

Public
Law
Project

Information pack Casework Paralegal

June 2024







This is an exciting opportunity for a capable and ambitious paralegal to join our exceptional casework team. You'll be working at the cutting edge of public law in the UK, supporting our award-winning team of solicitors in strategic cases that bring about real change.

Join Public Law Project (PLP) and you'll be playing a key role in the team that's currently running the main challenge to the Rwanda policy. PLP's casework team has successfully challenged the prorogation of Parliament, helped survivors whose assets are controlled by their abuser to access legal aid, and put a stop to the no-notice removal policy affecting people claiming asylum.

You will be supervised by one of our Lead Lawyers, and have the opportunity to collaborate closely with the whole team. The PLP team is friendly, diverse, and inclusive, and you'll be supported and encouraged to develop your skills as a public law caseworker. This is a fee-earning role, and so is suitable for candidates looking to develop their career.

You'll play a crucial supporting role in our casework, taking instructions from clients, drafting correspondence, statements, and instructions, and managing legal aid applications. You'll perform administrative tasks and be a first point of contact at PLP for prospective clients via phone and email. You'll be part of a variety of public law cases in PLP's priority areas – this includes working on immigration, welfare, constitutional, and AI cases.

We invite applications from anyone who meets the job description, but the role is suited to candidates who have completed the Legal Practice Course, want to pursue a career in the legal charity sector, and who can demonstrate experience of working with vulnerable individuals. The role is an opportunity to gain real casework experience within a team of lawyers who have solid experience of running judicial reviews and a proven ability to develop cases and ideas independently.

PLP is an equal opportunities and Disability Confident Committed employer, and we place a high value on diversity. We are proud of our strong diversity right across the organisation and at all levels of seniority. We have significant numbers of staff who come from underprivileged or minoritised backgrounds (including people of colour, women, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people, and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds). Whether you are part of all or none of these groups, you will be welcomed at PLP.

As part of our commitment to recruit fairly we use anonymised-selection processes until interview, offer additional interview opportunities to the highest-scoring candidates from under-represented communities, and use 'tie-breaker' provisions at all stages of our selection process.





About Public Law Project

We are researchers, lawyers, trainers and public law policy experts. The aim of all of our work is to make sure that state decision-making is fair and lawful and that anyone can hold the state to account.

For over 30 years we have represented and supported people marginalised through poverty, discrimination or disadvantage when they have been affected by unlawful state decision-making.

- Our specialist lawyers represent individuals, campaign groups and charities, often in high profile, high stakes, public interest litigation.
- Our researchers work in partnership with the UK's leading academic institutions. We respond to consultations, policy proposals and legislation that have implications for public law remedies, access to justice and the rule of law. We provide evidence to inquiries, reviews, and parliamentary committees, and we publish independent research and guides to increase understanding of public law.
- Our events team runs a national programme of conferences and training for practitioners and those working with marginalised and disadvantaged groups, providing thought-leadership, expertise and insight to organisations and individuals who share our goals.

Vision, Mission & Values

Our **vision**

Our **vision** is achieved by our **mission**

We improve public
decision-making

We empower people
to understand and
apply the law

We increase access
to justice

Our **values** underpin all our work

Equality

Integrity

Expertise

Teamwork



Employment information

Job title: Casework Paralegal

Contract term: Permanent

Location: Central London (EC1V). Homeworking within flexible working policies.

Hours: Full-time

Salary: £29,140 pa

Pension: 10% per annum after one year. Statutory minimum during first year.

Leave: A full time member of staff has 25 ordinary annual leave days each year in addition to bank holidays (usually 8). PLP gives all staff the days between Christmas Day and New Year's Day off as additional leave, outside the annual leave allowance.

Probation period: 6 months. Benefits may be offered at a reduced level during the probation period.

