

Job Description and Person Specification

Job Title: Supervising Solicitor/Caseworker, KIND UK, Central England Law Centre

Reports To: National Coordinator, KIND UK, Central England Law Centre

Purpose

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to be involved in Kids in Need of Defense UK (KIND UK). KIND UK is a partnership which provides free, specialist immigration advice and representation for children and young people, and their families. It is a collaboration between Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) US, Central England Law Centre, CELC at Islington Law Centre, Coram Children's Legal Centre, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit and Just Right Scotland. The UK agencies each employ Supervising solicitor(s)/lawyer(s) to provide training, guidance and support to commercial lawyers, who in turn provide the advice service on a pro bono basis.

Central England Law Centre is the largest Law Centre in the UK. We provide specialist legal advice to people across Central England. We want to live in a society where people's rights are upheld, their needs met and they are enabled to thrive.

We provide free specialist legal advice to those most in need and use legal processes to fight social exclusion. We advocate for people, challenge unfair decisions, take cases to the highest courts and work in partnership with other support services. As well as helping people move from crisis to stability, we deliver services that help people anticipate problems by acting early and tackling the root cause.

We are looking for a dynamic and enthusiastic solicitor or caseworker with expertise in immigration and nationality law to supervise commercial lawyers in providing free legal advice and representation to children, young people and families with out-of-scope immigration and nationality cases. The successful candidate will be expected to attend on clients with lawyers from the partner firms, and then supervise the lawyers in preparing the client's applications, running a number of cases at one time. You will be expected to ensure that the project takes on a target number of cases and makes the maximum possible positive impact for a vulnerable client base.

Responsibilities

The main duties are set out below but this is an emerging project and the activities and responsibilities may evolve as it develops.

Legal Casework and Supervision

- Processing referrals into the project and undertaking an initial analysis of the work needed in each case before passing referrals on to the pro bono teams in partner firms.

- Taking steps to ensure that all advice, submissions and other legal work undertaken by pro bono lawyers in partner firms is undertaken to a sufficiently high level of accuracy and quality
- Attending client interviews with pro bono lawyers and then providing ongoing supervisory support, including via telephone and email and by the development of template materials.
- Conducting and co-ordinating immigration/asylum/public law casework and litigation on behalf of organisations and individuals where it is agreed that the casework cannot be undertaken within the pro bono partner firms, but it is strategically or practically necessary for the work to remain part of the KIND UK project for conduct or operational reasons; or to make appropriate referrals where casework cannot be undertaken due to capacity reasons
- Conducting legal research where necessary or supervise Law Centre volunteers or pro bono lawyers undertaking such work
- Providing onward referral to other solicitors and services as appropriate.
- Maintaining standards of professional service in line with CELC's standards and procedures documents and complying with all policies of CELC.
- Promoting and embedding child-centred practice in the representation of children and young people
- Record all work undertaken and carry out billing, ensuring all income is accounted for on each case in accordance with the requirements of the Kids in Need of Defense UK funders, or the Legal Aid Agency (although most work carried out will not be publicly funded work)
- The post holder will be expected to carry out their casework with a high degree of professionalism, and to conduct their work in such a way as to meet relevant external standards (e.g. Law Society, Solicitors Regulation Authority, and OISC). They will also be expected to meet the Law Centre's performance targets in relation to time recording.
- Complying with accreditation and professional standards.

Training and Development

Working in partnership with the other Supervising solicitors/lawyers to:

- Develop and deliver legal and practical training to pro bono lawyers recruited to the project.
- Maintain, and revise where necessary, training notes, advocates manual, procedures, policies, referral forms, letters of authority, pro forma attendance notes, template letters, etc.
- Ensuring that own legal expertise is as up to date as possible in the relevant fields of law, including immigration, asylum and nationality law.
- Demonstrate awareness of and ensure access to appropriate referral channels, to other legal issues that arise related to the child's or young person's well-being, such as family law, community care law, education and health care.

Partnership and Stakeholder Management

- Working within the values, aims and objectives and in furtherance of work plans agreed by KIND UK's Steering Group.
- Active involvement with KIND UK's National Co-ordinator to manage and collaborate on the progress and development of the project.

- Co-ordinating and overseeing the delivery of project casework. This will include monitoring the working methods of the project and trouble-shooting problems.
- Initiating, developing and maintaining positive relationships with partner firms, and referral organisations.
- Regular feedback to pro bono coordinators on progress, including visits to partner firms to meet coordinators and volunteers.
- Revising and maintaining record-keeping systems and ensuring compliance with client confidentiality, data protection procedures/policies.
- Assisting with project budget in so far as it relates to casework, including allocating, tracking and managing disbursements on files.
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project, including outcomes and impact for clients, and reporting to National Co-ordinator and the partner firms and corporations.

