

# Candidate Information Pack

## **HM ASSISTANT CORONER**

### Inner North London

London Borough of Camden

on behalf of Camden, Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets

February 2019

**HM ASSISTANT CORONER FOR INNER NORTH LONDON**  
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This recruitment pack has been drafted in accordance with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

## **ADVERT**

### **HM Assistant Coroner for Inner North London**

**Salary fee paid, in the region of £454 per day.**

Camden is seeking to appoint 3 assistant coroners to support HM Senior Coroner for Inner North London, for the full range of coroner duties in order to deliver a high quality coroner service to the people of Inner North London. This appointment will be a permanent one, and will include on call out of hours working.

The assistant coroner will be based in the dedicated courts and coroner's offices in St Pancras and Poplar. Office opening hours are 8am to 4pm, but court may run to 4.30pm and sometimes later.

Camden Council is looking for exceptional candidates with excellent proven organisational, management and efficiency skills, as well as experience of managing and embracing change. You will work closely with the senior coroner to ensure value for money, performance and financial efficiencies.

You will be required to demonstrate knowledge and experience of coroner law and of basic medicine, have proven skills in conducting investigations and an understanding of court procedure. You will also need to demonstrate the excellent communication and interpersonal skills necessary to deal with sensitive situations.

The successful candidates will be required to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a coroner as defined in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and associated rules and regulations and as further described in various guidance issued by the Chief Coroner for England and Wales.

These are fee paid positions, although they are likely to involve a regular commitment, which is to be agreed between assistant coroner and senior coroner. However, there are no guarantees as to the number of occasions that assistant coroners will be required to work.

The successful candidates will be barristers or solicitors or fellows of the Institute of Legal Executives and satisfy the judicial appointment eligibility condition on a 5 year basis. They will be under the age of 70 and be subject to the appointment and eligibility conditions within the [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(s.23 and Schedule 3\)](#).

Once a Coroner is appointed they are then a Judicial Office holder until they reach the age of 70 years (compulsory retirement age) unless they choose to resign or are removed by the Lord Chief Justice or Lord Chancellor prior to their 70th birthday.

The candidate pack is available here:

<https://camdengov.referrals.selectminds.com/togetherwearecamden/jobs/hm-assistant-coroner-1237>

If you wish to have an informal discussion, please contact Jamie Akinola.

**Suitably qualified applicants are requested to attach their CV and supporting documents to Camden's Oracle Taleo job request.**

**Closing date: 10 April 2019**

**Interview date: 25 April 2019**

**Induction day: 24 May 2019**

The vacancy for this post has been notified to the Chief Coroner of England and Wales and the Lord Chancellor, as required by statute.

## **CORONER SERVICE INFORMATION**

### **Area information**

The Inner North London coroner area includes an area of approx 30 square miles with a current population of around 1million. The number of deaths registered annually averages above 2,500.

The coroner area contains many national rail, underground and overground railway stations; plus Docklands Light Railway, St Pancras International Railway Station policed by UK Border Force, and Cycle Super Highways.

The local prison is HMP Pentonville.

Hospitals include the regional trauma unit with helicopter landing at the Royal London Hospital, University College London Hospital, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Homerton University Hospital, the Royal Free Hospital and Whittington Hospital, as well as numerous psychiatric units.

There is a large transient population including foreign nationals.

The area contains the largest population of Hasidic Jews in Europe, and the borough with the largest proportion of Muslims in the UK. Members of both of these communities are often very keen to bury on the day of death, or often seek quickly to repatriate the deceased abroad.

### **Court and office accommodation**

The service is located in dedicated accommodation, including courts and offices in St Pancras and Poplar.

### **Staff**

Coroner's officers are employed by the the Metropolitan Police Service. In addition, there is a coroner's officer manager. The senior coroner, assistant coroners and coroner's officers are supported by two full time and one part time administrative staff employed by Camden Council.

### **Management**

Accommodation, contracts, tendering, finance and support staff are managed by the coroner service manager, who is employed by Camden Council in communities, culture and environment.

The coroner service manager works closely with the senior coroner and the Metropolitan Police Service on the delivery of the service to ensure those affected by the work of the coroner's office receive a high quality service.

### **Daily operations**

As these are fee paid positions the assistant coroner will work on days and times as agreed with the senior coroner. You will be expected to be available out of hours on a rota basis.