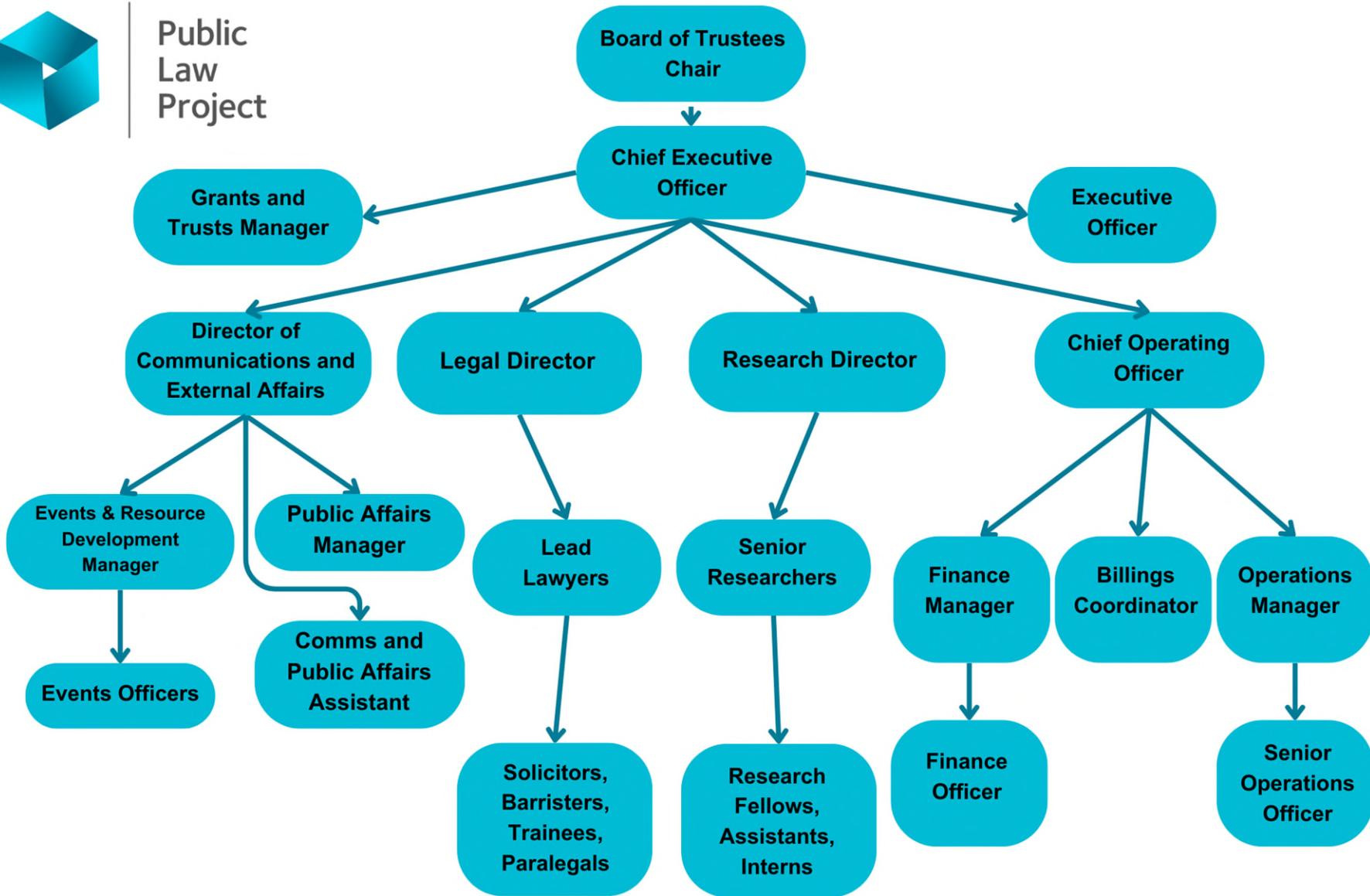
Payment method: Payment is made by electronic transfer on or shortly before the 15th of each calendar month covering payment for that same calendar month.

Flexible working:

PLP is a family friendly employer. We are open to flexible working arrangements including those that will enable the post-holder to accommodate their care responsibilities.

PLP employees may **be required to** attend occasional evening meetings. However, PLP recognises that post holders may have other commitments and seeks to be as flexible as possible in this regard. In addition, reasonable notice will be given of such commitments outside normal working hours where possible, and time off in lieu may be taken by arrangement.

These details are provided for information only and do not form part of an employment contract or job offer.





