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Recruitment Pack: Lawyers

The Howard League for Penal Reform is the world's oldest prison reform charity. Our overriding ambition is to move the dial on punishment towards building a more humane and effective response to crime, that provides justice to all and helps to reduce reoffending.

We provide specialist legal advice and representation to children and young people in the criminal justice system, through the only dedicated advice line for children and young people in custody in England and Wales.

We also challenge human rights violations and executive overreach across the prison estate. We are developing an impactful strategic litigation portfolio to effect vital change for adult men and women, as well as children, in prison. Recent work includes bringing legal action in relation to the introduction of PAVA spray into children’s prisons, addressing unlawful segregation practices at Oakhill secure training centre and tackling unsafe conditions across the prison estate.

We are a membership organisation that combines our litigation with campaigning and policy work. Together with our campaigns team, our legal team drives forward the organisation’s strategic priority areas (IPP sentences, joint enterprise, remand, and sentence inflation) and provides cross-organisational support on wider policy and communications work. To take IPPs as an example, last year we set up a hotline with law firm Peters & Peters to help people serving IPP sentences with complex changes in the law relating to their licences, and this year we convened an expert working group to provide practical policy solutions for ending the long-running IPP scandal for good.

There is no shortage of interesting and important work for creative and strategic lawyers in this space. We are looking for lawyers to join our legal team who can:

* scope and develop strategic public law and human rights challenges;
* provide high quality legal advice and advocacy support to children and young people in prison, and their families, friends and professionals working with them;
* run a small caseload of legally aided prison and/or public law cases; and
* work collaboratively with colleagues to contribute to the charity’s priority areas and wider policy and campaigning work as required.

We welcome applications from solicitors, barristers and chartered legal executives.

The Howard League recognises the importance of building an inclusive, diverse workforce. We welcome applications from marginalised groups and from candidates with personal experience of the criminal justice system.

Although experience of representing people in prison is desirable, this is not essential. We also want to hear from lawyers who have experience of conducting public law and/or human rights litigation and are excited about helping to develop strategic litigation to effect meaningful change in this area.

Even if you do not meet all the selection criteria, if you think you could be a good fit for this job, we would like to hear from you.

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| **Role description** | |
| **Job title** | Lawyer |
| **Reporting to** | Legal Director or Managing Solicitor, depending on experience |
| **Role purpose** | The Howard League’s lawyers are responsible for advising and representing children and young people in custody; running cases funded by legal aid; scoping and developing strategic litigation; and contributing to the Howard League’s policy and campaigning work |
| **Salary** | From £48,080 to £56,822 (FTE), depending on experience |
| **Duration** | Full time (0.8 FTE considered) |
| **Length of contract** | Permanent contract |
| **Location** | Hybrid working. Minimum of two days per week in the office in Farringdon, London. |
| **Benefits include** | * Flexible working * 30 days’ paid leave plus bank holidays * 10% contribution to the Howard League workplace pension scheme * Access to an Employee Assistance Programme |

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| **Key responsibilities**  **Legal advice, advocacy and casework**   * Providing legal advice and advocacy support in response to queries from children and young people in prison, professionals and the public * Running a small caseload of legally-aided prison and/or public law cases, in compliance with the Legal Aid Agency and Specialist Quality Mark standards * Ensuring effective administration of cases, including monitoring costs and billing * Identifying strategic issues and themes emerging from our advice line service to inform the wider work of the organisation * Developing resources on legal rights for children and young people in prison and professionals working with them * Keeping up to date with changes in legislation, case law and legal procedures relevant to the Howard League’s work * Providing support with legal administrative and compliance tasks and supervising legal administrative support staff, as required   **Litigation**   * Scoping and developing strategic public law and human rights litigation * Supporting with securing funding for cases where legal aid is not available   **Policy and campaigning**   * Contributing to and supporting policy, participation and communications work, in particular in relation to the organisation’s priority areas and legal work   **Other responsibilities**   * Providing information about the legal team’s work for events, social media, funding proposals and reports, as required * Developing and maintaining relationships with relevant stakeholders, including other NGOs * Representing the Howard League in meetings and at events with relevant stakeholders * Line managing legal administrative support staff/junior lawyers (as required and depending on experience) * Working as part of the whole office team |

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| **Selection criteria** | |  |  |
|  | | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Technical expertise and qualifications** | Qualified to practice law in England and Wales | ✔ |  |
| **Experience** | Experience of conducting public law/ human rights litigation | ✔ |  |
| Experience of advising and representing people in prison in England and Wales |  | ✔ |
| Experience of legal aid | ✔ |  |
| Experience of conducting strategic litigation |  | ✔ |
| Experience of campaigning |  | ✔ |
| **Knowledge and skills** | A commitment to, and understanding of, the Howard League’s strategic objectives | ✔ |  |
| A commitment to the Howard League’s values of collaboration, excellence, integrity, learning, accountability and courage | ✔ |  |
| Excellent written and verbal communication skills | ✔ |  |
| Ability to take initiative, think creatively and problem solve | ✔ |  |
| Ability to work well under pressure, and manage multiple priorities effectively to tight deadlines | ✔ |  |
| Strong client care skills | ✔ |  |

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| **Application process** |
| To apply, please complete the application form which can be found [**here**](https://howardleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Howard-League-Lawyer-Application-Form-August-2025-1.docx).  If for any reason you can’t use the application form, please provide an up-to-date CV **and** supporting statement. The supporting statement should address your skills and experience in relation to each of the essential and desirable selection criteria. CVs without a supporting statement will not be considered.  **The deadline for applications is 24 September 2025.**  First round interviews will be held in the week beginning 6 October 2025. The interview panel will comprise two to three people, who will each ask questions to enable you to demonstrate how you meet the essential and desirable requirements of the role. All candidates are asked a uniform set of questions and may also be asked follow-up questions to clarify or expand on individual answers. At the end of the interview, candidates will also have an opportunity to ask any questions about the job that they may have. Candidates may be required to complete a test as part of the interview process and a second round of interviews may be conducted, depending on the outcome of the first.  If you require any reasonable adjustments to any part of the recruitment process, please contact us at [info@howardleague.org](mailto:info@howardleague.org) to discuss this further.  Applicants who have not been short listed will be notified by email. Unfortunately, due to our limited resources, we are unable to provide feedback on applications.  Applicants must have the current right to work in the UK, which will be checked prior to interview.  If you would like to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact the Howard League’s legal director: [gemma.abbott@howardleague.org](mailto:gemma.abbott@howardleague.org) |