

advocate



CASEWORK VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY June – September 2021

Information sheet

Who we are

Advocate is the Bar's national charity which helps to find pro bono legal assistance from volunteer barristers. We can assist with:

- Advice, drafting, representation and help at mediation
- Cases in all areas of law
- Cases where proceedings have not yet been started
- Cases in all tribunals and courts in England and Wales

Pro bono assistance is only available to those who cannot afford to pay and who cannot obtain public funding (legal aid). We are a small staff dealing with over 2,000 cases each year and rely a great deal on casework volunteers. You will be supervised by a caseworker but carry out a lot of work independently.

Casework volunteer

This is a fantastic opportunity to help a small charity that works closely with the Bar. It will give you exposure to the practical working of the courts and the needs of litigants in person. You will learn a great deal about the real workings of the Bar as a profession and come into contact with a wide range of areas of law.

The volunteering programme comprises of two streams: the Gateway Stream and the Allocation Stream. You should apply to only **one stream**.

Gateway Stream:

You will assist caseworkers with the following tasks:

- Drafting case summaries using the case papers provided by individuals who need legal assistance. These case summaries are then used by experienced barristers when reviewing the file.
- Preparing court-standard bundles using our online system
- Completing case reports on our case management system
- Other administrative support

Allocation Stream:

You will assist the casework team with the following tasks:

- Advertising pro bono cases to volunteer barristers and chambers professionals across England and Wales
- Sending out court papers to volunteer barristers
- Creating short case reports
- Other administrative support

What we are looking for

We are looking for dedicated and enthusiastic individuals to volunteer remotely for one day a week over a four-month period. Advocate can offer a degree of flexibility around other work experience or commitments.

You will have an interest in law and be motivated to help those who cannot afford legal assistance. As a key part of our team you will possess strong inter-personal skills and be ready to adapt to the changing need of the casework team. You must have completed at least one year of law-related study/work and ideally have some experience in the voluntary sector. Office experience is preferred but not essential.

You must be available for one month between June and September 2021. The available slots are:

- June 1st – July 2nd 2021
- July 5th – July 30th 2021
- August 2nd – September 3rd 2021
- September 6th – October 1st 2021

You may state a preference for when you would like to volunteer on the online application form and we will do our best to accommodate it. We can discuss your availability further at your interview if you are shortlisted.

How to apply

Application is by way of an online application form; CVs and covering letters will not be accepted. Applicants may only apply for **one volunteering stream**; either the [Gateway Stream](#) or the [Allocation Stream](#). Applicants should also complete our [Equal Opportunities Form](#).

The deadline for applications is midnight on Sunday 2nd May 2021

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed on Zoom in the **weeks commencing Monday 10th and 17th May 2021**. **Please specify all the times you are available on the application form**. As a small charity with limited staff and resources we are not able to provide feedback or discuss the volunteer applications process with you.

If you are successful, you are required to attend a compulsory training session a compulsory online training session in the week before your start date. This will be on Wednesday 26th or Thursday 27th May for Gateway and Allocation streams starting in June, respectively. **We expect prospective volunteers to keep this date free.**

Testimonials from previous casework volunteers

“Volunteering with Advocate allowed me to be part of ensuring that some of the most marginalised members of our society have legal recourse. The casework team at Advocate made my whole experience enjoyable by remaining welcoming and accessible despite the remote working environment.”

"Volunteering with Advocate was fulfilling on multiple levels. Firstly, having the opportunity to help vulnerable people navigate the complex justice system is incredibly satisfying on its own. As a volunteer, I got the chance to follow a case from its earliest stages at application level to the final stage of finding it a barrister. The team made such an effort to update us on cases that were meaningful to us, which helped us see our contribution in practice. Secondly, working for Advocate broadened my career mindset. Coming from a commercially-minded university, it was reassuring to see that a legal degree can have various uses. Finally, the work in itself and the support I received from the team boosted my confidence in my skills and I recommend this experience to all future lawyers."