Job Description:

The Casework Paralegal provides administrative and legal support to PLP's casework team.

This role is line managed by a Lead Lawyer. The post works closely with the casework team, including the Legal Director and working under the supervision of PLP's lawyers as appropriate.

This is a fee-earning role and would be appropriate for a candidate looking to develop their career.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

The following is an illustrative but not exclusive list of the primary duties and responsibilities of the role:

Casework administration

Providing general administrative support to PLP's casework team including:

- Prepare outgoing post and faxes.
- Answer the telephone, forward calls and take messages.
- Prepare and send case correspondence such as subject access requests and appointment letters.
- Arrange client appointments and, where necessary, book interpreters.
- Assist caseworkers to set up and maintain client files, including scanning, printing and filing correspondence and other paperwork; setting up hard copy and electronic files; preparing and filing attendance notes; recording time.
- Prepare, index, paginate, scan and copy bundles of documents for court and counsel.
- Prepare payment requests to pay interpreters, counsel and independent experts and action invoices.

Legal aid administration & billing support

Assisting in the administration of legal aid applications including:

- Completing CW1 forms.
- Preparing and drafting applications for legal representation on the Client and Costs Management System (CCMS).
- Uploading documents and queries to CCMS and responding to queries.
- Undertaking means assessments with clients.
- Monitoring costs limits and making applications for extensions of costs and scope limitation.
- Drafting reviews and appeals of LAA decisions.



Providing billing support alongside PLP's Billing Coordinator:

- Inputting and amending time recording on the case management system.
- Drafting forms for escape fee claims and preparing files for submission to the LAA.
- Preparing files for billing and liaising with external costs draftsmen.
- Drafting claim forms and preparing files for submission to the court and LAA for assessment.

Casework support

Working under supervision and direction of PLP's lawyers, provide general support to the work of the casework team including:

- Manage new client enquiries and referrals, including speaking to new enquirers; logging details; carrying out preliminary assessment of legal aid eligibility; liaising with casework team to determine capacity and providing appropriate and timely response.
- Attend clients in person and by telephone to take instructions, assess legal aid eligibility and complete legal aid application forms.
- Draft correspondence, witness statements and instructions to third parties.
- Conduct research to support casework.

General duties

- Provide general administrative support to the casework team as required, such as preparing the agenda for team meetings and circulating action points.
- Maintain monitoring information about casework activities as required.
- Assist in the preparation of reports for funders and the board of trustees.
- Undertake other tasks appropriate to the role.



Person Specification:

Abilities, skills and knowledge	Essential	Desirable
Either an undergraduate law degree (or equivalent qualification) or substantial and relevant sector experience.	✓	
Excellent organisational ability and ability to prioritise competing priorities effectively.	✓	
Ability to work to a high standard under time pressure.	✓	
Good interpersonal skills including the ability to manage relationships with internal and external partners.	✓	
Good oral and written communication.	✓	
Good attention to detail.	✓	
Knowledge of legal aid regulations and procedures.		✓
Experience of working in a legal practice including experience in billing, completing legal aid forms and using the LAA CCMS.	✓	
Experience of time recording systems.		✓
Ability to follow complex discussions, such as of legal policy, and to capture, summarise and share appropriately.	✓	
Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Excel, Teams) and ability to quickly work with new software and trouble-shoot basic/common IT issues.	✓	

Personal qualities, commitment and values	Essential	Desirable
Team player.	✓	
Commitment to PLP's core values of equality, integrity, expertise and teamwork.	✓	
Sensitivity to clients' needs as appropriate.	✓	
Able to handle confidential information appropriately.	✓	
Personal resilience, including the ability to adapt quickly to new demands and work flexibly.	✓	
Assertiveness required to identify and manage any unrealistic expectations, gatekeep where necessary and clarify ambiguity or misunderstanding.	✓	
Proactive with the ability to work independently.	✓	
Ability to be self-servicing and to work flexibly and collegiately within a small, friendly, multi-disciplinary team.	✓	
Willingness and ability to travel locally during office hours including for urgent court runs.	✓	
Willingness and ability to occasionally attend evening meetings where required.		✓
Right to work in the UK.	✓	



Application process

PLP is an equal opportunities employer and Disability Confident Employer. We welcome applications from individuals regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Candidates may ask for clarification of elements of the person specification and/or the application process, and may discuss any issues that might impact on how they would be able to undertake the work. PLP will not discuss issues that may give any candidate information that would give them an advantage in their application.