## **JOB SUMMARY**

<b>Post Title</b>	<b>HM ASSISTANT CORONER</b>
<b>Service Area</b>	Communities, Culture and Environment
<b>Contact point</b>	Head of Regulatory Services
<b>Location</b>	St Pancras and Poplar Coroner's Courts and Offices

To deliver a high quality coroner service to the people of Inner North London in accordance with statutory provisions, case law, best practice and associated guidance.

### **JOB FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

To support the senior coroner to provide a high quality coroner service in accordance with statutory provisions, case law, and associated guidance issued by the chief coroner.

1. To conduct investigations into deaths when made aware that bodies of deceased persons lie within the coroner area and there is reason to suspect that:
  - the cause of death is unnatural; or
  - the cause of death is unknown; or
  - death occurred in custody or otherwise in state detention.
2. To determine the identity of the deceased and how, when and where the deceased came by his or her death; decide if a post mortem examination is necessary and give directions to a pathologist or other appropriately qualified expert medical practitioner or scientist; to establish the medical cause of death.
3. Where required, to hold an inquest, with or without a jury, in accordance with section 7 of the 2009 Act and as appropriate, to notify the relevant registrar of deaths of the findings and conclusion of the inquest, or the natural cause of death ascertained with or without a post mortem examination or that the death reported does not require further inquiry or investigation.
4. To provide clear direction to staff on coroner investigations.
5. To be sensitive and, as far as possible, responsive to the needs and requirements of those who engage with the coroner service, including the bereaved, witnesses, medical personnel, police, the media and other stakeholders; to take into account the religious and cultural requirements of faith communities; and to manage their expectations appropriately.
6. To assist the senior coroner to ensure that the coroner service has planned for and is prepared for any significant emergencies which may occur or affect the coroner area.
7. To comply with the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 for 24 hour availability for urgent matters that cannot wait until the following working day.
8. Where necessary to assist the senior coroner to engage with the local community, for example giving talks and seeking feedback and views; to collaborate and engage with external agencies and stakeholders as required.

9. To work co-operatively with the local authority staff team and police employees to ensure a safe, harmonious and effective working environment.
10. To deal with claims for treasure when required in accordance with statutory regulations and guidance.
11. To keep an up to date working knowledge of coroner law, practice and guidance, and advise staff on developments as appropriate.
12. To undertake compulsory Judicial College and chief coroner training; and other training as appropriate; and to keep a detailed record of this.
13. To be committed to ensuring expenditure is reasonable and controlled, working closely with the senior coroner to regularly monitor expenditure and report possible risk.

<b>ROLE REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
All applicants must be a barrister or solicitor or fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives and satisfy the judicial appointment eligibility condition on a 5 year basis and be under the age of 70.	<b>x</b>	
Thorough, up to date knowledge of legislation, case law and guidance relating to coroner's duties.	<b>x</b>	
Knowledge of structures and procedures of the police, in particular those relating to the investigation of sudden or suspicious deaths.		<b>x</b>
Knowledge of the extent to which cultural and religious requirements can be met within the constraints of coroner law and practice.	<b>x</b>	
Knowledge of the organisational structures of local government including an understanding of the challenges facing local government, both at present and in the future.		<b>x</b>
Ability to drive the service and be receptive to new ideas, reforms and diverse needs.	<b>x</b>	
Ability to work collaboratively with staff and their employers.	<b>x</b>	
Effective verbal and written communication skills and the ability to explain legal and medical terms to people from non-legal or non-medical backgrounds.	<b>x</b>	
Excellent analytical skills and a consistency of decision making and administrative direction.	<b>x</b>	
Ability to work in sensitive situations with a wide range of stakeholders (eg. relatives, police officers, medical personnel, mortuary staff, registrars, witnesses, council members and the media).	<b>x</b>	
Ability to deal with emotionally charged situations that require sensitive handling and confident/positive judgement.	<b>x</b>	
Full current driving licence (unless disability precludes this) and use of a vehicle for work purposes.		<b>x</b>
Experience of legal work in the coroner jurisdiction (e.g. representing clients at inquest).	<b>x</b>	
Previous experience as an assistant coroner		<b>x</b>
Experience of conducting investigative enquiries including demonstrating clarity of thought in identifying issues relevant to the investigation.	<b>x</b>	
As a fee paid assistant coroner your sitting pattern will be agreed with the senior coroner. You will be expected to work out of hours on a rota basis.		

