

Children and Statelessness Caseworker / Solicitor

JOB TITLE:	Children and Statelessness Caseworker/Solicitor (maternity cover)
LOCATION:	Asylum Aid Office (London) (office based and remote)
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Immigration Supervisor
CONTRACT:	10 months, part-time (4 days / 30 hours a week)
SALARY:	£28,000 - 32,000 p.a. pro rata (dependent on experience)
BENEFITS:	27 days holiday (pro rata) plus 4% matched pension contribution
START DATE:	January 2022

Background

Asylum Aid (previously merged with Migrants Resource Centre under Consonant) is, and has long been, a leader in the Immigration and NGO sector: providing high-level legal support to ensure the protection of vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and using its expert knowledge to drive forward system change. Now, in its 30th year of providing high quality legal support in asylum, immigration and public law work, these services are needed more than ever. Asylum Aid also has specific funded projects on statelessness casework and welfare benefits.

The Helen Bamber Foundation (HBF) is a pioneering Human Rights charity supporting refugees and asylum seekers who are the survivors of trafficking and torture, including gender-based and 'honour-based' violence. Recognising the complexity of each client's suffering and needs, the Foundation offers specialist services within a Model of Integrated Care encompassing: therapy; medical advice; legal protection; counter-trafficking support; housing & welfare advice; and community and integration.

Since August 2020, the Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid have combined our efforts to support the vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees who need us the most. We specialise in representing those with complex cases that often cannot access representation elsewhere, including survivors of trafficking and torture, children and stateless persons.

About the Role

As Children's and Statelessness Caseworker/Solicitor at Asylum Aid, you will be responsible for taking the lead on our unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) work. You will combine this work, which will account for approximately 50% of your time, with working alongside the Statelessness Project Coordinator to deliver Asylum Aid's award-winning Statelessness Project. You will also have the opportunity to contribute to the wider work of the Asylum Aid team, delivering high quality legal services on the full range of protection and trafficking issues that affect migrants,

refugees, and asylum seekers. You will conduct asylum casework under legal aid funding, with a specialist focus on representing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and contribute to policy and strategic legal work to promote the rights of children in the asylum system. You will also work with the Statelessness Project Coordinator to oversee and support the work of our pro bono partners in the preparation and submission of applications under the Statelessness Determination Procedure.

This is an ideal opportunity for a caseworker keen to work with UASC clients and who understands the role legal advice and representation can play in achieving wider societal change. You will also have the opportunity to develop expertise in the Statelessness Determination Procedure and work with a range of external stakeholders to support Asylum Aid's work to increase access to legal protection for this group. Full training on the Statelessness Determination Procedure will be provided as required.

The ideal candidate will be a qualified solicitor or Immigration caseworker with IAAS Level 2 accreditation and have significant experience in publicly funded immigration work under a Legal Aid Agency Contract. The candidate should have, or be able to obtain, Level 2 Children Safeguarding. You will be ready to hit the ground running in a busy yet rewarding environment and be able to pick up the caseload in a fixed term maternity contract.

As is the nature of this sector, the role will be exposed to a high volume of traumatic and distressing material and, whilst they will be supported by the Asylum Aid Director, supervisors and the surrounding team, they should also be able to demonstrate knowledge of good self-care principles in an intense work environment.

Some remote working is possible, although the nature of the role means that attending clients in person will often be necessary.

Equal Opportunities

The Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid are equal opportunities and Living Wage employers. We are committed to attracting and recruiting diverse candidates as we are keen to make sure that our staff, trustees, volunteers and ambassadors reflect the communities we serve and the wider community we work in at every level within the organisation. We particularly welcome applications from people from Black, Asian and minority ethnicity backgrounds.

Essential Qualifications and Experience

- Either a qualified solicitor or an OISC Level 3 accredited caseworker
- Level 2 (senior caseworker) accreditation under the IAAS
- At least two years' experience (or part-time equivalent) of maintaining a caseload of complex asylum and immigration cases in line with OISC/IAAS and LAA regulatory requirements;
- Significant experience of providing immigration, asylum and trafficking legal advice and representation to children, including UASCs;
- Experience and understanding of representing victims of trafficking within the National Referral Mechanism;
- Experience of undertaking publicly funded work under an immigration legal aid contract;

- Experience of appeals in the First Tier Tribunal and the Upper Tribunal, including working with counsel;
- Demonstrable track record of achieving billing and time recording targets.

