

Legal Recruitment News - April 2020

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Legal Job Market Report

Welcome to possibly the shortest legal job market update I have written in over 15 years of writing monthly legal job market reports for Ten Percent Legal. In a nutshell the permanent job market has shuddered to a halt, locum work has dramatically dropped, but the law firm sale market seems active still (whether or not any deals will take place for some months is of course another matter..).

Essentially the permanent legal job market stopped functioning as a going concern on March 17th 2020. Face to face interviews are impossible to arrange. Phone, Zoom (if less than 40 mins) and Skype interviews are all fine, but would any firm recruit permanently off the back of one unless they had to?

The locum market is still just about functioning with a small trickle of roles coming in, and we expect to see this continue, albeit on a small scale. Remote working locuming is clearly going to be the requirement for at least the next 2-3 months.

Permanent Jobs - Candidate Advice

Our advice to candidates looking for new permanent roles is to register and apply for jobs wherever you see them as you would normally, but don't expect a response from law firms or agencies for some time to come. However you never know who may be in need of staff and when the market reactivates itself so it is still worth going through the motions.

Locum Jobs - Candidate Advice

Be prepared to compete for work. As an example - we have had a remote working commercial role in over the last few days. We would usually get around 5-10 locums express an interest, but for this one we had over 30. The hourly rate range indicated by these locums is from £40 to £125 per hour. Some locums indicated a keen willingness to drop their rate to get the work.. This is the new norm we think.

Statistics

General Statistics for March 2020 (comparison is with March 2019)

New permanent vacancies added: 10 (48)

New locum vacancies added: 11 (10)

New candidates registering: 62 (54)

We have 35 law firms for sale at the moment [for details of current law firms for sale please click here to view our list.](#)

Hourly Rates of Pay for Locum Solicitors and Legal Executives

April 2020 Locum Solicitor & ILEX Rates

NB: Please bear in mind that most locum roles cropping up will be sought after for the next few months and some locums will drop their rates to get the work..

Child Care - £35-45 per hour (very difficult to source locums).

Civil Litigation – £28-35 per hour.

Commercial Contract - £35-75 per hour

Commercial Litigation – £35-75 per hour.

Company Commercial – £45-85 per hour.

Construction (non-contentious) £60-75, (contentious) £45-60 per hour

Conveyancing – £30-37 per hour.

Commercial Property – £35-55 per hour

Employment Solicitors – £30-50 per hour.

Family Solicitors – £30-35 per hour+.

In House Counsel: 0-3 years PQE – £25-40 per hour,

In House Counsel: 3+ years PQE – £45-105 per hour

In House Interim Advisors (SME) - £55-65 per hour

Insolvency - £30-60 per hour.

IP - £50-85 per hour

Local authority rates: variable.

Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence – 3+ years PQE – £25-£40 per hour.

Professional Negligence - £45-55 per hour

Wills & Probate – £35-50 per hour, going up to £55 per hour.

NB all rates exclude agency fees. The rates are for self-employed locums billing firms directly on a weekly basis.

Locums and Covid-19 - keep working

We have had a number of enquiries from locums looking to see whether the Government's Self-Employed Income Support Scheme assists them in any way. 97% of the locums who get work via our Interim Lawyers platform (<https://www.interimlawyers.co.uk>) are self-employed or work via their own limited company.

This is the current position, taken from [Martin Lewis](#) and also a firm of bookkeepers in Manchester ([COS Bookkeeping](#)). [The government's own information page is available here.](#)

£2,500 per month and 80% of profits

The grants are worth up to 80% of your profits. This is capped at £2,500 a month and is taxable. As it's a grant it means you don't have to pay it back.

Calculation of Profits

Grants are decided on your (actual) profits over the last three years. You must have filed a tax return for 2018/19.

50% + Self-Employment

You must earn more than half your total income from self-employment - so anyone who works as a salaried consultant for one firm but does locum work for others may need to check percentage levels. If this was not the case for 2018-2019 try averaging your 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 tax returns.

