

Job title: Investigation Officer

Line manager: Tenancy Fraud Manager

Grade (if applicable): 3

Direct reports: N/A



Role purpose:

The role of Investigation Officer is critical to the success of Peabody in ensuring we continue to effectively deal with any misuse of our properties and protect our resources. The successful applicant will work as a Fraud lead for a Peabody region and assist with initiative-taking measures to prevent and detect Housing fraud acts and conduct reactive investigations in a controlled and professional manner. While there is some home working you will be expected to be in the office 2/3 days a week and conduct visits out of hours if necessary, conduct interviews at various Peabody offices as well as Local Authority Offices, attend court hearings across London and be able to travel throughout the region to attend team meetings and conduct other duties as needed.

Success metrics:

- To assist the Tenancy Fraud Manager by contributing to develop our strategy for the prevention and detection of illegal occupation, illegal subletting, tenancy fraud and any other fraud and risk concerns within the business.
- To function as Investigating Officer for any cases allocated ensuring transparency and compliance in all case file management, ensuring that cases are followed through to their conclusion using all available tools and resources. This will include working on complex, sensitive cases and may involve joint working with, with Local Authority Fraud Departments, the Police, and other partners where considering different aims and legislation.
- To conduct distributed investigations in an efficient, prompt and compliant manner using professional knowledge, initiative, and experience to prioritise workload. Ensuring a measurable return of work and thus effectively contribute to the achievement of individual and team targets following the team and corporate plan.
- To maintain an up-to-date knowledge of civil and criminal law and procedures as affects investigative and professional standards ensuring the organization is not open to complaints and prosecution. You will also have to use strong persuasion skills to ensure this good practice if adopted across the group.
- Prepare and present files to the in-house legal team for civil cases and to Local Authority legal teams in both criminal and civil cases in the form of schedules, witness statements and exhibits while adhering to the GDPR and the Criminal Procedures Investigation Act. Good communication skills coupled with strong presenting and persuasion skills will be needed to ensure our recommendations are acted upon.
- To attend and give evidence in both criminal and civil proceedings at County Court, Magistrates Court and Crown Court, when requested and where appropriate to be able to brief our legal representatives or external representatives on the conduct, process and findings of the investigation during such proceedings.
- To ensure the Group recover monies made from unlawfully subletting our properties, working with in house solicitors and external Fraud Teams and Solicitors. To take ownership of this process and use innovative methods to ensure this money is collected.
- Promote Fraud awareness by providing information, advice and guidance to employees, residents and partners in relation to fraud detection and management. To ensure that other staff members can approach you for advice and guidance. To be able to present to other departments and suggest new working arrangements or processes when needed.
- To ensure that all policies and procedures are adhered to so that consistent and standard practice is achieved across the organisation.

- To achieve performance targets consistently and complete investigations in line with best practice and on a prompt basis. To progress cases through to prosecution where necessary in liaison with Legal Services.
- To be able to conduct visits to properties or other places wherever may be reasonably required and be able to carry out these tasks at unsocial hours or at weekends, if necessary, ensuring Health and Safety measures are adhered to.
- To ensure all evidence is gathered is obtained lawfully and stored and shared in accordance with appropriate legislation under GDPR. Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1983 and the Criminal Procedures Investigation Act. Make use of systems to store the information in a secure manner.
- To compile accurate concise and evidentially compliant witness statements (criminal cases) or where appropriate statements of truth (civil cases) during an investigation.
- To refer any cases to the Tenancy Fraud Manager where it is felt that a criminal prosecution is appropriate, ensuring compliance with CPIA/prevaling best legal practice. These files to be considered for legal action by the Tenancy Fraud Manager
- Handle sensitive financial documents, requested in accordance with POSHFA and where appropriate report any benefit fraud to the appropriate authority or possible money laundering to the head of risk for further investigation.
- To engage with other colleagues in the wider Corporate Anti-Fraud Risk Team to identify fraud and risk and work in partnership to mitigate and detect non-compliance and systems weaknesses
- To provide regular monthly management reports on the progress of investigations as well as case reports as requested by the Tenancy Fraud manager or above. Producing statistical information when required.
- To engage in pro-active anti-fraud exercises including joint initiatives with external partners. Ensuring fraud awareness is promoted always. This will need good communication and persuasion skills.
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About you:

- Professional Counter Fraud qualification (PINS, ACFS) or willingness to study towards this
- A strong working knowledge of the law (both civil and criminal) relating to; Tenancy Fraud, fraud in the wider field, criminal offences, housing, tenancy breaches and GDPR.
- Critical thinking skills with relevant experience of conducting fraud investigations.
- A good understanding of how Registered Providers work with local authorities and other external partners.
- Experience within a Housing or Housing Investigations environment.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Experience of case preparation and presentation at County, Magistrates and Crown Court
- Good interviewing skills for both informal interviews and interviews under caution
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills, able to develop and influence relationships at all levels. Able to work collaboratively as part of a team.
- Excellent attention to detail and ability to multi-task as well as good analytical skills, able to identify inefficiencies and suggest solutions.
- Ability to make independent decisions and recognise circumstances where risks or decisions need to be escalated. Ability to identify vulnerability and safeguarding risks, making appropriate referrals to internal and external agencies, as required
- Able to adapt verbal and written communication style to meet the need of the audience both in preparation and delivery.

- A team player and collaborative colleague, you'll also demonstrate your ability to work through organisational structures and operational challenges, removing barriers and blockers and simplifying perceived complexity