



Position Description - Solicitor

About us:

The Law and Advocacy Centre for Women (LACW) is a not-for-profit, Community Legal Centre for women in Victoria. We assist women who are in or at risk of entering the criminal justice system, providing legal advice and representation in the following areas of law:

- Criminal defence advocacy;
- Infringements;
- Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) Applications; and
- Intervention orders.

LACW provides a wrap-around service to clients, addressing the underlying issues that have brought them into contact with the justice system, as well as providing legal advice and representation.

LACW is located at 106-108 Victoria Street, Melbourne, Victoria, within the premises of the Centre for Innovative Justice (CIJ), RMIT University, and co-located with the Mental Health Legal Centre (MHLC). The Solicitor will be required to work collaboratively with these organisations, including with students from RMIT University, as part of a multidisciplinary partnership between LACW, MHLC and CIJ.

Terms and Conditions:

1. This is a full-time role (5 days per week, 7.6 hours per day) for a term of 24 months
2. Salary and conditions are in accordance with the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010, the National Employment Standards and LACW's policies and procedures.
3. Salary will be up to \$72,000 per annum (plus superannuation of 9.5%) depending on relevant skills and experience.
4. The position reports to the Principal Legal Officer (PLO).
5. Employment is subject to the completion of a three-month probationary period, which may be extended to six months.
6. The employee will be subject to an annual performance review linked to objectives set out for the position.

Position Overview

The Solicitor is required to provide legal advice and representation to women in relation to LACW's four practice areas – criminal defence, infringements, VOCAT and family violence/intervention orders. The primary focus of the role will be in criminal defence advocacy. The Solicitor will be required to work in an early-intervention capacity to assist clients who, due to their lack of prior offending or the nature of their legal matter, are ineligible for legal aid. The Solicitor will also be required to work with clients with complex needs, including those with past or current experience of family violence.

The Solicitor will be part of a holistic practice that supports clients in relation to their legal and non-legal needs, which may include housing, health (including alcohol and drug use and mental health), overcoming family

violence trauma, family reunification, and financial issues. To this end, the Solicitor is expected to work as part of a team, which includes professionals from other disciplines, to provide a wrap-around service to clients.

In some instances, travel will be required for this role. Accordingly, approved travel expenses may be claimed where travel away from LACW's offices is required to fulfil the duties of this role.

Key Responsibilities

1. Advise and appear on behalf of LACW's clients in the Magistrate's Court and County Court in relation to criminal matters. Specifically, provide representation for clients in relation to bail applications, plea hearings, contest mentions, adjournments and diversion hearings in mainstream and specialist lists including the Assessment and Referral Court and Koori Courts.
2. Advise and appear on behalf of LACW's clients in relation to family violence, VOCAT and infringements matters.
3. Work collaboratively within a holistic, therapeutic setting with professionals across different disciplines both internally and externally.
4. Provide supervision to volunteers and students working within LACW.
5. Maintain, collect and record client information and data in accordance with LACW's policies and practices.
6. Attend meetings relevant to LACW's operations from time to time as requested.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Demonstrated experience in providing criminal defence advocacy for vulnerable clients.
2. A commitment to the principles of social justice.
3. Excellent oral and written communication skills.
4. A high degree of professionalism and a reputation for integrity, discipline and attention to detail.
5. A demonstrated understanding of the legal and non-legal issues that relate to women from diverse backgrounds with multiple and complex needs.
6. Excellent time management skills, including the ability to work effectively under pressure and comply with tight timeframes.
7. Strong administrative skills. Experience in using Victoria Legal Aid's ATLAS system will be considered favourably.

Qualifications

1. A degree in law and admission to practice in Victoria, and at least three years post-qualification experience.
2. Previous experience working for a community legal centre or legal aid commission is desirable.
3. Membership or eligibility for membership to the Victoria Legal Aid Panels relevant to LACW's practice is also desirable.
4. All offers of employment are subject to a satisfactory Criminal History Check and the successful applicant must provide a current Working with Children Check prior to commencement.
5. Current Victorian Driver's licence.

Applications for this role

Expressions of Interest, queries and applications should be emailed to the Practice Manager, via info@lacw.org.au using the subject: Solicitor role. Applications must include a cover letter and must address the key selection criteria.

Applications will be accepted up to COB on 14 February 2018. Interviews will be conducted in the following week. The position will be required to commence as soon as is practical following offer and appointment.