

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Coroners Officer
Directorate & Section/Unit:	People, Communities
Reporting to:	Head of Coroner, Registration and Resettlement Services (line management) HM Senior coroner for Coronal matters
Responsible for:	N/A
Salary Grade:	Scale 6
DMA Management Level:	Frontline
DMA Span of Control (Direct Reports):	N/A

Our People Values:

To uphold and act in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's values:

- **Customer Focus** - Ensure delivery of a high-quality service which meets the needs of customers
- **Can Do Culture** - Be proactive to achieve excellence, finding solutions and creative ways of working
- **Freedom within Boundaries** - Make constructive change through cohesive decision making, ensuring services are responsive.

Purpose of job:

- To assist HM Senior Coroner and Assistant Coroners in fulfilling their statutory duty with regards to the investigation and direct case management of sudden, unexpected and unnatural deaths from initial referral through to inquest conclusion. This can include deaths which occur overseas and involve international liaison.
- Manage a personal caseload including complex and sensitive cases which involve child deaths, homicide, road traffic fatalities and cases involving suicide, some of which may attract media attention at a local and national level.
- To communicate directly with bereaved families, legal representatives, witnesses and other Interested Persons (IPs) to provide advice and guidance in respect of coronial proceedings.
- To act within the scope of Coronal law, including the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, Coroners (inquest) Rules and other relevant statutory provisions, case law and guidance.

Main Activities & Responsibilities:

- To work to the direction of the Coroner with regard to daily work maintaining confidentiality including to the Local Authority (for judicial matters).
- To make enquiries of each death so as to be able to report to the coroner in all cases so that the coroner may make the appropriate judicial decision.
- Manage a personal caseload, assess cases and gather all evidence required by the Coroner including statements and reports to enable the effective investigation and progression of investigations and straightforward inquests
- To manage all casework correspondence, issues and enquiries. To escalate urgent issues and liaise with HM Coroner where appropriate
- To arrange for post mortem, whether by a pathologist or by way of imaging as and when requested by the Coroner. To provide the pathologist with relevant information, ensuring relevant samples are dispatched to the appropriate laboratory, preserving the integrity of exhibits.
- At the direction of the Coroner, to procure any relevant services appropriate to the case, such as Home Office post mortems, pathology, toxicology services and transcription/translations etc.
- Liaise directly with bereaved families providing them with regular updates on the progress of cases including advice and guidance on the coronial proceedings and case management.

- To complete other tasks as directed including making arrangements for transfers of investigations in or out of the coroner area as directed obtaining information for the Coroner for Out of England orders.
- To liaise directly with medical professionals, Mental Health service providers, police, first responders, Interested Persons and their legal representatives, to ensure effective progress of cases including, if applicable, attendance at inquest.
- To ensure all Interested Persons are aware of the dates of the opening of the inquest, the final inquest hearing and any pre inquest hearings as required by the coroner including liaison with witnesses and interested parties ensuring that they are available for hearings. To coordinate and attend all or part of the inquest hearing, if so directed.
- To record all actions taken in relation to a case within the case management system.
- To inquire as directed into finds of treasure.
- To, if required, oversee the formal identification of the deceased at the mortuary.
- Provide the highest standards of customer care and act with professionalism and to the high standards that befit the judicial status of the service and HM Coroner as a Judicial Officer. This may include business attire on court days.
- In the unlikely event of an incident with mass fatalities, the post holder will be required to provide reasonable additional cover outside of normal working hours to meet the needs of the service.

Generic Accountabilities:

- To maintain personal and professional development to meet the changing demands of the job, participate in appropriate training activities and encourage and support staff in their development and training.
- To undertake other such duties, training and/or hours of work as may be reasonably required and which are consistent with the general level of responsibility of this job.
- To undertake health and safety duties commensurate with the job and/or as detailed in the Directorate's Health and Safety Policy.
- The duties described in this job description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users and is consistent with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Working with some vulnerable children, young people and adults can, at times, be emotionally challenging for which appropriate support will be provided through management supervision. The post holder must be able to deal with such mental demands.
- This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and / previously met the definition of Regulated Activity (as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006) and is therefore subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Check (Via the Disclosure Barring Service, DBS) (as defined by the Police Act).
- The Code of Practice on the English Language Requirement for Public Sector Workers (the fluency duty) applies to this post. Therefore, an ability to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role with confidence through the medium of English is essential for the post.

Contacts:

In all contacts the post holder will be required to present a good image of the coroner Service and the County Council as well as maintaining constructive relationships.

Internal: Assistant Directors, senior managers, management teams, managers and staff across all Directorates, project staff

External: District & County Councils, Government agencies and departments, healthcare professionals, PCT, Police, Fire, Probation Service, suppliers, contractors, service providers, barristers statutory and voluntary organisations, service users, clients, customers, members of the public, volunteers

Additional Information:

- The Council reserves the right to alter the content of this job description, after consultation to reflect changes to the job or services provided, without altering the general character or level of responsibility
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered as required by the Equality Act.

Author: Sharon Caldwell

Date: 19th June 2023

Date of grading confirmation: 20th June 2023

*** WCC is aiming towards a 5-level management organisational structure with level 5 being the Chief Executive.**