Less than £50k per year income

This means that the grant probably applies more to high street law locums than commercial law locums. Your average trading profit must be less than £50,000/year and operates as a 'cliff edge'.

Payments in June

This scheme's expected to start paying out in June. Payments will be likely backdated to cover March, April and May (in form of a lump sum). The scheme will operate across the UK and is set to last for at least three months, though this could be extended.

Keep Working

Unlike for the employee scheme you can keep working. You also do not need to prove coronavirus impact - all who qualify get it.

Company Directors - Dividend and Salary

The Society of Licensed Conveyancers says that company directors who take a mix of dividend and salary from their companies are not covered by this scheme. COS Bookkeeping have said that the government have confirmed that directors can furlough themselves as employees. Martin Lewis has confirmed that both the Treasury and HMRC have confirmed this and that it applies even if you are the only employee.

Umbrella Companies

As a company we dissuade locums from working via these (unnecessary expense, agencies making commission from selling the service, etc.. etc), but if you're part of an umbrella company you'll typically be eligible for furloughing - ie the job retention scheme for employed people.

Additional Info

Useful guide for conveyancers from the Conveyancing Association - [Conveyancing Association update 26th March](#)

Useful guide for businesses on financial support - [Society of Licensed Conveyancers Business Financial Support Guide](#)

(thanks to Rob Hailstone at the Bold Legal Group for the links).

Interim Lawyers Locum Bank

The enforced drop off in work on the recruitment side has finally led us to reorganise our systems and set up our locum bank. If any of our registered locums would like to join the list simply drop us a note across and we'll guide you through the process. You have to be a [Tier 1 locum](#) to join the list.

The Locum Bank is currently in beta mode, but can be viewed here:

<https://www.interimlawyers.co.uk/locum-bank/>

Furloughed? Spend an hour updating your CV - a guide

Whilst you are sat at home potentially twiddling your thumbs (or redecorating the lounge) what could be a better time to spend an hour or so improving your CV? So many people have CVs that could be dramatically improved - they are too short, not enough detail, not up to date, not enough factual information, too little content, too little personal details etc.

Take a look at our CV guides - all available at no cost online. <https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/cv-advice/>

Articles include: CV Myth - fitting a CV onto two pages, 20 second guide to writing a CV, Adding Extra Value, CV Writing Tips for Senior Solicitors (if you don't bother reading this it basically says write a lot more!), CV Writing for NQ Solicitors, Skills Sections, 5 Common Mistakes to Avoid, CV Writing for Locum Work, Avoiding Waffly Nonsense, Lying on CVs, Applying for Jobs after 25 years in the same role and many, many more. We have been writing CV guides for almost 20 years so there are quite a few! Full index here - <https://www.ten-percent.co.uk/cv-advice/>

We review CVs as well if required but this is a paid service. You do not need to get a CV reviewed though if you spend some time on your CV and follow the advice articles above. [For details of our CV review service click here.](#)

Remote Working and in need of secretarial assistance?

You may be currently working from home and finding yourself short of secretarial support, particularly for online audio typing services. Whilst there are plenty of systems out there that can be set up with ongoing contracts, what options are there for ad hoc typing and secretarial support? Self-interest alert - I have marked the service that our company part owns in the list below.

www.upwork.com - simply post your job on the site, specify your preferred hourly rates and sit back and wait for freelancers to bid for your work. The site works well - we use it regularly for IT and website developers - and occasionally you can source quality PA assistance.

*www.tptranscription.co.uk - our outsourced audio typing service, established in 2001. Prices from 80p per minute for dictation. Instant website uploading service - email return. ISO 27001 & 9001 accredited.

www.theofficegenie.co.uk - virtual PA, copy typing, audio typing, conferences, exhibition stand manning and more. No prices online.

www.transcribeit.co.uk - outsourced audio typing. no prices but start £1 per minute. This is the oldest established transcription agency in the UK (1992).

www.rev.com - Silicon Valley 'disrupter' company - \$1.25 per minute for all transcription. They use AI and humans to prepare transcripts and offer possibly the fastest service.

