

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

RESOURCES

JOB DESCRIPTION

<u>POST TITLE :</u>	Legal Officer [Child Care]
<u>PAY BAND :</u>	Band 10
<u>JOB EVALUATION NO.</u>	E3546
<u>REPORTING RELATIONSHIP</u>	Principal Lawyer [People Team]
<u>JOB PURPOSE :</u>	To act as a key member of the People Team, delivering legal services to the Council and external clients in relation to child care, education and schools, adult services, mental capacity, mental health, public interest immunity and criminal injuries applications. To assist in the management of the team and contribute to the overall management of Legal Services.
<u>POST NO.</u>	POS001443
<u>PDR COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</u>	Level 1, Expected Competencies for all employees

MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To deal with a case load of child care matters, as appropriate to the grading of the post, under the supervision of the Principal Lawyer or other Lawyers of the People Team
2. To assist with education, mental health and adult services cases and matters as may be allocated and under the supervision of the Principal Lawyer or other Lawyers of the People Team
3. To draft care proceedings applications [in particular Threshold Criteria and Allocation requirements], placement applications, other Children Act proceedings and subsequent applications once the case is in proceedings. Preparation, production and updating of documents and other material for court including court bundles, previous proceedings if applicable, summons, video evidence, statements, viability assessments, draft orders, social worker reports etc ensuring all up to date information is included and that they are filed with the Court and parties in time for hearings. Deal with correspondence, brief and instruct counsel and other experts, negotiate with other parties.
4. To attend and/or provide legal advice at case meetings, strategy meetings, planning meetings, conferences, reviews, conferences with counsel and other meetings as agreed by the Principal Solicitor
5. To deal with requests for advice and assistance

6. To undertake legal research as required
7. To deal with public interest immunity case work
8. To deal with criminal injuries applications
9. To ensure that all matters within your care and conduct are properly and expeditiously progressed in accordance with best practice
10. Reviewing information and draft orders from court following a hearing and taking appropriate actions such as complying with a disclosure requirement, preparing and submitting legal orders for sealing, transcription requests, updating appropriate spreadsheets such as the Bundles to Court list and data sets for children and Adults
11. Arranging transcribers for transcription of interview discs and then filing with the parties and court and placement upon the court bundle where appropriate
12. Collating and requesting evidence for court including medical records and submitting Annex D requests for police disclosure and making arrangements with process servers to serve on respondents
13. Compiling witness matrixes
14. Arranging video link evidence and DNA testing
15. Handling police disclosure and photographs once they have been received, filing the same on the other parties and the client department
16. Liaising with and requesting disclosure from other Local Authorities or other agencies
17. Liaison with experts/professionals/witnesses to obtain their availability and make arrangements for them to attend court/tribunal
18. Liaising with the client department to advise of court dates, arrangements and requirements to assist in case preparation
19. Liaising directly with the court and Counsel/advocate when urgent applications are required to be listed at Court
20. To review draft reports that are referred to the team, consider legal policy procedural and constitutional implications and to comment on and advise clients
21. To write and/or amend reports as may be necessary
22. To devise and deliver appropriate training seminars and courses for staff, members, clients and others
23. Ensure that you work in line with all the Council's policies and procedures and ensure that you are aware of your obligations under these.
24. Behave according to the Employees' Code of Conduct and ensure that you are aware of your obligations and responsibilities re: conflicts of interest, gifts, hospitality and other matters covered by the Code.
25. Carry out your role in line with the Council's Equality agenda.

26. To comply with health and safety policies, organisational statements and procedures, report any incidents / accidents/ hazards and take a pro-active approach to health and safety matters in order to protect yourself and others.
27. Any other duties of a similar nature related to this post that may be required from time-to-time.
28. Darlington Borough Council and schools within the Borough are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
29. This post is subject to a standard disclosure. The successful applicant will be subject to the relevant vetting checks before an offer of appointment is confirmed. Following appointment the employee will be subject to rechecking as required from time to time by the Council.

Date: October 2019

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**PERSON SPECIFICATION****LEGAL OFFICER [CHILD CARE]****RESOURCES****POST NO. POS001443**

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references.

Criteria No.	Attribute	Essential (E)	Desirable (D)
	Qualifications & Education		
1	Qualified Solicitor, barrister or ILEX with current practising certificate and with rights of audience		D
2	Law degree or equivalent		D
	Experience & Knowledge		
3	Approx. 2 years' experience of dealing with public law child care matters	E	
4	Knowledge of child protection and relevant issues	E	
5	Approx. 2 years' experience of interpreting legislation, case law, policy or procedures to give recommendations and advice	E	
6	Approx. 2 years' experience of effective negotiating to reach satisfactory outcomes	E	
7	Experience of presenting and attending hearings and courts	E	
8	Experience of working in local government		D
9	Understanding of Court procedures and practices		D
	Skills		
10	Ability to listen and communicate both orally and in writing to a wide range of audiences (including ability to write clear and concise reports & presentations)	E	
11	IT Literate, capable of using MS office packages	E	
12	Ability to summarise and interpret complex and conceptual matters to aide others' understanding and aimed at their needs	E	
13	Ability to work as part of a team, sharing tasks and providing cover as necessary	E	
14	Ability to use appropriate styles and arguments to influence and negotiate satisfactory outcomes	E	
15	Able to prioritise workload and to plan and allocate tasks to meet deadlines	E	
16	Ability to use initiative and make decisions outside immediate policy and procedure, and without reference to manager	E	
17	Ability to solve problems and make difficult (good call) judgments	E	
18	Ability to regularly give advice and guidance, including demonstrating duties, instructing and checking the work of others	E	
19	Effective advocacy skills		D
	Personal Attributes		
20	Ability to work under pressure	E	
21	Ability to inspire and to command respect and confidence	E	
22	Able to deal with potentially difficult, challenging and confrontational situations	E	
	Special Requirements		

23	To work outside office hours as required by the needs of the service	E	
24	To comply with current legal practice management standards, regarding file maintenance, time recording and so on	E	
25	The ability to communicate at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English	E	
26	Capable of independent travel to carry out the requirements of the post	E	