

Job Description: Legal Adviser, Fire Safety: Joint Inspection Team (JIT)

Reports to: JIT Team Leader

Directorate/Team: JIT

Grade: 7

Job Purpose:

To provide high quality, cost effective and proactive professional legal advice on Housing Act 2004 enforcement on residential high rise blocks and related activities.

Core Accountabilities:

1. Keep up to date with policy and legislative developments relating to Housing Act 2004, and enforcement action.
2. Model the LGA's values and work in accordance with health and safety, equal opportunities, and environmental policies.
3. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities appropriate to the post.

Role Specific Accountabilities:

1. Provide expert advice and guidance to the JIT team on all aspects of enforcement; appeals notices and related activities under the Housing Act 2004 Part1, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System Enforcement Operating Guidance (HHSRS) as amended, any operating Local Authority Enforcement Concordats, and related regulations and operating guidance in relating to high rise residential blocks. Some of this advice will used to advise local authorities choosing to take enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004.
2. Advise on and prepare appropriate enforcement notices for service under Part1 Housing Act 2004m taking into account the provisions of HHSRS and any operating Local Authority Enforcement Concordats .
3. Advise on and take all steps necessary to prepare for enforcement action ensuring compliance with appropriate timescales and court rules including preparing relevant officers giving evidence.
4. Draft witness statement and assist in training and preparing JIT and local authority staff for Tribunal/ Court appearances relating to Part 1 Housing Act 2004

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5. Provide advice to the JIT Team Leader, and, where appropriate, to individual local authorities on identifying the responsible person for remediation works, such as the owner, freeholder, managing agent.
6. Provide interpretation, guidance and advice to the JIT Team Leader on the requirements of the grant funding agreement and work specification, between the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG), and how the actions of JIT complies with including any actions that requires to be taken.
7. Help train non legal staff within the JIT team on developments in Part1 Housing Act 2004 and related activities, as necessary for the discharge of their roles and responsibilities..
8. Participate in JIT team meetings, training and events as required.
9. Work with the LGA Corporate Legal Adviser and in her absence her deputy, to procure and monitor the provision of high quality cost effective external expert legal advice and support.
10. Respond to authorities' requests for specific assistance and legal advice from their in-house legal teams on matters relating to the work of the JIT, identifying and managing potential risk conflicts, political issues and interfaces with monitoring officers and Chief Executives appropriately, liaising with the appropriate LGA Political Group Office Head on queries from elected members.
11. Develop and deliver internal and external briefings and training to JIT team and Local Authorities Housing Enforcement officers including making presentations on changes in the law, practice and emerging issues affecting local authorities relating to Part1Housing Act 2004, regulations and the HHSRS as amended

Relevant Contacts:

LGA

Group Offices

LGA Legal Team

Corporate Leadership Team

External

Ministry of Housing and Local Government

Local Authorities

External Professional Advisers

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Person Specification: Legal Adviser, Fire Safety: JIT team

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional legal qualification (solicitor, barrister or ILEX)
Knowledge and expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant post qualification experience relevant to the post Demonstrable experience of providing high quality legal advice and support including on complex and sensitive legal issues, which are responsive to the needs of clients. Demonstrable knowledge and experience of Housing Act 2004 and Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Operating Guidance, including awareness of the provisions of addendum issued in January 2019 and related Enforcement Concordats Demonstrable knowledge and experience of advising on and conducting legal enforcement actions under Part 1 Housing Act 2004 using HHSRS on residential buildings; relevant criminal evidence rules and legislation applicable to Part 1 Housing Act 2004 enforcement actions), and of advising staff on conducting interviews under caution, and preparing warrants and relevant related document. Practical knowledge and experience of preparing enforcement notices and documentation and conducting legal actions in the Courts pursuant to Part 1 Housing Act 2004. Sound understanding of the democratic processes, structure, role and remit of local government and how it relates to central government policy on Housing Act 2004. Experience of building and maintaining productive relationships with a network of influential contacts
Skills and abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly developed written and oral presentation skills with ability to present technical legal advice in a clear and comprehensible way. Legal Drafting skills Political awareness and sensitivity Strong organisational skills and able to work under pressure and with a high degree of autonomy and flexibility. Ability to work collaboratively and to create an environment of trust, fairness and openness. Committed to personal and professional development.

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