



# Law Centre Crisis Navigator Recruitment Pack

**Closing date for applications 4 January 2019**

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## Welcome from Karin Woodley, Chief Executive

I am delighted that you are considering joining the team at Cambridge House. This recruitment pack includes some information about our organisation that I hope you will find useful.

### Our vision

We pursue a vision of a society without poverty where all people are valued, treated equally and lead fulfilling and productive lives.

### Our history

As one of the UK's pioneering university settlements, Cambridge House was founded to promote social justice in South London's 19th century 'slum' neighbourhoods. In 1889 we began working at a 'grass roots' level to empower local people to tackle the social problems created by urbanisation and industrialisation. Established in 1893, the Law Centre is one of the oldest free legal advice services in the UK.

The ideological principles driving the work of the settlement movement contributed to the 1906 Liberal welfare reforms and the creation of the 20th century's welfare state.

Today the welfare state is retracting and the financial restrictions arising from welfare reforms are disproportionately affecting the communities in which Cambridge House works. These neighbourhoods include a high proportion of wards which are in the most deprived 5 to 20 per cent nationally.

### The 21st century context for our work

As austerity measures and far-reaching welfare reforms come into full effect we are driven to address their combined effects on existing levels of poverty and the equity and cohesion of society.

Against the backdrop of diminishing levels of social security, we are seeing poverty in our communities increase most drastically because of complex, cumulative and varied combinations of need. This context requires us to invest in:

- i) Our communities by providing targeted support and advice to those most adversely affected: individuals and families facing a build-up of problems across several aspects of their lives.
- ii) Systems changing activities that increase society's capacity to tackle poverty and social injustice.

In 2017/18 we provided services to 187,000 people across the following portfolio:

#### i) **Social Justice Services**

- **Law Centre**  
Free, independent and expert legal services in housing, employment and welfare benefits. We also undertake public law challenges within welfare benefits and or housing law issues.
- **Independent Advocacy**  
Care Act, NHS Health Complaints, Mental Health (IMHA) Mental Capacity (IMCA) and independent professional and community advocacy for adults and children.
- **Safer Renting**  
Specialist advice, support and advocacy for vulnerable tenants of criminal landlords.

## ii) Education and Inclusion Services

### ▪ Youth Empowerment

Medium to long-term, intensive and wrap-around schemes for excluded 16 to 25-year olds.

### ▪ Disabled Peoples' Empowerment

Arts, sports, life skills and wellbeing clubs for disabled children and adults.

## iii) Our people's social action centre

We manage our building as a community anchor so that it is a focal point for local communities and civic activity, a home for voluntary and community organisations, and a space where local people and statutory agencies can come together to promote and bring about positive social change.

## iv) Research and knowledge exchange projects

We organise activities that generate and collate evidence of what delivery strategies are most effective at tackling poverty and social exclusion at a local level and establish opportunities for evidence sharing and knowledge exchange.

This post is an exciting opportunity for someone to establish a new crisis navigation service in our Law Centre. The role requires specialist level experience of 'client-facing' advice and support in social and/or public welfare, housing and/or benefits, excellent knowledge of social policy and a commitment to our corporate vision.

As an organisation we are particularly keen to ensure that our staff reflect the diverse nature of the community in which we work. We value diversity and warmly welcome applications from disabled people, the LGBTQ communities and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Working at Cambridge House is immensely rewarding. If you would like to be part of this very special organisation and believe that you can manage the development of our Law Centre, we welcome your application. You can find out more about our work, including our corporate strategy and most recent audited accounts on our website [www.ch1889.org](http://www.ch1889.org).

I do hope that you choose to apply for the role.



