

Job description

Job title	Legal Director
Reporting to	Chief Executive
Job location	London, N1
Salary	£70,000 per annum

Purpose of the post

The Howard League for Penal Reform is the world's oldest penal reform charity, with a proven record of delivering change.

Our successful campaigns have led to the abolition of capital punishment, an end to the ban on sending books to prisoners and a massive reduction in arrests of children. Our legal team provides expert advice and support to children and young people in prison.

The Howard League for Penal Reform is looking to recruit a Legal Director to help shape the future direction of the organisation's public interest litigation and develop an impactful litigation portfolio. This role also represents a rare and exciting opportunity to join the senior leadership team of the world's oldest prison charity at a time of change.

We are looking for an experienced litigator, with expertise in prison law and public law, a strong strategic vision and a creative approach to lead and manage our legal team, following the departure of our Legal Director in February. The successful candidate will be highly collaborative with a track record of developing strategic litigation strategies and using the law as a tool to create real change.

In addition to litigation, you will thrive devising and overseeing innovative projects and workstreams that combine the Howard League's academic and practical strengths in the service of our beneficiaries and of wider penal reform.

The Howard League places a high value on constructive and authentic leadership. You do not need to have been a member of a senior leadership team before, but you will need to demonstrate that you have the skills, aptitude and interest to discharge this element of the role well. You will be reflective, emotionally intelligent, and reliable.

The post-holder will lead a team of three qualified lawyers, two trainees, a case worker and two support staff. This will include overseeing the legal team advice, which is the only dedicated free advice line for children and young people in prison in England and Wales. The successful candidate may choose to carry a small caseload of their own, with support (no more than 20% of the workload), with the rest of their time devoted to strategic development of

litigation, to collaboration with other teams and to line management and legal supervision.

Duties and Responsibilities

The following are the primary duties and responsibilities of the Legal Director:

Legal & Strategic Leadership and Management

- With the support of the Chief Executive, refocusing the casework of the Howard League towards strategic litigation. This will include developing a litigation strategy and working to extend the traditional focus on children and young people to issues affecting adult men and women.
- Work with others in the senior management team and the Board, ensuring that the Howard League identifies clear objectives across teams and that the legal team's substantive work programmes, particularly its casework and project work, are developed to achieve these objectives.
- In consultation with staff and external experts, devising and implementing legal strategies for advancing the Howard League's objectives through strategic litigation.
- Together with the relevant team directors, ensuring internal synergy between the work of the legal, research and campaigns teams.
- Taking the lead to ensure that the experiences of children and young people calling our advice line are captured in strategic case work, projects and workstreams across the organisation.
- Conceiving, planning and leading projects which build on the work of the legal team and pursue the penal reform objectives of the charity, ensuring that quality work is delivered in a timely manner with maximum consultation and collaboration.
- Acting as an influential and authoritative spokesperson for the Howard League on legal matters, including by speaking to the press, delivering training and participating in conferences, and engaging in external policy fora as appropriate.
- Working with the Campaigns Director, to oversee the production and legal content of external publications, training and events.
- Supporting the maintenance and development of the Howard League's external networks and partnerships to support its strategic objectives, including identification of suitable legal cases for support.
- With the agreement with the Chief Executive, carrying a small load of cases involving matters of particular complexity and/or high levels of public interest.

Human Resources Planning and Management

- Providing leadership of the legal team, contributing to the maintenance of a fair and respectful working environment that promotes the well-being and development of staff.

- Providing line management to the Managing Solicitors and other team members as necessary.
- Ensuring that the work of the legal team meets the highest professional standards, including in terms of client care, financial and case administration and Legal Aid Agency and Specialist Quality Mark (SWM) compliance, and that it otherwise meets the requirements of best practice.
- Developing annual operational plans for the legal team, overseeing the development of cascading individual work plans for legal team staff.
- Managing the legal team budget.
- Actively participating in senior management team discussions and decisions.
- Preparing papers for and attending quarterly meetings of the Board, and any other oversight bodies, responding to questions about the legal work and following up as required.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Reviewing and consolidating systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the Howard League's legal work.
- Reviewing the legal team's progress towards achieving its goals and providing support in evaluating its work.

Financial and contract management

- Ensuring that the casework complies with contractual obligations of professional regulators (the Legal Aid Agency and the Solicitors' Regulation Authority) and that the financial administration of cases is compliant.
- Ensuring that the Howard League has appropriate systems and controls in respect of billing and overseeing compliance with them.
- With or as requested by the Development Manager, contributing to fundraising applications, initiatives and reports to develop and support the legal team and/or the core funding of the Howard League.
- Maintaining positive working relationships with funders and potential funders and ensure compliance with funders' reporting requirements as appropriate.
- Jointly with the senior management team, contributing to the preparation of an annual operational plan and budget for Board approval and implement appropriate financial systems for proper budgetary and cashflow control.
- Liaising with the Finance and Operations Director to assist with the preparation of quarterly management accounts reporting actual and budgeted income and expenditure on at least a quarterly basis.

General

- Undertaking other tasks appropriate to the role as requested by the Chief Executive or the Board.

Selection criteria		Essential	Desirable
Technical expertise & qualifications	Qualified lawyer, with substantial post qualification experience	✓	
	Good understanding of the UK legal system, prison law, public law and human rights law	✓	
	Understanding of community care law		✓
	Experience of advising and representing people in prison in England and Wales	✓	
	Substantial experience of conducting strategic litigation	✓	
	Experience of management or supervision	✓	
	Experience of working in an NGO or other environment using integrated advocacy strategies or theories of change		✓
	Experience of working with different funding arrangements including legal aid, and foundation funding		✓
Knowledge, skills & abilities	Commitment to human rights and social justice, and the Howard League's cross-party, non-party status	✓	
	Commitment to the Howard League's values of collaboration, excellence, integrity, learning, accountability and courage	✓	
	Commitment to building a fair, compassionate, inclusive and diverse working environment	✓	
	Ability to take initiative, think creatively and problem solve	✓	
	Ability to work well under pressure, and manage multiple priorities and projects effectively to tight deadlines	✓	
	Ability to provide robust, fair line management	✓	

	Excellent oral and written communication skills	✓	
	Ability to provide leadership, motivation and support to colleagues	✓	

Conditions of Service

The Howard League is a friendly and inclusive team. We support flexible working practices and whilst this is a full-time (or near to full-time) role, part-time hours and/or job sharing will be considered for the right candidate/s.

The terms and conditions are as laid out in the contract of employment and the office handbook and include 30 days paid leave plus statutory days and 10% contribution to the Howard League workplace pension scheme. You may choose to work in the office each day, or to work some days from home on agreement with management.

The Howard League strongly encourages applications from suitable candidates with lived experience of prisons or the wider criminal justice system.

As an inclusive employer, the Howard League actively encourages applications from racially minoritised backgrounds.

How to apply

If you would like to discuss the role in more detail, then please contact Andrea Coomber, Chief Executive, on 020 7249 7861.

To apply for this role, please fill in the application form. If for any reason you can't use the application form, please provide an up-to-date CV and supporting statement, giving evidence and examples of how you meet the criteria, and what you feel you would bring to the role.

Please e-mail the completed application to info@howardleague.org.

The deadline for applications for this role is **5pm on Friday 17 July 2022**.

First interviews will be held on **Tuesday 26 July 2022**.