Delivering Strategic Change

- Seeking out opportunities for strategic litigation on issues of children and young people's rights which will feed into CELC's and KIND UK's wider policy advocacy work to effect positive change and promote the rights of children and young people.
- Raising awareness of the project and building referral streams, including involvement in publicity events and workshops to promote the project.
- Support the development of a pro bono culture within partner law firms.
- Support partner firms to use their own advocacy opportunities to advocate for positive change for migrant children

Promoting Kids in Need of Defense UK in collaboration with the Law Centres

- Proactively contributing to policy and research work through observations made and cases seen through the project and its working methods.
- Attending regular meetings with other supervising solicitors/lawyers and the National co-ordinators.
- Attending quarterly Steering Group meetings.

General

- Contribute to the fulfilment of any reporting requirements to funders, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), The Law Centre and others
- Undertake general administration including working with volunteers and other project staff to maintain the CELC/KIND UK project waiting list, maintain relationships with referral organisations and other partners
- Attend meetings of the KIND UK Steering Group and Advisory group as agreed on a shared basis with other staff on the project.
- Represent KIND UK externally as necessary
- Undertake other tasks appropriate to the role

Teamwork, decision making and management

- The post holder will be part of the CELC staff team. The post holder will be expected to attend CELC team meetings and other staff meetings and participate in consultation and decision making. They will carry out their duties in accordance with the Law Centre's policies
- The post holder will work closely with the CELC lawyers and other staff and, depending on experience, will report to the National Coordinator
- All Law Centre staff who are solicitors have a responsibility to support casework supervision of non-legally qualified staff, and comply with the SRA Code of Conduct in terms of the Solicitors Accounts rules and Personal Competence Training and record keeping in accordance with the professional practice rules for solicitors
- All solicitors and caseworkers undertaking publicly funded work must hold the Law Society Immigration And Asylum Accreditation (IAAS) at Level 2 or above. In addition all solicitors and caseworkers undertaking work with children and/or young people must hold a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate

Promotion of the Law Centre's Policies

Equality and Diversity

The Law Centre's clients are mainly on low incomes and come from a diverse range of minority ethnic groups. The post holder will be expected to show a particular interest in working with this type of client group and to show an understanding of equal opportunities issues including the promotion of equality

Confidentiality

The post-holder will be required to comply with the Law Centre's confidentiality policy in relation to client information. They will also be expected to ensure that commercially sensitive information is treated confidentially.

Health and Safety

The post holder will be required to abide by the Law Centre's Health and Safety policy and to ensure that they conduct their duties with due regard to their own health and safety and that of other people.

This job description is not exhaustive and as such, the post-holder will need to be flexible, and to carry out all reasonable requests. However, any substantive changes will only be made following discussion with the post-holder and the provision, as appropriate, of further training.

Person Specification

The Supervising solicitor/caseworker must have the following:

1. Level 2 Caseworker accreditation with the Law Society's Immigration and Asylum Accreditation Scheme (IAAS). Supervisor status under the IAAS is desirable.
2. Experience of managing a caseload and working to deadlines.
3. Experience of approaching casework strategically to maximise benefits beyond the individual client.
4. Experience of supervising staff with a wide range of legal experience, including volunteers.
5. Experience of working in partnership with other organisations, and making presentations to small and large groups.
6. Up to date expertise and experience in immigration, asylum and nationality law.
7. A commitment to high quality legal casework and client care.
8. Experience of diagnosing support, accommodation and community care issues and an understanding of how immigration law intersects with other areas of law, and how to make appropriate referrals for specialist advice and support where necessary.
9. Experience representing destitute families to make immigration and nationality applications.
10. Experience of managing and developing external relationships with diverse stakeholders.

Skills/Knowledge & Personal Attributes

1. Skilled in coaching and supporting others.
2. Excellent communication and influencing skills.
3. Skilled in making presentations and delivering written reports.
4. Self-motivated, able to work independently and on own initiative and able to organise own workload.
5. Ability to identify problems within the project or cases and to address these.
6. Ability to work as part of a team.
7. Ability to work flexibly and sometimes outside of office hours, with some travel to partner firms.
8. Understanding of the pro bono sector.
9. Highly developed interpersonal skills.
10. Support for MiCLU, ILC and KIND UK's aims and a commitment to promoting children and young people's rights, and understanding of working within a human rights and child rights framework.
11. A sensitive approach to working with children, young people and families including those without regular immigration status.
12. Knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting migrant children, young people and families.

Signed Dated