



Role Profile



Role Title **Regional Head of Legal Operations**

Job family group Legal Services

Job family/ies

Operational Delivery / Strategy and Improvement

Grade G6

Status For internal use

Role Purpose
(250 words max)

Regional Head of Legal Operations is a specialist legal post with overall responsibility for the professional and operational leadership of lawyers and legal professionals working nationally/within regions. Working with senior judiciary, they are responsible for protecting the independence of those who exercise the jurisdiction of the court with the authority of the judiciary and for promoting the highest legal professional standards across the organisation and ensuring justice is at the heart of what we do.

Regional Head of Legal Operations are senior leadership roles, responsible – as part of the regional/National Services leadership team - for overall delivery of legal operational objectives within a region/nationally. Regional Head of Legal Operations will lead the overall safe and secure delivery of legal operational priorities and objectives, contributing significantly to the achievement of key national and regional business plan objectives. Regional Head of Legal Operations will undertake the strategic leadership for one or more jurisdictions/services nationally, ensuring effective, efficient, and consistent service delivery and performance, liaising with senior judiciary as required. In doing so they will support the work of the Regional Delivery Directors, Service Owners, and National Services. Regional Head of Legal Operations has considerable influence and responsibility over areas of operations and development activity, responsible for co-ordinating large areas of work activity with personal responsibility for legal service delivery which will have a significant impact on the achievement of key business plan objectives.

Regional Head of Legal Operations has significant people leadership responsibility, with direct line management of Senior Legal Managers and indirect leadership, through them, of staff across the region/nationally. Regional Head of Legal Operations will encourage and challenge leaders within their teams to confidently lead, manage and inspire our people to deliver high quality legal services and effective performance. Regional Head of Legal Operations will promote inclusive leadership, championing our values and behaviours, promoting innovation and creativity and fostering a culture where the legal profession is valued and ensuring everyone feels respected, supported, challenged and capable.

Play a major role in protecting and promoting the judicial independence of those giving advice to magistrates and when exercising the jurisdiction of the court under the authority of the judiciary. Regional Head of Legal Operations will exercise their delegated authority from the Lady Chief Justice to give directions to authorised officers with judicial independence (subject to any limits contained in legislation/protocols etc)

Key Accountabilities (600 words max)

- Regional Head of Legal Operations has overall responsibility for the professional and operational leadership of lawyers and legal staff working within their business area.
- They will act with judicial independence when exercising judicial or quasi-judicial functions and are responsible in conjunction with the judiciary for upholding and protecting the independence of all those exercising such functions – (s 28 and 29 Courts Act 2003 and Courts and Tribunals (Judiciary and Functions of Staff) Act 2018).
- Responsible for leading and managing the effective and efficient delivery of jurisdictional/service performance across multiple locations within the region/National Services. Regional Head of Legal Operations will be responsible (and accountable to their delivery director) for the performance and delivery of their business area and have a clear mandate to take steps to sustain/improve performance of those service(s)/locations, where required.
- Responsible for providing strategic leadership for a jurisdiction/service(s), working with colleagues nationally to ensure consistent delivery of legal services across HMCTS.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with external stakeholders including judicial office holders, acting as a key point of contact and escalation for service issues and complex complaints.
- Overall ownership and responsibility (and accountable to their delivery director) for governance, assurance and risk management within their business area(s). Regional Head of Legal Operations will balance risk, strategic impact and short and long-term needs when dealing with organisational issues. They are responsible for ensuring systems are in place within their business area(s) to identify and manage risk and to ensure remedial action is taken to mitigate such risks, only reporting to the Delivery Director (DD) and/or internal audit teams where risks are intolerable and/or possible solutions would go beyond current policy or levels of authority.
- Develop and maintain effective close working relationships with Service Owners for their business area(s), National Services (Courts & Tribunals Service Centres (CTSCs) and National Business Centres (NBCs) and CFCE (Criminal Fines Collection and Enforcement), and wider Heads of Operations – Legal community, engaging at a strategic level to deliver service improvement and performance.
- Embed organisational values and behaviours, ensuring wellbeing, inclusion, diversity, and equality is at the forefront of all people activities.
- Be visible as a leader, making best use of modern ways of working and be available to managers and staff across the region/nationally. Act as representative of the senior leadership team in providing visible, collective senior leadership across service/jurisdictional boundaries to staff in all parts of the region/National Services.
- Provide strong leadership, clear direction and support to legal managers and set benchmarks to manage effective performance standards in line with strategic objectives.
- Lead legal talent and succession planning. Regional Head of Legal Operations is responsible for ensuring that legal managers are equipped with the right skills to effectively support our people to grow and engage in their own personal and professional development and to effectively manage poor performance.
- Assess compliance and performance, identifying the reasons for workload fluctuations and variances to provide a detailed picture of the operation of the legal service(s) for which the Regional Head of Legal Operations is responsible to support the work of the Head of Service Performance and Improvement and the Delivery Director.
- Work with the regional/National Services senior leadership team, and senior judicial office holders to undertake business planning and set and agree strategic direction for all services/jurisdictions and support the DD in ensuring effective delivery of quality legal operations.
- Maintain a strategic focus across relevant service(s), and work with colleagues to realign priorities and/or assign responsibility for action where required to meet the strategic direction agreed.

