

**Queensland Advocacy Incorporated**

**Our mission is to promote, protect and defend, through advocacy, the fundamental needs and rights and lives of the most vulnerable people with disability in Queensland.**

***Systems and Legal Advocacy for vulnerable people with Disability***

**QQueenueenslandslandAAdvdvocacocacyyInIncorporacorporatetedd**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Position Title | **Solicitor (Mental Health Legal Service)** |
| Location | Queensland Advocacy Incorporated  2nd Floor, South Central, 43 Peel Street (cnr Merivale Street) South Brisbane Qld 4101 |
| Industrial Instrument | Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHADS Award) |
| Classification | Pay point commensurate with experience |
| Full-time / part-time | Flexible full-time fixed term contract –  75 hours per fortnight |
| Position Reports to | Principal Solicitors |
| Date | 14 January 2021 |

# Queensland Advocacy Incorporated Values

The Solicitor (Mental Health Legal Service) will have a commitment to Queensland Advocacy Inc (QAI) to promote and implement the values and philosophies of the organisation when conducting activities and actions related to their position.

# Organisational Context

Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) is an independent, community-based systems and legal advocacy organisation for people with disability. QAI's mission is to promote, protect and defend, through advocacy, the fundamental needs, rights and lives of the most vulnerable people with disability in Queensland. The organisation does this by engaging in systemic advocacy through campaigns directed at attitudinal, law and policy change, and by supporting the development of a range of advocacy initiatives in this State.

As QAI is a social advocacy organisation, it works to uphold the principles of fundamental human rights, social justice and inclusion in community life by:

* + taking positive, ethical action
  + being on the side of people with disability
  + being understanding of their position and vulnerability
  + being independent with minimised conflicts of interest
  + focussing on fundamental needs, welfare and interests
  + doing advocacy with vigour and a sense of urgency
  + remaining loyal and accountable over time
  + acknowledging the costly nature of advocacy.

**Ph: (07) 3844 4200 or 1300 130 582 Fax: (07) 3844 4220 Email:** [**qai@qai.org.au**](mailto:qai@qai.org.au) **Website:**

**2nd Floor, South Central, 43 Peel Street, STH BRISBANE QLD 4101**

**QAI endorses the objectives, and promotes the principles, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.**

People involved with QAI therefore believe that people with disability:

* + are as valuable as any other human beings, regardless of what they can or cannot do
  + need to live well and have the same opportunities in life as other people
  + are part of the relationships and connections of ordinary life and can participate and contribute to the rich and diverse fabric of our communities
  + should not be segregated, congregated or isolated on the basis of disability.

# Role Description Individual Advocacy Services

The Solicitor (Mental Health Legal Service) will provide legal advice and casework within the scope of QAI’s Mental Health Legal Service, including in relation to the *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld), the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) and the *Forensic Disability Act 2011* (Qld), with representation before the Mental Health Review Tribunal (**MHRT**) in matters referred to it through Legal Aid Queensland and as required for matters where an individual requests the assistance of a lawyer at the MHRT when a lawyer is not appointed.

# Key Position Responsibilities and Accountabilities

# *Legal Advice and Representation*

The Solicitor (Mental Health Legal Service) will work primarily in the LAQ Referrals team and as required with other members of the Mental Health Legal Service to:

1. Provide legal advice, information and referral as required.
2. Provide representation for the Mental Health Legal Service for matters before the MHRT where a lawyer is not appointed as required.
3. Provide representation before the MHRT for matters referred to the Mental Health Legal Service as referred by Legal Aid Queensland.
4. Identify, develop and maintain projects which would enhance the delivery of legal services to people with mental illness.
5. Contribute to service evaluation and development of strategies for improvement.
6. Support the work of other QAI individual advocacy services as needed.

***Law and Systems Reform***

1. Collaboration with systems advocates supporting law reform activities.
2. Representing QAI at conferences, meetings and other events.

# ***Administration***

1. Ensure that client files and records are kept and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Qld), the National Association of Community Legal Centre’s Risk Management Guide and QAI’s policies and procedures and in accordance with KPI’s established for QAI’s Mental Health Legal Service.
2. Participate in casework file review meetings.

# ***General***

1. Participate in staff meetings, planning workshops and other meetings in connection with the operation of individual advocacy services and QAI.
2. General office teamwork and assistance.
3. Undertake own word processing and administrative tasks.
4. Undertake training required to perform the above duties.

# Requirements of the Position:

## Values, skills, knowledge:

1. Strong commitment to human rights, social justice and diversity.
2. Experience in Mental Health Law, Criminal Law with prior experience in the disability, mental health or social services sectors required.
3. Demonstrated experience providing legal advice and representation to highly vulnerable individuals in the community.
4. Admitted, or eligibility to be admitted, to legal practice in Queensland, with at least two (2) years Post Admission Experience (PAE).
5. Well-developed legal casework, advocacy and negotiation skills.
6. Excellent interpersonal & verbal communication skills including the ability to communicate sensitively with clients and other people from diverse backgrounds.
7. Excellent written skills, including ability to convey information in simple English.
8. Highly developed organisational skills to identify priorities, manage workload, and maintain records within a resource-poor community legal service.
9. Good knowledge of the welfare and/or disability sector/s with understanding of what makes people vulnerable.
10. Current driver’s licence as travel is required as part of this role.
11. Willingness to meet the Department of Health Vaccine Preventable Disease (VPD) screening requirements as required for all practitioners appearing before the MHRT. Documentation is required, confirming the successful applicant has been vaccinated against or is not susceptible to the following VPD’s is required: Hepatitis B; Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Varicella (Chicken Pox); and Pertussis (Whooping Cough).
12. The position is conditional on accreditation to represent clients before the MHRT as determined by LAQ.

## Relationships

1. Ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a team to achieve positive outcomes.
2. Ability to work non-confrontationally, yet reason and argue assertively on important issues on behalf of people with disability.

## Extent of authority

1. Ability to work with supervision and within organisational policy.
2. Ability to exercise initiative and judgment within the sphere of work to plan, coordinate, implement and evaluate work in a strategic way.

## Support and Training

## Training and Professional development will be provided and supported by QAI.

## Opportunities to participate in strategic planning and review processed will be provided as appropriate.

## QAI is an inclusive and flexible workplace and as such team building and rapport hold high importance.

# Performance Review

# A probationary period applies to this position. A probationary appraisal will be conducted to ensure adequate support, training, and experience for the role at three months. Annual performance reviews are conducted thereafter.