

Rent Service

Court Officer Job Description and Person Specification

We are seeking an enthusiastic and customer-focused Court Officer to join the Rent Service team. Reporting to the Rent Specialist Support Manager, you will manage rent arrears cases for secure council tenants and residents in temporary accommodation, ensuring all recovery action complies with legislation, council procedures and the Pre-Action Protocol for Social Housing Claims. The role involves preparing and presenting housing possession cases at court, managing a complex caseload, working closely with internal teams and external partners, and supporting residents to sustain their tenancies wherever possible while maximising rent collection.

The successful candidate will have experience of rent recovery, case management and decision-making, with a strong understanding of housing legislation, welfare benefits and debt recovery processes. You will possess excellent communication, organisational and IT skills, attention to detail, and the ability to build effective relationships with colleagues, stakeholders and residents. We are looking for someone who demonstrates empathy, resilience and a commitment to delivering excellent customer service. Full training and ongoing support will be provided, and candidates with transferable skills and relevant experience are encouraged to apply.

Review date (11/05/ 2027)

Job Description

Job Title:	Court Officer
Department:	Rent Service
Function:	Rent Service
Team:	Rent Court Team
Post number:	S001522
Grade:	LBR 7
Hours/weeks: <i>E.g. 36 hours/52.14 weeks</i>	36 hours/52.14 weeks
Base location:	Lynton House / Orchard Housing Office
Reports to: <i>Job title</i>	Specialist Support Manager
Responsible for: <i>Job titles of direct reports</i>	<i>If there are no direct reports insert 'No direct line management but may be responsible for the supervision of trainee and work placement employees on occasion'</i>
Role purpose and role dimensions: <i>Overview of the job</i>	- To provide legal support within Rent Collection for council and temporary accommodation, liaising with managing agents, landlords and solicitors - To work with Rent Collection 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
Key external contacts: <i>Organisations</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
Key internal contacts: <i>Job titles or groups of staff</i>	Housing Needs, Welfare Benefit Department; Housing Benefit Department; Social Services; Legal Department; Finance Department; Tenancy Sustainment Team; NELFT; Children's Services
Financial dimensions: <i>Budgetary responsibility & amount. Equipment, cash, property etc. for which employee is responsible.</i>	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.

Key areas for decision making:	Key Areas for Decision Making - Progressing rent arrears cases through the legal process. - Assessing and preparing evidence for court action. - Prioritising and managing a complex caseload. - Recommending amounts to be collected, written off or written back. - Ensuring compliance with court protocols, policies and procedures. - Making decisions with significant financial implications for the Council.
Other considerations: <i>E.g. working patterns</i>	- Office attendance is required for a minimum of 2 days per week, with additional attendance as required by service needs. - Travel to courts and other locations within and outside the borough may be required. - A valid UK driving licence and access to a vehicle are desirable but not essential. - The post holder is expected to work flexibly to meet operational and service requirements.

Key accountabilities and result areas:	Key elements:
1. Strategy and Planning	This will involve: - Prepare and coordinate cases involving substantial or persistent rent arrears for court action, ensuring all required documentation and supporting evidence, including Notices of Seeking Possession (NoSP), Notices of Possession Proceedings (NoPP), Notices to Quit (NTQ), and Particulars of Claim, are accurately compiled and submitted. - Contribute to the review and evaluation of court-related processes and procedures, identifying opportunities for improvement and supporting the implementation of changes to enhance efficiency, compliance, and service delivery.
2. Operations and Support	This will involve: - Represent the Council at court hearings, presenting evidence relating to rent arrears and the actions taken to recover outstanding debt, often without legal representation. - Maintain accurate, comprehensive, and up-to-date records of all court-related activity, ensuring compliance with legal and organisational requirements. - Manage court cases effectively to secure money judgments and other appropriate legal outcomes where applicable. - Contribute to the delivery and continuous improvement of Housing Services processes within the remit of the Rent Services team, supporting service objectives and performance standards. - Undertake any other duties and responsibilities commensurate with the grade and nature of the post, as reasonably required by management.