- Work collaboratively with Heads of Service Performance and Improvement to highlight opportunities to make efficiencies and potential improvements within services/jurisdictions to feed into national service/performance improvement and maintain consistency of service provision across HMCTS. Provide operational knowledge and insight (via the Head of Service Performance and Improvement) into national project streams.
- Plan for and implement strategy and lead change within the jurisdiction(s), supported by the Head of Service Performance and Improvement.
- Work with national and regional senior judiciary on listing and judicial priorities. Provide support to the magistracy, inclusive of national panels, regional benches etc and engaging with senior judiciary.
- Responsible for secretariat functions relating to Advisory committees, Justices' Training, Approvals, Authorisations and Appraisals Committee (JTAAAC) and Family Training, Approvals, Authorisations and Appraisals Committee (JTAAAC)
- Accountable for the training of legal advisers, with oversight by the Judicial College, to ensure they have the skills and legal knowledge to perform their duties.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience (500 words max)

- This is a specialist legal post and the role holder must fulfil the eligibility requirement for appointment to HMCTS as a senior lawyer (5 years post qualification experience).
- The post holder, as both a senior leader and a lawyer, will have the professional credibility to engage with leaders, judicial office holders and major stakeholders on legal matters and in prioritising use of legal resources. The postholder will have the ability to work constructively with others to set priorities for those undertaking legal case officer functions within the region / across National Services.
- Regional Head of Legal Operations must be able to demonstrate the ability to act with judicial independence when exercising judicial or quasi-judicial functions and is responsible in conjunction with the judiciary for upholding and protecting the independence of all those exercising such functions.

In addition to the above, the role holder will have;

- Excellent leadership and relationship management skills with proven ability and experience of delivering through others, leading and managing operational teams in accordance with appropriate management practices policy and strategy.
- A breadth and depth of knowledge and experience of operational/service management and experience of supporting stakeholders/partners. They will develop a specialist service knowledge and expertise to enable them to execute significant representational and external facing responsibility on behalf of the organisation. Regional Head of Legal Operations will engage effectively with regional/internal stakeholders, judicial office holders, the legal community and external stakeholders in managing interactions with the wider community and the media.
- The ability to anticipate and identify strategic organisational issues and analyse and interpret statistical information gathered to assess performance. Regional Head of Legal Operations will be expected to take responsibility for the resolution of a range of complex problems, escalating only those which are outside of current policy area or level of authority.
- Excellent communication and customer service skills, understanding the needs of our end users reflecting the diverse needs of our customer base from professional justice partners to vulnerable victims and witnesses and judicial office holders.
- Influencing skills – to be able to deliver through others, collaborating and negotiating to deliver excellent levels of service within the jurisdiction(s).
- A demonstrable track record of strategic planning and delivering significant change.

Problem Solving and Decision Making (300 words max)

Regional Head of Legal Operations will:

- Work effectively in a highly complex customer and stakeholder environment within, and potentially across, jurisdiction(s), building effective relationships and managing the expectations and concerns of a variety of senior stakeholders, with complex and often competing needs.
- Be responsible for leading the resolution of complex strategic problems within the jurisdiction(s), for which there may not be existing guidance or procedures, and which may involve several organisational dependencies. Regional Head of Legal Operations will be expected to take responsibility for the resolution of a range of complex problems, escalating to the Delivery Director only those which are outside of current policy area or level of authority.
- Need to confidently and regularly make decisions which drive or change business and jurisdictional strategy and are consistent with judicial values. There will be a requirement to prioritise resources within their business area(s) to maximise efficiency of the operation and effectively manage risk. This will include urgent problem solving where immediate high-level decisions are required e.g. when business continuity plans need to be implemented as well as balancing risk and the strategic impact of short- and longer-term needs in the jurisdiction.
- Be expected to assess locational/jurisdictional performance to anticipate strategic organisational issues. They will analyse and interpret complex and possibly conflicting evidence and data to make sound judgment on the most appropriate solutions that take into account the views of important stakeholders.
- Make use of specialist service knowledge, expertise and insight to inform effective decision making.

