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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.

SWLLC now works 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. In 2023/24 we assisted 5,868 people. We represent clients in all courts and tribunals and worked on 2,505 cases in 2023/24.

We continue to run one of the largest pro bono clinic services across England, we deliver around 100 free clinic appointments per week offering initial advice on a wide range of civil/legal problems over 400 pro-bono lawyers helped 2,800 clients last year.

We also provide 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.

### **Working at South West London Law Centres**

South West London Law Centres has served the communities of South West London for 50 years. Today, we continue to meet the needs and address the disadvantages of around 6,000 clients per year. They include women fleeing domestic violence, people who are in a housing crisis, people with no income or recourse to public funds, those with complex benefits challenges, and people mistreated by unscrupulous employers.

Joining the law centres is a chance to be a part of the law centres movement and to make a real impact with every case. We have a generous leave allowance of 29 days per calendar year, rising to 34 days after five years of continuous service, as well as a range of discretionary leave to cover emergencies.

We offer opportunities for training and progression and support staff wellbeing through an employee assistance program. Our offices are centrally located close to transport hubs.

**SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**

***Legal Action for Local Communities***

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

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<b>Reports to:</b>	CEO, Trustees, Finance Sub Committee, Board of Trustees, Billing Coordinator and Senior Management Team
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**Key Tasks**

**Finance**

1. Maintain our Xero accounts system/ Clio Case Management System
2. Process payment requests, staff and volunteers expenses and invoices
3. Identify and follow up debtors
4. Monthly reconciliation and bookkeeping of all cards and accounts
5. Assist with preparation of monthly management, year-end accounts and audit process
6. Work with the CEO for the takeover of the calculation and reporting of the taxes owed by the law centre
7. Work with the CEO to take over the administration of the SWLLC payroll and pension
8. Responsible for liaison with external accountants and auditors

**Legal Practice and Billing**

1. Preparing information and submitting for all monthly reports to the Legal Aid Agency, including CWA (Legal Help) and Court Duty submissions
2. Responsible for claiming payment on accounts for certificate cases
3. Work with the CEO to take over the preparation of work in progress reports

4. Work with the CEO to prepare and disseminate monthly billing reports
5. Work with the Billing Coordinator and the SMT to identify cases to push through the billing process.

### **Systems**

1. Lead on the continued development of our legal aid case management system, Clio, including maintaining a functional understanding of all aspects of the system, keeping abreast of new developments and feeding back to staff.
2. Manage the administration of our case management system and other systems used by our staff team, including adding new users and reporting on data collected.
3. Lead on our paperless working processes.
4. Negotiate and manage our contracts with printing providers.
5. Maintain regular reviews of the systems we're using, assessing whether they are fit for purpose or not and whether there are alternative products which represent better value for money.
6. Researching, developing and implementing new systems where required.
7. To work with HR Admin Manager to maintain the Office Manual

### **Information Technology**

1. Acting as centre lead for the purposes of our IT support contract with AspiraCloud.
2. Leading on new technology initiatives such as the implementation of Windows 11, with the support of AspiraCloud and Law Centres Network.
3. Maintaining oversight of the devices owned and maintained by the organisation.
4. Raising IT support tickets on behalf of all staff.
5. Purchasing new devices on behalf of the organisation, ensuring value for money at all times.
6. Completing the annual Cyber Security audit and return.
7. Maintain the organisation's IT plan and update it annually.

### **Archiving**

1. Overseeing the organisation's archiving process and supervising staff and volunteers to send files to archive regularly.
2. Proactively managing our offsite archive so that files that have passed their destroy date are regularly destroyed.

### **Data Protection**

1. Overall responsibility for the data protection obligations of the organisation.

2. Keeping abreast of changes and updates to Data Protection legislation.
3. Completing annual returns to the Information Commissioner's Office.
4. Feeding into the Lexcel audit in relation to Data Protection.
5. Delivering regular training to staff on Data Protection.
6. Participating in discussions and workshops facilitated by LCN in relation to information governance and Data Protection.

#### **Strategic Management**

1. Working with the SMT and the Board of Trustees to develop and implement the strategic plan for the organisation.
2. Participating in regular strategic planning meetings.

#### **Other**

1. To carry out other tasks as directed relevant to the post
2. To attend and participate in Board and Sub Committee meetings
3. To collaborate with the CEO and SMT to foster a culture of openness and cooperation with staff, developing regular communication, exchange of information and ideas relating to the development and operation of the Law Centre.

**SOUTH WEST LONDON LAW CENTRES**

***Legal Action for Local Communities***

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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**Essential Experience and Skills**

1. Excellent IT skills with extensive experience working with Excel, Microsoft Office applications and computerised accounting packages
2. Experience in accurate book keeping and using Xero or similar packages
3. A minimum of 2 years experience in a similar role
4. Ability to develop, maintain and report on data and compliance records, including the ability to impart information in an understandable way
5. Excellent verbal and written communication skills
6. Highly organised with strong organisational and planning skills. Able to set priorities, meet goals and evaluate the process and results.
7. Confident, self-reliant, capable of taking the initiative and working autonomously.
8. An eye for detail and concern for accuracy,
9. Resilient and calm under pressure, a flexible attitude with the aptitude to work well in a team.
10. Professional manner, able to develop good working relationships with people both internally and externally at all levels
11. 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.

### **Essential Knowledge**

1. Relevant accountancy/financial qualifications
2. Knowledge of bookkeeping and preparation of management accounts.
3. Knowledge of financial planning, management and processes.
4. Ability to understand accounts and to communicate financial information.

### **Desirable Experience and Skills**

- 1) Experience and knowledge of charity accounting
- 2) An understanding of the Legal Aid Agency's working practices
- 3) Experience in dealing with auditors and a clear understanding of their requirements for preparing annual accounts and liaising with auditors.
- 4) Ability to attend some meetings outside office hours, including Board meetings
- 5) Experience of VAT
- 6) Experience of setting up financial procedures and implementing them with other staff