

Job Description

Private Secretary Senior Presiding Judge

Grade: Grade 7

Location: Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL

Overview

The Senior Presiding Judge's Private Office is looking for an enthusiastic, motivated, high performing Grade 7 to join the team. The successful candidate will be based in the Royal Courts of Justice and will be working at the heart of the Judicial Office in this varied role which offers significant scope for personal development. This is an exciting opportunity to help lead a busy Private Office, the successful candidate will report directly to the Senior Private Secretary and will be working with a number of the most senior members of the judiciary.

The Senior Presiding Judge ('SPJ')

The SPJ's responsibilities and remit include:

- providing support, leadership and guidance for courts judiciary and magistrates, particularly to leadership judges;
- acting as 'Chief of Staff' for the Lord Chief Justice, dealing with the day-to-day issues affecting the judiciary, across a wide-ranging field including diversity, HR casework, and appointments
- representing the Lord Chief Justice on the HMCTS Board and attending a number of other high profile boards;
- the effective and efficient operation of the courts, including regular meetings with HMCTS, working with judges to understand and improve performance.
- Providing support, leadership, and guidance for courts judiciary, in particular to leadership judges;
- the effective and efficient operation of the courts, including regular meetings with those involved in the work of the courts, and working with judges to understand and improve performance;

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The successful candidate will take active leadership of the SPJ's Private Office supporting the Senior Private Secretary with management of the team of 8 and will be required to independently manage conflicting priorities daily as well as advise the SPJ.

They will be expected to build strong relationships with the SPJ and other senior members of the judiciary, gaining their trust, respecting their confidence and providing appropriate challenge. The post-holder will need to work closely with colleagues in other parts of the Judicial Office and in HMCTS, investing time to develop good relationships to ensure the SPJ has all the information needed to reach decisions and address the concerns of the judiciary.

A key aspect of this role will be to help lead the Private Office, although the SPJ Private Office has a cross jurisdictional role the post-holder will support on issues relating the Criminal Justice System ('CJS'). This will require collaborative working with the Judicial Office's Criminal Justice Team, HMCTS, MoJ and the CPS identifying and drawing links where necessary.

Main Responsibilities

The role will also undertake the following duties and responsibilities (the list is not exhaustive):

- Report to and support the Senior Private Secretary, particularly with the leadership of the Private Office; this will include direct line management of the Deputy Private Secretary's.
- Ensure that the SPJ receives periodic updates as to live issues within the CJS, providing advice, briefing and support at meetings where required;
- Support the SPJ on specific projects including supporting key CJS working groups which will include working with the wider judiciary and senior contacts in the CPS, Police, Defence, HMPPS and HMCTS.
- Ensure the Private Office and wider Judicial Office are aware as necessary of emerging issues within the CJS especially those with cross jurisdictional impacts;
- Act as an ambassador for the SPJ, communicating with senior stakeholders with accuracy and sensitivity towards views/concerns/questions as required;
- Undertake ad-hoc requests as required to support the SPJ and Senior Private Secretary, managing conflicting priorities often with tight deadlines;

These duties are subject to change depending on the SPJ's priorities.

Private Office roles are unpredictable and can require working long hours and, very occasionally, at weekends. It may be necessary to support the SPJ on visits across the country therefore some travel will likely be required. This role is not suitable for job-share or reduced hours working.

Person Specification

The successful candidate must be able to influence and manage upwards and speak with authority when dealing with senior officials or judiciary. Excellent communication and leadership skills are required. Line management experience is desirable as is the ability to work collaboratively, through building and maintaining a network of colleagues and contacts across various teams both within your own department and in external organisations.

Desirable Skills

Operational experience, specifically within the criminal justice system is desirable.

Experience of working with the judiciary would be an advantage.

You will be assessed against these behaviours during the selection process:

- Communicating and influencing
- Working together
- Delivering at pace
- Seeing the big picture

The Judicial Office

"Strengthening the rule of law and improving the administration of justice by supporting the leadership and governance of our independent judiciary."

The Judicial Office was established in 2006 following the implementation of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 which made the Lord Chief Justice (LCJ) the Head of the Judiciary.

The Judicial Office is an arm's length body of the Ministry of Justice based at the Royal Courts of Justice. We are a unique branch of the civil service, dedicated to supporting the judiciary and promoting judicial independence, to maintain confidence in the rule of law. We help the Lord Chief Justice and the Senior President of Tribunals fulfil their responsibilities to the judiciary, in an ever-evolving justice system. We provide operational support, policy, legal and handling advice through a number of specialist teams.

We have consistently high staff engagement scores and can offer frequent opportunities to get involved in the management and running of the department.

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