

## **Job Description: HOUSING SOLICITOR (CONSULTANT)**

Contract: Full Time or Part Time

Salary: Fee-Share arrangement



### **ABOUT US**

Advice for Renters (A4R, formerly known as Advice4Renters) was established over 30 years ago as a campaigning organisation, to campaign for better rights for those living in private rented accommodation. Over the years, we have achieved some major successes. Our advice service grew up alongside our campaigning work, to help private tenants understand and secure their rights.

We have a contract with the Legal Aid Agency (“LAA”), to provide specialist housing advice and have had a housing franchise since May 2005. We have a specialist quality mark. Although our main focus is on providing advice and assistance to those in the private rented sector, we provide legal services to tenants in all tenures as well as to the homeless.

We believe that safe, secure housing is a fundamental right. This means that the life outcomes and wellbeing of people living in the Private Rented Sector should not be disadvantaged by housing tenure.

We are driven by our belief that a fairer, well housed society will flourish, and by achieving this we would take a fundamental step towards empowering people to successfully tackle life's challenges as they arise.

To achieve our vision we are tackling housing inequality from many angles, ranging from legal support for vulnerable tenants facing eviction, to lobbying government for the policy change needed to protect tenants in the first place.

We see the person and their potential first and tackle the problems they bring us in that context. To assist us to reach our aim to improve the health, wellbeing and resilience of clients, we continue to develop a range of complementary services including financial inclusion, work to tackle fuel poverty and our mentoring and befriending service.

Our new community-led housing programme aims to change the way we talk about, develop and manage housing, by putting the occupiers back in the driving seat. We are in the process of developing a genuinely scalable, sustainable community led housing model - the first of its kind - by addressing the all too common scalability and funding issues which often affect small scale affordable housing developments.

Over the last 30 years we have supported thousands of tenants in acute housing need, and our influence is seen in housing policy changes since the early 90's. In turn our high standards are driven by on-going review and improvement based on listening and learning from our

beneficiaries, and the direct experience of our clients in the private rented sector and our staff who manage their cases.

Advice for Renters aims to be an organisation where people come before profits. This means that targets are a means to an end, the continuation of our ability to provide a high quality, holistic advice service, and not an end in themselves. We are an organisation where a good work/life balance is positively encouraged.

You will be joining a team of three Housing Lawyers with associated support staff. Advice for Renters provides a supportive, friendly and collaborative working environment.

## **MAIN PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE JOB**

We are seeking a Housing Consultant Solicitor to join our small, friendly team.

Applicants should have a minimum of two years' experience as a practicing solicitor and significant experience of the LAA Contract Category in housing.

The role is to provide legal advice and legal services to A4R's clients under the legal help and legal aid schemes. You may also act for privately paying clients or under Conditional Fee Arrangements.

You will be required to advise on all aspects of housing/landlord and tenant law.

The post holder will have a valid practicing certificate (or be entitled to apply to the SRA for one) and should be able to meet the Legal Aid Agency's Housing and Debt supervisor standard after meeting the required hours. You will be required to comply with the LAA Specialist Quality Mark casework standards.

## **Location**

The post holder will be based at our office in Kilburn (Brent) – some hybrid office/home working available.

## **DUTIES AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Will include but are not limited to:

- Initial assessment of client's eligibility for legal aid
- Interviewing clients to take instructions and carrying out all follow-up case work
- advising clients on the law and legal issues relating to their case;
- drafting documents, letters and agreements tailored to the client's individual needs;
- researching and analysing documents and case law to ensure the accuracy of advice and procedure;
- negotiating on the client's behalf;
- acting on behalf of clients in disputes and representing them in court, if necessary;
- instructing barristers or specialist advocates to appear in court for the client in complex disputes;
- instructing experts;
- preparing papers for court;

- team working;
- supervising and delegating work to support staff and volunteers as appropriate;
- checking all documentation prior to signing and implementing;
- administrative duties, e.g. updating case management records so that charges for work can be calculated and billing completed and statistical information collated;
- taking referrals from other firms of solicitors and advice agencies;
- billing files promptly at the conclusion of each case
- contributing to the development of A4R and the promotion of A4R to potential clients, external partners and existing and potential funders
- Be flexible within the broad remit of the post and carry out other duties that may arise, develop or be assigned

The post is self-supporting

You may also be required to contribute to A4R's Public Legal Education training in renters' rights.

You will be proactive in keeping up to date with developments in the law and practice and complying with the SRA CPD requirements.

A4R is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity and inclusion. We encourage qualified candidates from a wide array of backgrounds to apply because we know that it's the differences in our people that make the difference to our performance.

***This job description does not form part of your contract of employment and can be amended from time to time as the needs of the organisation require.***