

LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

ROLE DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Role Title:	Court Officer		
Directorate:	Place	Grade:	7
Department:	Housing	Hours/weeks:	36 hours/52.14 weeks
Function:	Housing Resources	Post number:	
Team:	Complex Cases	Base/location:	Lynton House / Orchard Housing Office
Reports to:	Complex Case Team Leader		
Responsible for:	No direct line management but may be responsible for the supervision of workers, trainees and work placement staff on occasion		

Role and Context	
Overall Role Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide legal support within Rent Recovery for council and temporary accommodation, liaising with managing agents, landlords and solicitors To work with Rent Recovery Officers to instigate and progress cases legally, including NoSP, NoPP, Particulars of Claim, up to eviction To attend Court on behalf of the Council for all court hearings related to the eviction process triggered by rent arrears and/or landlord handbacks that relate to money judgement only To contribute to delivery of internal Housing Services' processes that fall within the Rent Recovery teams' remit
Role Context:	<p>In recent years the Rent Recovery function has had to respond to the significant challenges of a changing environment and customer base. Welfare reform, in particular the introduction of the Benefit Cap in 2013, the Spare Room Subsidy and the roll out of Universal Credit in 2017, have caused rent arrears to drastically increase. This has been compounded by a lack of affordable housing within the housing market coupled with the acute problem in Redbridge which has the second lowest social housing stock of all London Local Authorities. In addition the Redbridge customer base is presenting with greater vulnerabilities and complex needs. The Court Officer function has been created in this context of rising rent arrears.</p>

Key Accountabilities and Result Areas	
1. Strategy and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare cases of substantial or persistent arrears for court action including, gathering documents and exhibits including NoSP, NoPP, NTQ, and Particulars of Claim To support reviews of Redbridge processes and procedures relating to court activity. To support the implementation of improvements
2. Operations and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To represent the Council presenting evidence in Court Hearings of arrears and action taken to recover these arrears, usually without legal representation To ensure high standards of record keeping for all court activity To obtain money judgements on relevant cases To contribute to delivery of internal Housing Services' processes that fall within the Rent Recovery teams' remit To carry out any other duties commensurate with the grade of the post as requested
3. Systems and Process Development and Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the enforcement of court protocol across the Rent Recovery function To act in compliance with court protocol during all court activity To keep abreast with any changes to court protocol To assist in the development of Redbridge internal court policies and procedures where required To capture all notes and resident engagement on Northgate (or relevant Housing system) To clearly and accurately present court data as required by the service To support the referral of claims of disrepair to relevant colleagues (as determined by the type of property) To maintain customers electronic files on info@work providing a thorough audit trail of activity and key documents in line with agreed process
4. Communication Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To contribute to and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues within Redbridge, other council and statutory services, external bodies, service users, and landlords To liaise with managing agent on standards and expectations of behaviour and activity in court Communicating upward to the Complex Case Team Leader on activity Advise Complex Case Team Leader of outcomes, recommending amounts to be collected / written off / written back Communicate with other teams to assist in ensuring that court protocol is followed across the service <p><i>Key Internal Contacts</i> Housing Needs, Welfare Benefit Department; Housing Benefit Department; Social Services; Legal Department; Finance Department; Tenancy Sustainment Team; NELFT; Children's Services</p> <p><i>Key External Contacts</i> Managing Agents, that provide the Council with temporary accommodation; Solicitors; Welfare Benefit Agency; Other Local Authorities; Department for Works and Pensions; Probationary Services; Registered Social Landlords; Citizens Advice Bureau; Credit Unions; customers; their friends, relatives and advisors</p>
5. Performance and Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To demonstrate high standards of professionalism to ensure that the Council is well represented at all times To uphold accurate record keeping and use of systems to ensure comprehensive ability to produce relevant reports To provide statistical information on performance as requested To answer members enquiries and draft responses to complaints / enquiries on individual cases as required

	<p>The post holder will be required to contribute to the development and implementation of the Council's corporate objectives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety in the workplace • Performance management • Equality and Diversity policy • Customer service strategy • Corporate priorities and strategies <p>To ensure that services are innovative and quality driven and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are responsive to customer's needs and service requirements • Demonstrate clear departmental direction, vision and style • Achieve effectiveness and efficiency in operation • The Council's Equality and Diversity policy is adhered to • To carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post, in accordance with the Council's Health & Safety Policy and relevant Health & Safety legislation
Key Performance Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all court actions and exhibits (e.g. NTQs and NSOPs) are carried out in accordance with the timescales set out in e.g. reduction in time taken to process • Customer service standards are upheld • External court protocol is upheld
6. Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manage a busy and varied caseload with competing demands • The postholder has no specific budget management responsibilities. However decisions can have significant financial impacts and cause both the commitment of resources and of long term housing provision commitments.
Corporate Accountabilities	<p>All employees of the Council should undertake and conduct their work with due regard to the corporate accountabilities (available on the Redbridge Council website). These include responsibilities for outcomes regarding Equality, Conduct & Behaviour, Health & Safety, Data Protection, Safeguarding and Customer Care.</p>
Flexibility	<p>The key responsibilities and duties of the role are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. All workers are expected to operate flexibly to support delivery of services and from time to time will be required to undertake responsibilities outside the normal remit of role description as required by the line manager, which are broadly commensurate with the job level and scope of competence.</p>

Person Specification		
Knowledge & Experience		A - I - T
Method of candidate assessment: A = Application form I = Interview T = Test		
Statutory or Mandatory qualifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No Mandatory Qualification Required	A
Educational Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Level 4: Specialist learning with ability to undertake detailed analysis of a high level of information and knowledge in an area of work or study.May be evidenced by: Certificates of higher education; NVQ level 4; HND; BTEC Professional; and equivalent qualifications, or evidence of demonstrable application in the course of experience, including study of lawA Law degree would be advantageous	A
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Knowledge of tenant service charges and associated financial legislationSpecialist knowledge of court protocolSpecialist knowledge of court conventionsKnowledge and awareness of Local Government operating processes and decision making processes and the ability to operate in that environmentKnowledge of Housing Benefit and regulationsKnowledge of recent housing issues and government initiativesKnowledge of the principles behind case management	AI T
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Attending & presenting cases at Court as requiredMediationWorking in the public or social housing sector	AI T
Skills / Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Able to communicate effectively with all stakeholders to ensure that council priorities are clearAble to communicate effectively with Council officers at all levels and with a variety of external agenciesMaintain accurate record systemsAbility to prepare, collate, analyse and interpret specialist information and present the information in an appropriate mannerAbility to prepare documents and reportsAbility to manage time effectively, prioritise workload and work to deadlinesAbility to negotiate within a context of high political sensitivity and conflicting interests	AI T
Corporate Behaviours	The Council has a set of behaviours that all employees are expected to deliver in the performance of their role. The behaviour framework can be found on the Council's internet page , and these should be reflected in your application and the way you work. As part of an individual's personal development Redbridge expects employees of all levels to be continuously developing these core behaviours.	AI
Effective and Collaborative Team Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To take responsibility for personal development and actively participate in all learning and developmentTo participate in the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of service plansTo support and contribute to value for money, service efficiency and improvement.	AI T
Working Pattern and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Travel to courts as required both within Redbridge and out of Borough (for example including Court cases in Reading, Stratford, Romford, Basildon, Slough, Canterbury, and UxbridgeMust have valid UK driving license	AI
Safeguarding and Disclosure	DBS Disclosure required? <u>No required</u> / Basic / Enhanced	A T
Special Factors or Constraints	N/A	AI

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Last Reviewed:	16/10/2019