Desirable Experience

- Level 2 Child Safeguarding qualification
- Experience of advocacy in First-tier Tribunal (IAC) appeal hearings;
- Experience of pre-action protocol and relevant CPR applicable to judicial review work;
- Experience of providing legal advice and representation on Judicial Review and/or Court of Appeal applications (under solicitor supervision if appropriate);
- Understanding of the Statelessness Determination Procedure;
- Experience of working in partnership with external organisations, including volunteers and/or pro bono lawyers
- The ability to design and deliver training courses and workshops on related legal issues for a varied range of participants.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Legal Casework

- Provide legal advice and representation to clients on asylum and immigration matters, including trafficking and statelessness matters, including for children and victims of trafficking.
- Demonstrate excellent standards of client care, taking account of the particular needs of children and young people and other vulnerable people.
- Ensure that referrals are made to attempt to find additional, non-legal support for clients, where this is deemed appropriate and clients are open to such support.
- Undertake casework at a pace and in an environment suitable to children, using child-friendly language and in line with Asylum Aid policy on working with children.
- Where appropriate, apply for LAA Case Funding and ensure that all requirements of the Legal Aid Agency contract with regard to the conduct of publicly funded work are complied with;
- Ensure that legal aid and other income is maximised, and targets are achieved;
- Deal with referrals and other initial advice enquiries;
- Maintain client files and records in line with file management procedures;
- Analyse legal information from domestic and international case law and legislation;
- With guidance from the Asylum Aid Director and senior casework staff, provide legal representation for clients at appeal, human rights and bail hearings.
- Participate in file reviews with other casework staff as required.
- Instruct counsel on cases as appropriate.
- Liaise with and refer clients to other legal representatives as appropriate.

Other duties:

- Keep abreast of relevant developments in asylum/immigration law and practice, particularly as it relates to children and statelessness cases;
- Comply with professional standards and accreditation;

- Contribute to the development and implementation of Asylum Aid’s legal strategy;
- Use the evidence base generated to identify strategic challenges that can feed into wider policy, research and campaigning work.
- Ensure that any reporting and monitoring requirements agreed with funders regarding children representation and statelessness cases are met in full.
- Work with colleagues in contributing to and collating to data collection from casework.
- Assist, inspire and support colleagues in carrying out their duties;
- Attend and actively participate in legal team meetings;
- Attend and actively participate in internal and external meetings, events, and training sessions as appropriate;
- Play a full part in the development of Asylum Aid generally;
- Adhere in full to all Asylum Aid’s policies and procedures;
- Undertake any other related activities as required.

Throughout all aspects of the role

- Respect for client confidentiality at all times in line with Asylum Aid’s confidentiality agreements and consent forms;
- Ensure accurate and timely record keeping of client data on the case management system and participate in gathering data when required for monitoring and evaluation in line with organisational KPIs;
- Attend staff training days, meetings and any departmental meetings when required;
- Attend forums and meetings with relevant external agencies to promote Asylum Aid, share information and keep knowledge up to date;
- Promote the aims, principles, policies, interests and wellbeing of Asylum Aid and to protect its integrity and reputation at all time;
- Support the organisation at special events and initiatives.

Person Specification

In addition to the essential criteria and desirable criteria above, the ideal candidate will meet the following criteria for the post:

Knowledge

1. Excellent working knowledge of the law and policy as it relates to immigration, asylum and children;
2. Understanding of the requirements of OISC/SRA/Lexcel and LAA in relation to the conduct of cases, file management and supervision;
3. Thorough understanding of NRM procedure;
4. Thorough understanding of LAA contract provisions in relation to controlled work and exceptional case funding and experience of using CCMS;
5. Good awareness of the welfare and support entitlements of asylum seekers in the UK; and
6. An understanding of the barriers migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers face regarding access to legal advice, reasons why they may become destitute and why this makes it more difficult to access advice and support.

Abilities

1. The ability to manage a high number of cases at any given time;
2. The ability to maintain a high level of client care
3. The ability to work co-operatively with colleagues;
4. The ability to work autonomously, prioritise workloads and meet deadlines;
5. The ability to analyse and assess detailed information, and to grasp complex issues rapidly;
6. The ability to work well with children and young people;
7. The ability to deal empathetically and supportively with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers;
8. The ability to communicate fluently and effectively in English, with a range of internal and external contacts;
9. The ability to be self-servicing in an office environment;
10. The ability to work outside normal office hours as required; and
11. The ability to travel in order to carry out the responsibilities of the post.

Please note that the successful candidate will be offered the job subject to suitable references and a DBS check. This role will require disclosure of both the adult and child barring lists. If appointed you will be required to give your consent to Asylum Aid to receive regular updates on your criminal records status throughout your employment.

How to Apply

Please submit an up to date CV and a covering letter by **5pm on 22 November 2021** by outlining your relevant skills and experience, as well as how your previous experience matches the listed responsibilities and person specification to jobs@helenbamber.org. Please state in your covering letter when you would be available to start the role. In setting the salary regard has been had to average sector pay and the NCJ pay-scales.

Interviews are scheduled to be held during the week commencing **29 November 2021** will be conducted via Zoom. For any queries, please email Alison Pickup (Director of Asylum Aid) at alison.pickup@asylumaid.org.uk.

We regret that we can only respond to applicants who make it to the interview stage. No agencies.



Asylum Aid is part of the Helen Bamber Foundation Group

Contracted with the Legal Aid Agency

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