

# A week in the life of...

working  
with you,  
for you

## ... a graduate paralegal in the regulatory department at Stephensons, by Brea Carney-Jones

# Stephensons

### Graduate paralegal in the regulatory department



#### Monday

**9.00 am** – Head to Blackburn Magistrates' Court to attend the first day of an appeal hearing before the Care Quality Commission ('CQC'). We are acting on behalf of the appellant in an appeal to the first-tier tribunal (Care Standards Chamber) against the CQC's decision to cancel both the provider's and the registered manager's registration for a care home.

**10.30 am** – Arrive at court ahead of the hearing and meet with the client. Attend both the client and counsel in a conference in advance of the hearing commencing.

**11.30 am** – The hearing commences and I sit with our client behind counsel. Counsel for the respondent starts by introducing the respondent's first witness and giving their evidence in chief. The witness is then cross examined by counsel for the appellant and it is very interesting to watch the technique used. I take detailed notes throughout and I am on hand to assist counsel whenever necessary.

**1.15 pm** – I head to a cafe close to the court with counsel for lunch and we discuss how the hearing is going so far.

**2.00 pm** – We return to court and proceed with the hearing. The respondent's second witness is agreed so we proceed with the evidence of the third witness.

**4.00 pm** – The first day of the hearing concludes and we have a conference with counsel and our client following the hearing. The hearing is listed for five days so there are a further four days remaining. The solicitor dealing with the case and another of our graduate paralegals are due to attend on some of the remaining days.

**5.00 pm** – Head home following the hearing.

#### Tuesday

**9.00 am** – Arrive at the office and settle at my desk with a cup of tea. I check my emails and make a to-list for the day ahead.

**9.30 am** – Deal with a new enquiry which has been sent through to me via email. We deal with a variety of enquiries from the different areas of work the department specialise in including road traffic; road transport; professional discipline; CQC and Ofsted; health and safety and more recently data protection. My enquiry this morning is a motoring enquiry in relation to a charge for driving whilst disqualified. I contact the client to discuss the details of the offence and I advise them in relation to the sentencing guidelines and their possible plea. Our assistance is on a private paying basis so I quote them for our representation. The client is keen to proceed and makes payment immediately. We currently have a bonus scheme for the conversion of new enquiries which is an extra incentive for us to convert as much new work as possible!

**10.00 am** – We have a professional discipline meeting with the solicitors and graduate paralegals. We review the new enquiry spreadsheet and discuss the enquiries we have dealt with in the past week and whether there are any potential conversions. We discuss how the department is doing and any other relevant updates including any changes to regulatory procedure.

**11.00 am** – I prepare a client care letter for a new client facing proceedings before the Health and Care Professions Council ('HCPC') which I recently converted.

**11.30 am** – I deal with a further motoring enquiry, this time in relation to a charge for drink driving. I again advise the client in relation to the sentencing guidelines for the offence and their plea options. I send the client a follow up email to confirm my advice and the costs for our assistance.

# Graduate paralegal in the regulatory department

12.00 pm – I have my lunch.

1.00 pm - I deal with a Nursing and Midwifery Council ('NMC') enquiry. The client is facing proceedings before the NMC. I advise the client that we would need to carry out an initial review of the case and provide a proposed course of action for dealing with the case. I quote a fixed fee for our services.

2.00 pm – I prepare a witness statement for a motoring client who is at risk of a six month driving disqualification under the totting up provisions as they will have 12 penalty points on their licence. We are seeking to persuade the Court that such a disqualification will cause extreme hardship.

3.00 pm – We take part in new enquiry sales training with our motoring solicitor. This is training to help us structure calls when dealing with new enquiries to help improve conversion rates.

4.00 pm – I have a telephone appointment with the new HCPC client which I recently converted. I take detailed instructions from the client regarding the incident in question. This will then be used to prepare our detailed written advice in which we advise client about the likely allegations to be made, the procedure to be followed by the HCPC and our proposed course of action for dealing with the case moving forwards.

5.30 pm – I finish work and leave the office for the day.

## Wednesday

I am out of the office every Wednesday as I am currently completing my second year of the LLM LPC at UCLAN University. The regulatory department are very flexible in allowing you to work as a graduate paralegal on a part-time basis whilst completing your studies.

## Thursday

9.00 am – Arrive at the office and settle at my desk with a cup of tea whilst I check my emails.

9.30 am – I prepare for a conference with counsel and one of our care home clients which I am due to attend later this afternoon.

10.30 am – I prepare a self-referral letter to the HCPC on behalf of one of our professional discipline clients.

11.00am – Deal with a Chartered Institute of Management Accountants ('CIMA') enquiry. A complaint has been made by a client to CIMA and the client has a deadline to respond. I advise the client that we would need to carry out an initial review of the case before responding on their behalf. I quote a fixed fee for our services and the client provides the relevant documentation by email.

11.30 am – I travel from the Wigan office by train to St Johns Buildings Chambers in Manchester for a conference. The case concerns an appeal to the first-tier tribunal (Care Standards Chamber) against a decision of the CQC on behalf of our care home clients.

2.30 pm – Leave Chambers and head back to Wigan.

4.00 pm – Arrive back at the office. Attend a meeting with one of the Partners to plan the preparation of a Rule 7 response to the GMC on behalf of a doctor client. We discuss obtaining references and plan the preparation of reference requests and reference guidance.

6.00 pm – Leave the office for the day.

## Working with you, for you

At Stephenson's our clients are real people, and they live and work in the real world - which at times can be an unpredictable place. But whatever it throws at them we're never far away to help. Because we're real people too and we understand our clients needs. Our similarities mean we can work side-by-side to get the best outcome possible. It also means we can tailor our legal costs and services to lots of different circumstances. Ensuring everyone gets the representation and result they deserve for their individual circumstances. Our business is to deliver legal services that work for our clients, so you can trust our specialists to take care of things on your behalf.

Call us on **0333 344 4885** or email [enquiries@stephensons.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@stephensons.co.uk)

[www.stephensons.co.uk](http://www.stephensons.co.uk)