



Royal Court of Jersey  
**Viscount's Department**

**Assistant Coroner**

Candidate Pack

APRIL 2025

## **Introduction**

The Viscount is the Executive Officer of the Royal Court of Jersey, the Court of Appeal, the Magistrate's and Petty Debts Court and of the States of Jersey.

The office is extremely ancient, the first recorded appointment of *Vicomte de Jersey* being in 1258. Until 1974, the appointment was made by the Crown. Since that year, the Viscount has been appointed by the Bailiff.

The Viscount is assisted by the Deputy Viscount and Viscount's Officers, many of whom are sworn as 'Viscount Substitutes' in order to carry out their duties. The Viscount and these officers comprise the Viscount's Department, which was created in 1930. The Viscount and the Judicial Greffier work closely together and their respective departments form the Jersey Court Service.

The Viscount is the Senior Coroner for Jersey and is seeking to appoint, subject to the consent of the Bailiff, an Assistant Coroner. This is a new post where the successful candidate will work closely with the Viscount and Deputy Viscount in the management of sudden and unexpected deaths and related matters by carrying out their own coronial investigations, case management and conducting inquests.

**Advocate Mark Harris**  
**Viscount**

**April 2025**

## Press Advertisement

### **ASSISTANT CORONER**

The Viscount is the executive officer of the courts in Jersey and is seeking to appoint a coroner to work closely with the Viscount and Deputy Viscount by carrying out their own coronial investigations, case management and conducting inquests.

To be considered for this role ideally you will need to:

- Be qualified as a lawyer with medical knowledge or a medical practitioner with legal knowledge.
- Demonstrate knowledge and experience of coroner law and of basic medicine, have proven skills in conducting investigations and an understanding of court procedure.
- Demonstrate the excellent communication and interpersonal skills necessary to deal with sensitive situations.
- Have excellent proven organisational, management and efficiency skills, as well as experience of exercising sound judgement and communicating effectively.

The successful candidate will be required to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a coroner as set out in the Inquests and Post-mortem Examinations (Jersey) Law 1995, associated rules and other related legislation and practice.

This is a part-time salaried position of approximately 2/3rds of a full-time post. Salary will be in accordance with the Jersey Judicial Pay Scale, Band J1 (£137,179 - £149,275 FTE) and pro-rated accordingly. You will be expected to be available to assist on an out-of-hours rota system.

## **Application/Interview process and timelines**

To apply formally for this role, please send a copy of your CV and a supporting statement clearly expressing your motivation for applying and how you meet the stated requirements of the position.

**Applications should be emailed to Mark Harris at [m.harris@courts.je](mailto:m.harris@courts.je) no later than 5pm on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025.**

If you are selected for final interview, these are likely to take place during the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 weeks of June 2025.

Any further enquiries should be directed to Mark Harris, Viscount, Viscount's Department, Morier House, Halkett Place, St Helier at [m.harris@courts.je](mailto:m.harris@courts.je) or 01534 441402.

Interviews will be conducted by the following panel members:

- A representative from the Jersey Appointments Commission
- The Viscount
- The Judicial Greffier
- An independent member with related experience

The interviews will be carried out with reference to the Job Description and Personal Specification and how well the Panel feels each candidate can demonstrate that they have the necessary competencies and attributes, as demonstrated in the application and the interview, to undertake the office of Assistant Coroner.

Once the successful candidate has been selected, they will be invited to accept the post.

The official title of the role is Assistant Viscount (Coroner) but abbreviated to Assistant Coroner for convenience. This appointment is made by the Viscount, subject to the consent of the Bailiff, pursuant to the Departments of Judiciary and Legislature (Jersey) Law 1965. The successful applicant will be subject to the Judicial Code of Practice.

## **Job description and personal specification**

### **1 Purpose of the job**

To carry out the duties and responsibilities of a coroner as set out in the Inquests and Post-mortem Examinations (Jersey) Law 1995, associated rules and other related legislation and practice, by carrying out their own coroner investigations, case management and conducting inquests.

Together with the Viscount, Deputy Viscount and Relief Coroners, provide a high-quality coroner service that puts the bereaved at the heart of the process.

### **2 Job Summary**

Coroners are independent judicial office holders. The coroner is responsible for conducting investigations and holding inquests when required (with or without a jury) into deaths to determine who the deceased was, when and where the deceased came by his or her death and how that death occurred.

In Jersey, a referral is made to the coroner, via a police officer, where a person has reason to believe that the deceased died: (i)(a) as a result of violence or misadventure; (b) as a result of negligence or misconduct or malpractice on the part of others; (c) from any cause other than natural illness or disease for which the deceased person had been seen and treated by a registered medical practitioner; or (d) under such circumstances as may require investigation; (ii) The deceased died while in police custody, prison or another legal place of detention; or (iii) as a patient in a mental health establishment or children's home.

Conducting investigations of this kind will include where appropriate directing pathologists and others to determine these answers. Coroners also produce Prevention of Future Death reports should an investigation give rise to concerns about future deaths occurring from the circumstances that caused the death.