3. Systems and Process Development and Improvement	This will involve: • Support the consistent application of court protocols across the Rent Services function, promoting compliance with legal and procedural requirements. • Ensure all court-related activities are conducted in accordance with current court protocols, legislation, and organisational policies. • Maintain up-to-date knowledge of changes to court procedures, protocols, and relevant legislation, ensuring these are reflected in day-to-day practice. • Contribute to the development, review, and implementation of internal court-related policies, procedures, and guidance to support continuous service improvement. • Record all resident contact, engagement, case activity, and court-related actions accurately and promptly within the relevant housing management systems. • Produce, analyse, and present court performance data and management information clearly and accurately to support service delivery and decision-making. • Support the timely referral of disrepair claims and related matters to the appropriate teams and colleagues in line with established procedures. • Maintain accurate and comprehensive electronic customer records, ensuring a clear audit trail of actions, communications, and key documents in line with agreed processes and data management standards.
4. Communication and Partnership Working	This will involve: • Develop and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues across Housing Services, other Council departments, statutory agencies, external organisations, landlords, managing agents, and customers to support the delivery of effective court and rent recovery services. • Liaise with managing agents to communicate the Council's standards, expectations, and requirements relating to court attendance, conduct, and case management. • Provide regular updates and accurate information to the Rent Specialist Support Manager/ Rent Court Team Manager on court activity, case progression, and emerging issues. • Report on court outcomes and make recommendations to the Support Manager/ Rent Court Team Manager regarding debt recovery actions, including amounts to be recovered, written off, or written back, in accordance with agreed policies and procedures. • Work collaboratively with colleagues across services to ensure court protocols, legal requirements, and agreed processes are consistently applied. • Communicate complex case information clearly and professionally, both verbally and in writing, to a range of internal and external stakeholders.

5. Performance and Standards

- Demonstrate high standards of professionalism, integrity, and accountability, ensuring the Council is represented positively at all times.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date records, ensuring information is effectively captured within relevant systems to support reporting, decision-making, and audit requirements.
- Produce and provide performance statistics, management information, and reports as required by the service.
- Respond to Members' enquiries and draft clear, accurate, and timely responses to complaints and case-specific enquiries, in line with Council standards and procedures.

Corporate Responsibilities

The post holder will contribute to the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives by:

- Supporting and promoting health and safety in the workplace.
- Contributing to effective performance management and continuous improvement.
- Adhering to and promoting the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies.
- Supporting the delivery of the Council's customer service strategy.
- Contributing to the achievement of corporate priorities, objectives, and strategic goals.

Service Delivery Standards

The post holder will support the delivery of innovative, customer-focused, and high-quality services that:

- Respond effectively to customer needs and service requirements.
- Contribute to the achievement of service objectives and priorities.
- Promote effective and efficient ways of working.
- Comply with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies and principles.
- Operate in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety policies, procedures, and statutory requirements.

Key Performance Outcomes

- All court actions and legal notices, including Notices to Quit (NTQs) and Notices Seeking Possession (NSOPs), are prepared, issued, and progressed accurately within agreed timescales.
- Court cases are effectively managed, with accurate records maintained and court protocols consistently followed.
- High standards of customer service are delivered, ensuring customers and stakeholders receive a professional, timely, and responsive service.
- Court-related data, reports, and case information are maintained accurately and provided within required timescales.
- Strong working relationships are maintained with internal and external stakeholders to support effective case management and service delivery.
- Legal compliance, Council policies, and court procedures are adhered to at all times, minimising risk and supporting successful outcomes.

6. Resource Management	This will involve: • 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.
General accountabilities and responsibilities	
Green Statement	This will involve: ▪ Seeking opportunities for contributing to sustainable development of the borough, in accordance with the Council's commitment to making Redbridge a cleaner, greener place to live. In particular, demonstrating good environmental practice (such as energy efficiency, use of sustainable materials, sustainable transport, recycling and waste reduction) in your job.
Data Protection/Confidentiality	This will involve: ▪ Complying with the Data Protection Act 1998 – treating all information acquired through your employment, both formally and informally, in strict confidence and in accordance with Caldicott principles. ▪ Complying with the Code of Conduct, other practice guidelines and the rules and protocols defining employees' access to and use of the Council's databases and systems. Any breaches could result in disciplinary measures. ▪ Maintaining client records and archive systems in accordance with departmental procedure, policy and statutory requirements.
Conduct and Whistleblowing	This will involve: ▪ Complying with the requirements of the Code of Conduct and maintaining high standards of personal conduct, honesty and integrity. You have a duty to raise any impropriety or breach of procedure to the appropriate level of management. Employees making such disclosures (whistleblowing) are protected and may make them without fear of recrimination.
Safer Working	This will involve: ▪ Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Where you work in such a post the Council will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and references will be taken up prior to interview.
Equalities	This will involve: ▪ Complying with the Council's strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity and outcomes in its services to the community and in the employment of people. You are expected to understand, comply with and promote Council policies in your work, to undertake any appropriate training and to challenge any prejudice and discrimination.
Customer Care	This will involve: ▪ Complying with corporate and service area customer service standards and promoting the development of high quality, individualised and customer-led services.