Low Cost Recruitment for Solicitors - Ten Percent Unlimited

and Chancery Lane

We offer not one but two lower cost budget recruitment services.

1. Ten Percent Unlimited

Recruit as many staff as you like over a set period of time (3 or 5 years) for a low monthly fee starting at just £65 plus VAT. We offer this service to law firms and accountancy practices. There are no restrictions on numbers and no other similar services exist in the recruitment industry. You can save £000s on your ongoing recruitment. Includes unlimited job posting on www.chancerylane.co.uk. Interested? Call Clare Fagan on 0207 127 4343 or email clare.fagan@ten-percent.co.uk. www.tenpercentunlimited.co.uk.

2. ChanceryLane.co.uk

Our online jobs board. We have used this ourselves for years as a useful source of candidates from time to time. It is picked up by Google Jobs amongst other aggregators and has been around for over 10 years. This year we have decided to allow anyone to post onto the board for just £50 per vacancy. No time limit - keep the vacancy live for as long as it takes you to recruit and full CVs are sent over to you automatically when a candidate applies. For details please visit www.chancerylane.co.uk or give us a ring on 0800 246 5001.

How to be a Locum - pdf guide

We have produced a guide on how to be a locum. This includes sections on getting work, realistic expectations, hourly rates, popular fields of law, payment, insurance, umbrella companies and much more. Available for download or to read online from www.interimlawyers.co.uk.

Outsourcing Transcription

TP Transcription Limited is our wholly owned subsidiary offering outsourced typing work by legal and medical secretaries since 2003. We work on thousands of hours of recording every year for law firms, companies, the NHS, academic institutions and individuals. Try the service out - email or whatsapp your recording to anna@tptranscription.co.uk, visit www.tptranscription.co.uk or call 01745 813306.

About Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment

We are a specialist legal recruiter, covering both permanent and locum roles across the whole of the UK. Over 11,000 lawyers are registered with us and we have access to a range of external and internal job boards and websites where we do not have candidates available ourselves. We also assist with recruitment advice and assistance, regularly advising partners and practice managers on suitable salary and package levels.

Our company is unique for a number of reasons, including the fact that we are not shy to publish our fee structure and also donate a chunk of our profits to charity each year. We offer unlimited permanent and locum recruitment for a fixed monthly fee or one-off fees depending on the job. We also buy and sell law firms. We donate 10% of our profits annually to charity, hence our name.

We have three recruitment consultants, Jonathan Fagan, Clare Fagan and Peter Gresty. As a team we have over 40 years of experience in the legal profession.

Ten-Percent Legal Recruitment also owns Interim Lawyers, a specialist locum service. We operate an outsourced UK based typing service as well – www.tptranscription.co.uk and are

preferred suppliers to a number of institutional clients and law firms across the UK and overseas.

The Ten-Percent Group of Legal Recruitment websites gives 10% of annual profits to charity. We have maintained this tradition since we formed the company 19 years ago. So far over £100k has been donated to charities in the UK and Africa including LawCare, Unlock and Reprieve.

We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter and look forward to hearing from you if we can assist further.

Warm regards

Jonathan Fagan
Director

E: jbfagan@tenpercentgroup.com
T: 0207 127 4343

London Office:
Ten-Percent.co.uk Limited
27 Old Gloucester Street
London
WC1N 3AX

Head Office:
Ty Brith
Llandegla Road
Mold
CH7 4QX

Jonathan Fagan is a solicitor, qualified recruitment consultant and Managing Director of Ten-Percent.co.uk Limited. His LinkedIn profile can be viewed here - www.linkedin.com/in/jbfagan

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