

Job description

Job Title: Billing Co-ordinator (Crime)

Reporting to: Finance Operations Manager

Objective of the role

The focus for this role is working with the Finance Team, assisting fee earners in the Criminal department in converting work in progress into bills, and process bills accurately and promptly.

The role involves supporting the firm's Criminal Law Team, which is one of the most prestigious in the country, and which acts in many high profile and complex cases. The role therefore involves billing in a range of cases, often with novel or complex issues

Key responsibilities

- Undertaking Crime lower billing, including police station and magistrates fixed fee bills as well as non-standard magistrates' bills including;
 - Preparing bills and processing claims for submission to the LAA;
 - Submitting monthly criminal contract claims to the LAA;
 - Dealing with fee earner queries;
- Submitting claims for publicly funded, crown court, court of appeal and other criminal matters including, where appropriate, drawing up detailed schedules of costs incurred to assist with applications for wasted costs orders;
- Submitting claims for Costs out of Central Funds where Defence Costs Orders have been obtained for private clients.
- Following assessment of publicly funded bills, liaising with fee earners to determine whether the assessment will be appealed and ensuring that any such appeals are submitted within the time limits allowed;
- Posting criminal legal aid bills on the firm's case management system, accurately allocating costs to fee earners and charging the appropriate timelines and disbursements;
- Maintaining detailed electronic records of all claims on the bills tracker to support cash flow forecasting and budgeting;
- Maintaining efficient and effective filing systems for criminal legal aid bills and related documentation;
- Reconciliation of crime submission (monthly and yearly)
- Working with the Accounts Assistant to check payment remittances from the LAA and other public funding bodies for accuracy.
- Working with Legal Cashier to process invoices from counsel, experts and other providers of service for the firm, ensuring that invoices are authorised by the appropriate fee earner and are accurately referenced;
- Assisting with the preparation of interim and final bills for privately funded matters, if required;
- Closing completed matters and processing them in order that they can be archived;
- Assisting with preparation of training and guidance materials for fee earners and team members;
- Assisting in the monthly preparation and distribution of financial and other management reports for fee earners
- Dealing with queries from fee earners within the Crime department, and supporting them in the preparation and delivery of bills;

- Attending monthly billing meetings with fee earners to review WIP, the progress of files currently being processed by the billing team and 'housekeeping' (in line with the policies of the firm) such as;
 - Time transfers
 - Rate changes
 - WIP write offs
 - Billing write offs
 - File closures
 - Disbursement transfers or write offs
 - Amend client records as needed
 - Assess fees received vs. targets with each fee earner
- Ensuring any tasks following billing meetings are dealt with promptly;
- Processing rate changes on private matters as directed;
- Assisting other team members to post accurate bills, journals, WIP/Disbursement write offs, time transfers and receipts to the firm's accounting system, also maintaining ledger compliance including investigating balances, closing finished matters and ensuring that all monies received are apportioned accurately and in a timely manner;
- Assisting when required with civil billing and provide cover for the billing team/finance team
- Assisting with the firm's yearly audit.
- Compliant with SAR, LAA, LEXCEL or other external agencies;

Person specification

Experience and education

- At least one year's experience gained within a law firm is desirable, but not essential
- Knowledge and understanding of criminal Legal Aid billing and other systems of public legal funding is desirable, but not essential
 - AAT qualification is desirable, but not essential

Skills and abilities

- Confident, with good influencing and negotiation skills
- Ability to work effectively and respond well under pressure
- Organised and efficient
- Ability to use own initiative
- Strong communication and customer service skills
- Excellent attention to detail and numeracy
- Ability to manage own caseload and self motivate
- Strong IT skills

Personal qualities and attributes

- Friendly and approachable with a professional manner
- Flexible, co-operative and supportive team player
- Enthusiastic and confident and able to work with a wide range of people