Management of Resources (250 words max)

Regional Head of Legal Operations will:

- Lead legal staff within a matrix management structure with different reporting lines based on geography, jurisdiction, function (i.e profession). They will understand the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the matrix management structure and work collectively with them to maximise efficiency, optimise resource management to ensure both national and regional needs are met, and enhance career development. The role holder will, with other Regional Heads of Legal Operations provide professional leadership and/or line management for lawyers and legal staff.

- Work collectively with DDs, Heads of Operations and Heads of Service Performance and Improvement to ensure effective deployment of legal resources (inclusive of legal team members, hearing/court rooms, and sitting days), advocating for both national and regional legal priorities in resource planning.
- Have significant people leadership responsibility across the region, and role model engaging and effective leadership behaviours that reflect our MoJ Shared Values, sharing the 'big picture' to help people understand their roles in contributing to the success of HMCTS.
- Directly lead, coach and support Senior Legal Managers and have indirect leadership responsibility for the people who work to those Senior Legal Managers.
- Create a culture that reflects our values and supports innovation, creativity and appropriate risk taking, bringing our people together, managing and encouraging inter-relationships across jurisdictional and geographical boundaries.
- Bring insight and understanding of regional jurisdictional performance to the development of strategy and vision for the region and be responsible for implementing regional and corporate strategies.
- Work with Regional Head of Legal Operations, Heads of Service Performance and Improvement (HoSPI) and Senior Legal Managers to agree and set service level targets and analyse performance.
- Liaise with Heads of Service Performance and Improvement and Heads of Operations (as appropriate) to forecast and prioritise and maximise efficient use of sitting day resource allocation for their business area(s) and to liaise, manage and report on risks and implementation of change.
- Be responsible for attainment of national jurisdictional performance goals and customer satisfaction, balancing delivery of these against the allocated budget and resources.

Autonomy (250 words max)

Regional Head of Legal Operations will:

- Have autonomy to set aims and objectives for the work in their area working within strategic and wider operational plans and will be accountable for the performance of their jurisdiction(s).
- Have responsibility for the management and allocation of resources within their area(s)/jurisdiction(s) of responsibility.
- Operate independently in making decisions that drive forward service delivery and/or performance improvement within their jurisdiction(s), Regional Head of Legal Operation will seek guidance only where possible solutions would go beyond current policy or levels of authority.

Key Relationships and Contacts (300 words max)

Regional Heads of Operations will

- Be a visible senior leader, and build relationships with staff at all levels, advocate change and communicate the vision for their service(s) so that our people understand our strategic objectives and how the work they do contributes towards them.
- Establish, build and maintain effective relationships with key internal and external stakeholders within the jurisdiction(s) to influence, negotiate and deliver strategic outcomes which impact service delivery. As the expert voice for their jurisdiction, Regional Head of Legal Operations will regularly discuss operational service and performance issues with the wider senior leadership team and HQ corporate functions including their business partners to shape organisational context and convince others to follow a course of action to drive service delivery.
- Establish, build and maintain effective relationships with the Heads of Operations/Heads of Service Performance and Improvement/Senior Legal Managers. Leadership Judiciary for their business area(s).
- Establish, build and maintain effective working relationships with judicial office holders. This could include Senior Judiciary, Leadership and Resident Judges, Designated Family and/or Civil Judges, Regional Tribunal Judges, Magistrates Bench Chairs etc to work together to strategically manage workload and resolve issues including sitting day allocation management and other judicial related issues.
- Lead on discussions with relevant external justice partner stakeholders, including but not restricted to; Criminal Justice Agencies, Police, Witness Service, CAFCASS, Local Authority etc, to work jointly to implement national strategies, problem solve and drive forward improvements.
- Hold external suppliers to account and to ensure that contract standards are met, challenge performance issues and escalate to Contracted Services Division any major issues.
- Promote cross-government working and relationships with other government agencies including Home Office, HMPPS, DWP etc, at a strategic level.
- Liaise with Trade Union to discuss issues as part of the senior leadership team.