To apply please complete the application form which accompanies this information pack and send it to hr@publiclawproject.org.uk

The deadline for applications is 11.59pm, Sunday 7th July.

A recruitment panel will be nominated for each vacancy. The recruitment panel will use the completed application form to assess each candidate's ability to meet the essential requirements of the job as set out in the person specification using a scoring system. The highest scoring applicants will be interviewed.

Interviews will be held on the 22nd and 24th of July.

Further information about the interview process will be provided to successful applicants. Interviews will usually consist of at least one practical test of your abilities relating to the role and a standard interview with a panel of at least two people. Please let us know in advance of your interview if you have a disability and require reasonable adjustments for the interview and/or assessment process to ensure the process is fair and equitable to all applicants.

Interview questions will be decided in advance based on their relevance to the job description and person specification and scored separately by interviewers. A score sheet will be set in advance, interviewers may only use information from the application form, the interview and any other assessment methods to inform their score.

PLP keeps assessment records/notes for all applicants, whether shortlisted or not, for 12 months. They are stored securely and then destroyed securely after the above period.

All short-listed candidates shall be notified of their selection decision and can obtain feedback from the assessment if they request it. All such requests are dealt with by HR who may pass them on to the relevant person if applicable.



Equality statement of intent

As an employer, PLP will treat all employees and job applicants equally and fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against them. This also applies to volunteers, interns and anyone undertaking work experience with PLP. Our commitment to equal treatment extends to arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotion and transfers, grievance and disciplinary procedures, demotions, selection for redundancies, dress code, references, work allocation and any other employment related activities. Specifically, PLP will endeavour to ensure that:

- i. Whenever practical, we will recruit and maintain a workforce which broadly reflects the diversity of the community in which we operate and serve. We will ensure that the style and content of our job adverts and recruitment materials convey this commitment, and always includes the statement that "The Public Law Project is an equal opportunity employer".
- ii. Subject to cost, we will ensure that job opportunities are advertised widely and to diverse audiences. Where appropriate, PLP will take positive action measures to attract applications from all sections of society and especially from those groups which are under-represented in our workforce.
- iii. We treat all job applicants equally and fairly and do not unlawfully discriminate against them. We do this by ensuring that we operate an open and fair recruitment process, and making decisions using selection criteria which do not discriminate.
- iv. We will take every possible step to ensure that employees and volunteers are treated fairly, with the aim of creating a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that is free of discrimination and promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.
- v. We recognise our continuing responsibility to develop the potential of all employees, removing any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents progression or full contribution to the organisation's performance. We will ensure that selection for promotion, training or other benefit is free from discrimination of any kind and is based on the employee's experience and abilities and the needs of the job.
- vi. We will make clear to all employees, volunteers and trustees that anyone who works for PLP in any capacity is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, and that unlawful discrimination, intimidation, harassment and victimisation are disciplinary offences which will not be tolerated by the organisation and may lead to disciplinary action. We will provide clear and accessible procedures allowing allegations of such conduct to be promptly and sensitively investigated.
- vii. We will provide flexibility to employees in relation to work requirements that may significantly impact on their personal needs and responsibilities and we will seek, as far as possible, to foster a culture that ensures an appropriate work – life balance. We also aim to be aware of days of cultural or religious significance that employees may wish to observe in an appropriate manner.



Privacy notice

When you apply for a job with PLP we will need to collect information about you including your employment history and contact details so that we can assess your suitability for the role and inform you about the progress of your application.

Your records will be kept securely whilst we consider your application. If your application is unsuccessful, we will keep your data until 6 months after the decision was made. If successful your recruitment information will be kept for 6 years after your last day working with us.

If you opt to provide equal opportunity data to PLP this will be anonymised and retained only as long as is necessary to record the recruitment decision against the anonymised data and no longer than six months.

We do not share recruitment information with third parties.