## The Cambridge House Law Centre

### Helping vulnerable people to save their homes, keep their jobs and protect their families

- i) This new role is being established to support the Law Centre's service users to stabilise their lives and progress by providing a high-quality advice and crisis mitigation service.
- ii) Our Law Centre provides free expert legal advice and representation in the areas of housing, welfare benefits, employment and public law.
- iii) Recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the London Legal Support Trust and holding Lexcel accreditation for quality legal practice management and excellence in client service, Cambridge House maintains a reputation as one of the country's leading law centres.
- iv) The Law Centre holds Legal Aid Agency and Southwark Council contracts and generates more than £200,000 per annum in legal fees.
- v) The team comprises four solicitors (including the Law Centre Manager), one caseworker and an administrator. New three-year funding from the City Bridge Trust will fund a skilled Crisis Navigation Adviser position to work flexibly across housing and welfare benefits.
- vi) Working with around 2,500 clients every year, the Law Centre's recent successes have included:
  - Achieving a historic recognition of the rights of homeless people by winning a Supreme Court case defining vulnerability and priority of need. This was the first Supreme Court case concerning a homeless individual with a disability in 30 years.
  - Excellence in case outcomes protecting the homes and incomes of vulnerable individuals:
    - 100% success rate in possession/eviction proceedings, enabling clients to protect their homes.
    - 100% success rate in homelessness challenges, protecting homeless individuals' right to housing.
    - 100% success rate in welfare benefits appeals.
    - 100% success rate in welfare benefits appeals to the First Tier Tribunals encapsulating legal issues for example, overpayment of tax credits or housing benefit. Disallowance of ESA, PIP, DLA.
  - Advice given on Judicial Review matters such as unreasonable delay, breach of a statutory duty such as failure to send decision notices notifying the claimant of his or her appeal rights.
  - Appeals to the Upper Tribunal on point of error of law.
  - Cases involving the right to reside, habitual residence test, or Windrush issues.
  - Housing Benefit backdating revisions and supersessions.
  - Social Fund Reviews.
  - Advice given on entitlement to contributory-based benefits, such as maternity allowance, contribution-based JSA/ESA.
  - Income Maximisation.
  - Advice given to elderly clients in respect of Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance.
  - Advice on all aspects of employment related enquiries.

- Excellence in client service:
  - 93% were “Very Satisfied” with overall level of service.
  - 97% rated the overall service as “Excellent” or “Very Good”.
  - 93% reported increased awareness of their rights and responsibilities.
- vii) The Law Centre is embedded in the local community. It is closely involved in local advice networks and belongs to a consortium of advice organisations providing welfare benefits, employment and housing advice and casework services to Southwark residents who do not qualify for legal aid.

## Job Description and Person Specification

Job title:	Crisis Navigator
Responsible to:	Welfare and Employment Solicitor
Responsible for:	Staff and volunteers allocated to the post
Location:	Cambridge House
Salary:	£30,000 to £35,000 per annum depending on experience
Contract:	Permanent
Working Hours:	35 hours per week
DBS:	Enhanced

### 1. Job Purpose and Objectives

As a member of the Law Centre team, the purpose of the role is to provide high quality advice and crisis mitigation support to service users who face crises in social and public welfare, benefits, housing and employment.

### 2. Main Duties and Responsibilities

- a) Deliver and develop the Law Centre's crisis prevention services including:
  - i) The provision of advice work.
  - ii) Undertaking casework.
  - iii) Advocacy and representation on behalf of clients.
  - iv) Conducting initial client interviews and detailed diagnostic interviews at Cambridge House, outreach sites and over the telephone.
  - v) Making referrals to Cambridge House solicitors in cases requiring certificated legal advice.
  - vi) Providing crisis navigation advice and support at court to the clients of Law Centre staff attending the 'Duty Housing Possession Scheme'.
  - vii) Delivering relevant training and knowledge sharing activities to Cambridge House staff and at outreach sites.
  - viii) Undertaking community education and social policy-related activities.
- b) Collaborate with Law Centre colleagues and other Cambridge House teams to:
  - i) Develop marketing and communications for the service.
  - ii) Identify and maximise opportunities to develop and extend the crisis navigation service.
- c) Develop and implement working policies and protocols for the crisis navigation service so that it achieves its key performance indicators (KPIs).
- d) Maintain accurate and up-to-date records that comply with internal policies and procedures, Lexcel and Legal Aid Agency standards and funders requirements.
- e) Collate and analyse monitoring and evaluation data for the crisis navigation service and prepare monitoring and evaluation reports as required internally and by funders.
- f) Provide advice and mutual referral support to local generalist advice providers so that complex cases are addressed in user-friendly and effective ways.
- g) Keep informed of:
  - i) Relevant legislation and social policy.
  - ii) Local issues and work of other agencies and organisations working in relevant fields.

### 3. General Responsibilities

- a) To keep abreast of the overall work of Cambridge House.
- b) To participate in regular supervision and annual appraisal, and to be committed to own professional development.
- c) To participate in internal/external meetings as required, to attend conferences and other functions, and to contribute to general management decision making as necessary.
- d) To comply with all of Cambridge House's governance policies and procedures.
- e) To carry out any other duties commensurate with the role.
- f) To work occasional unsociable hours (evenings and weekends)
- g) Travel across, and on occasions, outside of London.