Health and Safety	This will involve: Being responsible for your own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public. Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment where necessary and report defectives and hazards to management.
To contribute as an effective and collaborative member of the team	This will involve: - Taking responsibility for continuing self-development and participating in training and development activities. - Participating in the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of the service plans. - Supporting and contributing to value for money, service efficiencies and improvements.
Flexibility	This will involve: The above-mentioned duties are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. From time to time you may be required to undertake responsibilities outside the normal remit of your Job Description as required by the line manager, and are broadly within your the grading level and competence.

Person Specification

Job Title:	Court Officer		
<i>Method of candidate assessment: A = Application form I = Interview T = Test. Weighting: 3 = Essential, 2 = Desirable</i>		A - I - T	Weighting
Minimum education/ qualifications:	- Educated to Level 4 or equivalent, with the ability to undertake detailed analysis and apply specialist knowledge within a professional work environment. - This may be evidenced by qualifications such as a Certificate of Higher Education, NVQ Level 4, Higher National Diploma (HND), BTEC Professional qualification, or another relevant equivalent qualification. Equivalent experience demonstrating the application of specialist knowledge, including an understanding of legal processes and procedures, will also be considered. - Knowledge of housing law, court procedures, and legal processes relevant to rent recovery and possession action is desirable. - A Law degree or equivalent legal qualification would be advantageous.	A	2

Minimum experience/ knowledge/ skills:	• Knowledge of housing management, rent recovery, service charges, welfare benefits, housing legislation, and court protocols relating to possession and debt recovery proceedings. • Experience of preparing and presenting court cases, negotiating and mediating with customers and stakeholders, ideally within a local authority, social housing, legal, or public sector environment. • Strong communication and stakeholder management skills, with the ability to build effective relationships and influence outcomes across a range of internal and external partners. • Ability to prepare, analyse, interpret, and present complex information, reports, legal documentation, and performance data accurately. • Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to maintain accurate records, manage competing priorities, meet deadlines, and operate effectively within a politically sensitive environment.	AIT	3
Minimum competencies: Customer focus	• Demonstrates a commitment to delivering high standards of customer service, ensuring customers are treated fairly, professionally and with respect. • Able to identify and respond appropriately to the needs of customers, including those who may be vulnerable or experiencing financial hardship. • Communicates clearly and effectively with customers, managing expectations and explaining complex information in an accessible manner. • Takes ownership of customer enquiries and works proactively to achieve timely and effective resolutions. • Balances customer needs with legal, regulatory and Council requirements to achieve appropriate outcomes.	AIT	3
Communicating and influencing	• Able to communicate clearly, confidently and effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including customers, colleagues, elected Members, legal representatives, managing agents and external agencies. • Able to influence and negotiate positively to achieve effective outcomes while balancing customer needs, legal requirements and Council priorities. • Presents complex information, evidence and recommendations clearly, both verbally and in writing, to a range of audiences. • Builds and maintains effective working relationships, fostering collaboration and promoting a consistent approach across services. • Adapts communication style to suit different audiences and situations, including managing challenging conversations in a professional and constructive manner.	AIT	3

Building relationships, working together and in partnership	- Builds and maintains effective working relationships with colleagues, customers and partner organisations. - Works collaboratively with others to achieve service objectives and positive customer outcomes. - Shares information and supports colleagues to promote a joined-up approach to service delivery. - Develops productive partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.	AIT	3
Respecting & implementing diversity	- Demonstrates a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, treating customers, colleagues and stakeholders with fairness, dignity and respect. - Recognises and responds appropriately to the diverse needs, backgrounds and circumstances of customers and communities. - Promotes inclusive service delivery and challenges discrimination or inappropriate behaviour where necessary. - Works in accordance with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies and standards.	AIT	3
Planning, organising & achieving results	- Effectively plans and prioritises workloads, managing competing demands and meeting deadlines. - Maintains accurate records and ensures that court actions, documentation and related processes are completed within required timescales. - Uses initiative and sound judgement to resolve issues and progress cases efficiently. - Focuses on delivering high-quality outcomes and continuous improvement in service performance.	AIT	3
Embracing change	- Demonstrates a positive and flexible approach to change, adapting quickly to new ways of working and service requirements. - Supports the implementation of service improvements, policies, procedures and legislative changes. - Identifies opportunities to improve processes and contribute to more efficient and effective service delivery. - Maintains up-to-date knowledge and skills to meet the changing needs of the service.	AIT	3
<i>For those with managerial responsibility</i> Leadership	N/A		
Managing and developing people	N/A		
Special conditions:	N/A		