## **SUMMARY OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HM ASSISTANT CORONER**

The conditions of service applicable to the post are those set out in Schedule 3, Coroners and Justice Act 2009. The assistant coroner holds office on whatever terms are from time to time agreed. You will not be an employee of the local authority.

### **Salary**

The post is fee paid and the current fee is expected to be in the region of £454 per day .

### **Hours of work**

As these are fee paid positions the assistant coroner will work on days and times as agreed with the senior coroner.

You will be asked to participate in an out of hours service on a rota basis.

### **Holiday entitlement**

None (fee paid appointment).

### **Payment of expenses**

Expenses will be paid in line with the council's expenses policy. Reasonable expenses for attendance at judicial training (including travel expenses and accommodation where necessary) will be paid by the local authority.

### **Indemnity**

The council will indemnify the assistant coroner for costs or damages in relation to legal proceedings in accordance with Regulation 17 of The Coroners Allowances, Fees and Expenses Regulations 2013.

### **Notice period**

The assistant coroner may resign from office by giving notice in writing to the relevant authority, however the resignation does not take effect unless and until it is accepted by the authority.

### **Politically restricted post**

This post is politically restricted under the terms of Schedule 3, paragraph 4 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

### **The Guide to Judicial Conduct**

The assistant coroner will comply with the standards as set out in the Guide to Judicial Conduct and other associated guidance.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

### **Applications**

You are required to submit a CV and full supporting statement of up to two A4 pages. It is important that your supporting statement fully addresses the following criteria.

1. Efficient management and organisation.
2. Up to date knowledge of coroner law and guidance.
3. Coroner skills in the office and in court.
4. Integrity, sound judgment and decisiveness.
5. Collaborative working, with staff, relevant authority and police.
6. Communication skills.
7. Sensitivity to diversity and cultural requirements.
8. It is important that the applicant's coroner experience is provided in detail. The form should therefore require the applicant to state:
  - (a) how many days worked as coroner;
  - (b) the nature of the work;
  - (c) the division of time between office and court;
  - (d) the extent of experience in completing Forms 100A and 100B;
  - (e) the number and type of inquests conducted;
  - (f) the number of long inquests and their subject matter; and
  - (g) the number of Article 2 inquests conducted.

If you do not complete a full supporting statement, your application will be rejected. Please ensure that you include your work, home and mobile contact numbers, home address and email addresses where applicable. Please note that correspondence will be via email unless otherwise stated. All correspondence and details provided will remain confidential.

### **Employment references**

Please include the name, address and contact details for two references. Candidates should also state their relationship to the referee and at least one should be your current/most recent employer/senior partner/head of chambers/relevant authority. References will be taken up for shortlisted candidates.

### **Evidence of qualifications**

Candidates will be required to bring evidence of their qualifications (degree and professional) and eligibility (e.g. admission to the roll and current practising certificate) to the interview, by way of *original* certificates. Copies will be taken.

### **Criminal convictions check**

Due to the nature of the post, it is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore any conviction, whether spent or unspent, must be declared. Applicants invited to interview will be required to complete a declaration form. The successful candidate will be required to undergo a DBS check.

Applicants must specify in their application if they are subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which they belong and clearly state the salary or fee payable. Applicants will also be asked in interview to declare any matters which they believe should be brought to the attention of the Local Authority, particularly bearing in mind the basic set of guiding principles in the Guide to Judicial Conduct:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/publications/guide-to-judicial-conduct/>

### **Eligibility to work in the UK**

Candidates must be eligible to work in the UK. The successful candidate will be required to provide original evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK.

### **Interview**

You will be required to undertake a short presentation as part of the interview process.

### **Chief Coroner's role in the process**

No appointment may be made unless the Chief Coroner of England and Wales and the Lord Chancellor consent to it.

Local authorities appoint coroners but do not employ them. Once appointed, a coroner becomes and remains an independent judge.



## **RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE**

Closing date Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019  
Interview invitations will be sent w/c 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019  
Interview date 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019  
Start date and training day 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

If you do not hear by 19 April 2019, please assume that you have not been shortlisted.

The interview panel will be:

- Jamie Akinola, Camden Council
- Coroner ME Hassell, HM Senior Coroner for Inner North London
- Cathy Gallagher

The successful candidates will take up post on 24 May 2019, which will be a training day.