**This job description is provided as a guide to the role. It is not intended to be an exhaustive description of duties and responsibilities. It will be subject to periodic revision as the emphasis on and ways of working within the role changes.**

<b>Person Specification</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 5 A-C GCSEs or equivalent</li> <li>2. Level 3 Qualifications or equivalent</li> <li>3. Relevant professional training</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Degree at 2.i level or higher in a relevant discipline</li> <li>2. Relevant professional qualification e.g., Certificate in Generalist Advice</li> </ol>
<b>Professional Knowledge and Experience</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At least three year's relevant experience including specific and demonstrable experience of specialist level social and public welfare, benefits and/or housing advice.</li> <li>2. Detailed knowledge of relevant social policy.</li> <li>3. Substantial experience of providing advice to vulnerable people and/or people with multiple and complex needs.</li> <li>4. Experience of preparing, planning and delivering knowledge sharing and/or training sessions.</li> <li>5. Track record of managing a varied range of advice casework.</li> <li>6. Track record of ensuring ongoing compliance with funding/contract and external accreditation requirements.</li> <li>7. Experience of compiling and maintaining accurate written, computerised and statistical records in line with data protection legislation, the provision of advice casework and the preparation of reports and submissions.</li> <li>8. Experience of managing service user/client expectations.</li> <li>9. Experience of analysing and interpreting complex information, including financial information and relaying the information to service users/clients in an understandable way.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Working in voluntary/public /health sector environment</li> <li>2. Experience of working with clients from diverse communities.</li> <li>3. Experience and knowledge Lexcel, SRA and LAA regulatory and compliance frameworks.</li> <li>4. Experience of managing volunteers.</li> <li>5. Experience of facilitating forums/networks</li> </ol>
<b>Skills, abilities and competencies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to conduct welfare benefits appeals in the First Tier Tribunal.</li> <li>2. Ability to work collegiately and collaboratively as well as liaise and work effectively in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously, take initiative and responsibility for completing tasks in a fast-paced environment, set priorities and work both independently and in a team environment.</li> <li>4. Excellent written and oral communications skills including a demonstrable ability to work effectively with a variety of people including colleagues, vulnerable clients, visiting and resident professionals and the public.</li> <li>5. Demonstrably numerate, detail orientated and analytical.</li> <li>6. Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends.</li> <li>7. Strong interpersonal skills including an ability to demonstrate empathy, respect and a non-judgemental understanding of clients' behaviours and motivations.</li> <li>8. Windows and Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, SharePoint etc.) gained over a minimum of two years</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ability to support solicitors on certificated work.</li> <li>2. Additional languages</li> <li>3. Financial Management and Budgeting</li> </ol>
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Honesty, reliability and excellent time-keeping</li> <li>2. Loyalty and a commitment to Cambridge House's work</li> <li>3. Positive, enthusiastic and friendly attitude</li> <li>4. Problem solving and 'can-do' approach</li> <li>5. Listening skills</li> <li>6. Flexible, motivated and adaptable to change</li> <li>7. Discretion</li> <li>8. Client-focused</li> <li>9. Team-player</li> </ol>	

## How to Apply

### Please include the following in your application:

1. A short evidenced-focused supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4 explaining why this appointment interests you and how you meet the essential criteria in the person specification.
2. Your curriculum vitae with:
  - i) Education and professional qualifications.
  - ii) Full employment history, giving details where applicable of budgets and numbers of people managed as well as relevant achievements in recent posts.
  - iii) Details of your latest remuneration and your notice period.
3. The names, positions, organisations and contact details of two professional referees:
  - i) Your referees must include employers covering the last five years of your employment history.
  - ii) References will only be taken once your express permission has been granted.
4. A completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form (attached)
  - i) The information provided will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only.
  - ii) The form will not be treated as part of your application.
5. We request that you inform us if you will require any special provision because of a disability should you be called for interview.
6. Email, mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the interview timetable.

Recruitment Timetable	
<b>Closing Date for applications</b>	<b>Friday 4 January 2019</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Week commencing 14 January 2019</b>
The interview dates may be subject to change and candidates will be advised in advance should this happen	

**Please email completed applications on or before midnight on 4 January 2019 to:  
Jan O'Day: [joday@ch1889.org](mailto:joday@ch1889.org)**

**If you do not hear from us within 14 days of the closing date, please assume your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.**

**Please note that we only provide feedback to shortlisted candidates.**