

Western Circuit Caseworker

Advocate is a national charity that connects volunteer barristers eager to provide pro bono assistance with individuals who need legal support but cannot afford private representation or access public funding (legal aid).

We are seeking to recruit a Caseworker, *ideally* based in and familiar with the Western Circuit. As the Advocate representative for this region, you will be the primary point of contact for barristers and front-line legal agencies. Additionally, you will take on the role of Social Welfare Law Caseworker and crime lead.

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to enhance Advocate’s presence within the Western Circuit. You will play a key role in maintaining relationships with chambers and contributing to the strategic development of Advocate’s activities in the region.

We are looking for a determined, organised, and enthusiastic individual who thrives on building relationships with barristers, clerks, and legal agencies while efficiently managing a busy caseload. Previous experience working with vulnerable individuals and a meticulous attention to detail are essential. While a strong interest in social welfare law and criminal law is not a requirement, it is highly desirable.

This role is full-time and offered on a 9-to-13-month contract, depending on the candidate. The position requires 35 hours per week (Monday–Friday, excluding lunch breaks).

You will work from home and will be expected to travel to our London office at least four times a year.

We would also consider a job share or part time working for the right candidate.

If you would like to apply for this position, please send the following:

* An up-to-date CV outlining your employment history, academic and professional qualifications, and contact details
* Supporting Statement (no more than 2 x A4 pages). Demonstrating how you meet the criteria outlined in the Person Specification & why you are interested in becoming our Criminal and Western Circuit Caseworker.

**Closing date: 9 am 21 February 2025**

**Interviews: w/c 24th February 2025**

**Start Date: ASAP**

**Salary: £30,066.53**

**Advocate is an equal opportunities employer.**



Job Description: Caseworker (Western Circuit)

**Reporting to:** Director of Casework & Chief Operating Officer

**Job purpose:** To be the Advocate representative in the Western Circuit, both the point of contact for local barristers and front-line legal agencies in the Western Circuit, to develop and establish good working relationships in Western Circuit and therefore support more individuals in the Western Circuit in need of free legal assistance. To help those individuals in your case load effectively and efficiently so that the organisation provides the highest quality service to those it aims to help.

1. **Case management**
   1. Processing applications received from applicants as part of a team of caseworkers dealing with specific tasks and managing these cases via an electronic case management system. Sensitively and clearly communicating effectively with applicants, solicitors, referral agencies, courts, barristers and others.
   2. Liaising with other caseworkers, management, reviewing barristers and panel members regarding applications.
   3. Having responsibility for social welfare cases (family, employment, housing & crime) with a focus on crime
   4. Where cases meet Advocate’s criteria, identifying appropriate volunteer barristers to assist, and advertising cases to such volunteers.
2. **Western Circuit Development** 
   1. Developing and fostering positive working relationships between Advocate and sets of Chambers, clerks and individual barrister volunteers in Western Circuit, supported by the Engagement Manager
   2. Developing links with solicitors and referral agencies & bodies such as Citizens Advice, Law Centres and MPs in the Western Circuit
   3. Inputting into the direction and implementation of Advocate’s strategy in the Western Circuit bringing in local knowledge and local relationships. This work will be supported by the senior team at Advocate.
   4. Managing this development work alongside your own case management.
3. **Communication**
   1. Attending events to promote the work of Advocate and encourage volunteering.
   2. Running seminars in Western Circuit that further Advocate’s aims.
   3. Liaising with other pro bono providers and networks such as the Free Representation Unit, LawWorks and CILEx.
   4. Identifying cases suitable for internal and external publicity.
4. **Training**
   1. Providing casework training sessions for office volunteers and supervising them undertaking casework tasks.
5. **Administration and Organisation**
   1. Implementing and maintaining appropriate systems for managing casework, including appropriate filing systems.
   2. Implementing and maintaining appropriate IT databases for monitoring, record-keeping and administration purposes.
6. **Generally**
   1. Undertaking any other responsibilities as reasonably requested by the SMT.



**Knowledge and Experience**

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| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Administrative or casework experience | ✅ |  |
| Awareness of the law (expert legal knowledge not required) | ✅ |  |
| Awareness of the Bar of England and Western Circuit | ✅ |  |
| Experience of working with vulnerable people | ✅ |  |
| Experience of Salesforce or similar case/document management systems |  | ✅ |

**2. Skills and Abilities**

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| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Proven ability to work in a small team with competing demands | ✅ |  |
| Proven ability to work in a busy environment and stay organised under pressure | ✅ |  |
| Excellent email and telephone etiquette | ✅ |  |
| Proven ability to communicate with a wide range of people and liaise with other organisations | ✅ |  |
| Proven ability to prioritise effectively and meet deadlines | ✅ |  |
| Proven ability to cope with stressful situations | ✅ |  |
| Competent IT skills | ✅ |  |

**3. Personal Qualities**

| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
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| Empathetic and driven to help vulnerable people who may be upset or angry | ✅ |  |
| Value pro bono and diversity | ✅ |  |
| Resilient, pragmatic, and adaptable | ✅ |  |
| Positive and proactive “can-do” attitude and approach to work | ✅ |  |
| Commitment to the development of pro bono legal services | ✅ |  |
| Attention to detail | ✅ |  |
| Live in or can commute to the Western Circuit |  | ✅ |
| A passion for social welfare with a focus on criminal law |  | ✅ |
| Professional, reliable, and responsible | ✅ |  |

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