### **3 Principal accountabilities**

- A demanding workload with personal responsibility and accountability as a judicial officer.
- Investigation of all sudden deaths, directing Police and Police Coroner's Officers accordingly, ordering post-mortem examinations by appropriate pathologists as may be necessary.
- Provide supplementary guidance as may be necessary to Police, doctors, pathologists and their staff, funeral directors and any others who may request it.
- Hold inquests as may be necessary (formal court hearings taking evidence to decide who died, where, when and how)
- Give directions to doctors in borderline cases concerning the reporting of deaths to the Police or the issue of Medical Certificates of the Fact and the Cause of Death.
- Decide whether to permit organ donation (for transplantation) in inquest cases.
- Deal with cases of local people who die abroad and whose bodies are returned to Jersey.
- Assist UK and foreign equivalent office holders when their citizens die in Jersey and the bodies are repatriated.
- Deal with any complicated issues concerning organ and tissue retention following post-mortem examination, as may be requested by pathologists or their staff.
- Deal with applications for exhumation and reinterment.
- Deal with all ancillary matters, including liaison with families and their legal and other representatives.

- Be prepared, at all times, to take action in connection with deaths arising from major disasters and during the course of any pandemic and other emergency planning matters.
- Provide training and guidance to the medical and legal professions.
- Assist with promoting and providing advice on law reform of related legislation where necessary or desirable.
- Change and Court's Digital: Identifying opportunities for improvement and change. Leading on the design and implementation of better systems of work, including software solutions, to improve the fulfilment of the functions of coroner.
- This is a part-time salaried position of approximately 2/3rds of a full-time post. You will be expected to be available to assist on an out of hours rota system.

### **3 Person specification: Knowledge, skill and experience required**

- Be qualified as a lawyer with medical knowledge or a medical practitioner with legal knowledge.
- Knowledge and experience of coroner law and of basic medicine, have proven skills in conducting investigations and an understanding of court procedure.
- Excellent analytical skills and a consistency of decision-making and administrative direction, as well as experience of exercising sound judgement and communicating effectively.
- The ability to explain complex terms to those from non-legal or non-medical backgrounds.
- Excellent proven organisational, management and efficiency skills as demonstrated by:

- ability to prioritise work effectively to minimise delays.
  - ability to work at speed and under pressure.
  - resilience and responding calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances.
- An ability to work constructively with others, including the coronial team, interaction with bereaved families and external stakeholders:
    - knowledge of the extent to which cultural and religious requirements can be met within the constraints of coroner law and practice.
    - ability to drive the service and be receptive to new ideas, reforms and diverse needs.
    - treats people with respect, sensitivity and in a fair manner without discrimination; ensuring the requirements of those with differing needs are properly met.
- To demonstrate the excellent effective communication and interpersonal skills necessary to deal with sensitive situations:
    - Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
    - Establishes authority and inspires respect and confidence.
    - Remains calm and authoritative even when challenged.
- Demonstrate integrity and apply independence of mind to make incisive, fair and legally sound decisions:
    - Able to deal with emotionally charged situations that require sensitive handling and confident/positive judgement.
    - Experience of conducting investigative enquiries including demonstrating clarity of thought in identifying issues relevant to the investigation.
    - Reaches clear, reasoned decisions objectively, based on relevant law and findings of fact.
- Thorough, up to date knowledge of legislation, case law and guidance relating to coroner's duties.



- Knowledge of structures and procedures of the police, in particular those relating to the investigation of sudden or suspicious deaths.
- A full current driving licence and use of a vehicle is desirable.

#### **4 Training**

The office of Coroner occupies a unique place within the judicial branch and training is undertaken in-house and through courses organised by the Judicial College, UK Ministry of Justice and the Coroners' Society of England and Wales, absorbing the contents of specialist legal and medical texts and spending time with experienced Coroners in England and Wales. Basic training takes about a year and all-round competence is achieved after about three years.

#### **5 Constitutional status**

The Assistant Viscount (Coroner) (abbreviated to Assistant Coroner for convenience) is not a civil servant to whom the Employment of States of Jersey Employees (Jersey) Law 2005 applies but is an independent office-holder appointed by the Viscount, with the consent of the Bailiff, under Article 9(5A) and (5B) of the Departments of the Judiciary and the Legislature (Jersey) Law 1965.

#### **6 Salary**

This is a part-time salaried position of approximately 2/3rds of a full-time post. Annual salary will be in accordance with the Jersey Judicial Pay Scale, Band J1: £137,179 - £149,275 (FTE) and pro-rated accordingly.

#### **7 Dimensions**

2024

Over 200 deaths formally reported to the Viscount.

166 authorisations by the Viscount for doctors to issue certificates of fact and cause of death.

The Superintendent Registrar reports that there were 877 deaths registered in Jersey in 2024 (913 actual deaths) – the highest number of deaths registered since 1995.

Approximately 41% of all deaths in Jersey in 2024 involved the Viscount as coroner.

77 inquests were concluded.

38 permits issued to allow bodies in or out of Jersey.

Further details can be found in the Jersey Court Service Annual Reports on the Jersey Court Service website, courts.je

<https://www.courts.je/viscount/viscounts-reports-and-documents/>

## **7 Disciplinary proceedings and criminal convictions check**

Due to the nature of the post, it is exempt from some of the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Jersey) Law 2001 and therefore any conviction, whether spent or unspent, must be declared.

The successful candidate will be required to undergo a DBS/CRB check.

Applicants must specify in their application if they are the subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which they belong.