A program of Advocacy & Rights Centre Ltd (trading as ARC Justice)
ABN 23 082 541 240

Position Description

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<tr>
<th>POSITION:</th>
<th>Advocacy Support Worker</th>
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<tr>
<td>APPLICABLE INDUSTRIAL INSTRUMENT:</td>
<td>The applicable industrial instrument is the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHADS Award).</td>
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<td>LOCATION AND TRAVEL:</td>
<td>Your usual place of work will be: The Bendigo office, which is located at 171 Hargreaves St, Bendigo, However, ARC Justice may require you to perform your duties at other locations either temporarily or permanently. You agree you may be required to travel and work elsewhere throughout and beyond the region set out above in the performance of your duties and responsibilities. A vehicle is available for this purpose.</td>
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<td>DIRECT REPORTS:</td>
<td>No direct reports, however, supervision of volunteers and student placement may be required as directed by the Senior Advocacy Support Worker.</td>
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<td>SUPERVISOR / MANAGER</td>
<td>This position initially reports to the Housing Justice Manager.</td>
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OVERVIEW

Organisational Overview

ARC Justice is an independent, not-for-profit, human rights organisation that incorporates the Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre, the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre and Housing Justice.

Our programs deliver accessible legal services, tenancy advice and support to those in our community in the greatest need. We deliver community education and advocate for systematic change that enhances the rights of rural and regional Victorians. We recognise that housing and legal issues do not occur in isolation and we work with local partners to ensure a whole-of-person approach to our work.

ARC Justice is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff. ARC Justice and its staff must comply with a range of statutory requirements, including equal opportunity, occupational health and safety and privacy laws. ARC Justice is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Housing Justice operates primarily in the Loddon Campaspe region (LGAs of Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander).

Advocacy Support Workers provide assistance and support to vulnerable and disadvantaged social and public housing tenants to ensure they maintain their tenancy. They also assist with the provision of information, referral and advocacy for vulnerable private tenants.

Position Description: Advocacy Support Worker - HJ
Housing Justice provides advice, information and assistance to tenants about:

- their rights and responsibilities
- the Victorian Civil and Administration Tribunal (VCAT)
- negotiating with landlords and real estate agents.

Housing Justice supports tenants living in public housing to:

- address barriers to their tenancy
- settle into a new tenancy and link up with their community
- access relevant services and support
- negotiate with government and other community agencies.

Housing Justice provides a free and confidential service. Our outreach includes Maryborough, Echuca, Castlemaine, Kyabram and Rochester.

THE ROLE

An integral client focussed role that will provide support and advocacy to vulnerable clients who are at risk of homelessness and/or are seeking assistance relocating and linking in with local services. The role provides multiple facets of support, including assisting with external referrals, advocacy for the client and support and representation during VCAT matters. Service delivery entails managing a caseload that will at times require travel to outreach areas.

The position suits a passionate community services candidate who can provide holistic, high-quality telephone and face to face services to address complex housing issues.

The incumbent will have the opportunity to provide their clients with wrap around service, working collaboratively with the housing justice team, community services and partners. This role involves proactive networking, community engagement, and the opportunity to identify systemic issues and think strategically.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

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<th>Advocacy, referral, and support</th>
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<tr>
<td>Provide a responsive and professional advocacy, support and referral service based on principles of empowerment and respect for vulnerable private and public housing tenants.</td>
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<td>Work across two or more programs including the Tenant Assistance &amp; Advocacy Program (TAAP) and Tenancy Plus.</td>
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<td>Work with the Senior Advocates and support the development and maintenance of relevant housing information and resources to provide to tenants, community groups and service providers.</td>
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<td>Provide information and complete the preparation of documents related to VCAT submissions and personal support or advocacy at VCAT hearings.</td>
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<td>Provide regular outreach service to locations across the service delivery area as required.</td>
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<th>Intake and Administration</th>
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<td>Respond to walk ins, client referrals and agency enquiries as required in Senior Advocate absence.</td>
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<td>Provide regular case studies for reporting and actively engage in regular team planning days, stakeholder meetings and case conferencing as required.</td>
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<td>Assist with intake and administration coverage as required.</td>
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| Community development and stakeholder engagement | • Develop and maintain effective working relationships with staff of relevant government departments and community organisations.  
  • Proactively liaise with relevant services to promote the services of ARC Justice and provide education regarding the needs of tenants.  
  • Participate in relevant regional forums and networks.  
  • Assist in the production and dissemination of information regarding the program.  
  • Actively contribute to inter-agency protocols. |
| Ways of Working | • Support colleagues and the team environment– we value stepping outside of our day to day work and helping each other.  
  • Contribute to meetings and quarterly staff days – we value your input and feedback helps us improve.  
  • Maintain organisational values and behaviours.  
  • Support the achievement of the ARC Justice Strategic Plan, through team planning and work plans. |
| Other duties | • Comply with policy and procedures and maintain currency through training that relate to legal and regulatory requirements and our ways of working.  
  • Seek out training opportunities to further enhance professional development in accordance with duties as required within this position after consultation with your manager.  
  • Contribute to monitoring and evaluation activities and reports as required.  
  • Participate in regular supervision and meet agreed performance indicators and work plan activities.  
  • Undertake any reasonable additional tasks as directed by management. |

**KEY SELECTION CRITERIA**

**Essential (Skills, knowledge, experience)**
1. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with ability to communicate effectively in a variety of settings with a wide range of people.
2. Demonstrated ability to build rapport with clients with complex needs from diverse backgrounds and manage a varied caseload.
3. Demonstrated ability to work within a small collaborative team and actively contribute to team planning and goals.
4. Conciliation and negotiation skills (capacity to negotiate and undertake conciliation in both formal and informal settings and encourage collaborative resolutions to problems and disputes).

**Desirable (Skills, knowledge, experience, qualification and/or training)**
1. Knowledge and applied experience of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.  
2. Experience within the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal.  
3. Experience with the Social Housing database SHIP and other client management systems.  
4. Knowledge of and experience working with community agencies and housing services within the Loddon Region.

**Prerequisites**
1. Qualifications in relevant field e.g. Social Work, Community Services or similar.  
2. Unrestricted Victorian driver’s license. This is at the employees’ own expense.  
3. Clear Police record check (concerning offences of dishonesty and personal safety) and obtaining a Working with Children Card (if applicable). ARC Justice will cover the costs involved.
4. As a child safe organization ARC Justice requires disclosure of any formal disciplinary action taken by any current or former employer including any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct. Any changes to these prerequisites after employment commences must be communicated to the employer immediately by the employee.

Signature of Employee: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Signature of Employer: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Mim Dineen, Corporate Services Manager