



Position Description – Legal Secretary

Position:	Legal Secretary
Reports to:	Principal Managing Lawyer
Salary:	AO Level 4 – 6 (SCHADS Level 2) Salary range \$43,738 to \$50,580 per annum – depending on experience, plus superannuation. Salary Packaging also available
Location:	Head Office - 273 High Street, Preston, Victoria This position may require regional and interstate travel
Employment type:	Full-time (fixed term until 30/06/2025)
	We are always actively looking for applicants from a diverse range of gender identities, sexual orientations cultures, language groups, abilities, and experiences. In particular, we encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Members of the LGBTQI+ community, people with disabilities, and people with experience seeking asylum to apply.

About us

We were established as a community-controlled organisation in 1973 to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the criminal justice system. The organisation has a long and proud history of providing legal and service support for Aboriginal Victorians who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing negative contact with the justice system and advocating locally, nationally and internationally for the rights of Aboriginal people.

We strive to:

- Promote social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- Promote the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to empowerment, identity and culture;
- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples enjoy their rights, are aware of their responsibilities under the law and have access to appropriate advice, assistance and representation;
- Reduce the disproportionate involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the criminal justice system; and
- Promote the review of legislation and other practices which discriminate against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The organisation has grown over the years (with further expansion options being pursued) and now offers criminal, family and civil law services, client services support, community legal education and a range of community justice support programs in Victoria.



Our Values

Respect

We advocate for and demonstrate the right of every person to be treated with dignity and respect.

Culture

We remember what we are here for and how our organisation came into being and ensure we are centred within our communities.

Commitment

Our team is committed to improving the lives of Aboriginal people. We keep our word and stand by our commitments.

Self-Determination

We respect and promote the principle of self-determination in everything that we do. We will achieve change for Aboriginal communities and ensure the realisation of self-determination.

Independence

We are Apolitical. We are independent.

Integrity

We are steadfast in our adherence to our values. We take every reasonable measure to protect our clients. We offer independent, professional and high-level legal representation.

Equality

We fight for our communities to be equal before the law and to rectify the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the justice system. VALS promotes the right to be different, free from discrimination and valued as an individual. We are an inclusive workplace that respects and protects equality.

About the team

Legal Services

This section is responsible for delivering client focussed quality services for Aboriginal Victorians in contact with the justice system.

Legal Services are co-located in this unit to drive an integrated, flexible and innovative approach to meeting client needs.

The section liaises and networks with other Aboriginal organisations and works with stakeholders to reduce negative contact Aboriginal people have with the justice system.

In conjunction with Executive and Corporate Services this section also advocates for improved justice outcomes and prepares specialist advice on legislation change.

The Director, with the PML's ensures all legal standards and CLC Risk Management guidelines are met.



About the position

Overview

To provide high quality secretarial and support services to the legal staff in the provision of criminal, family and civil law assistance to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Victoria.

Key Performance Indicators, Duties & Responsibility

1. Undertake all secretarial tasks and associated file management tasks as provided by solicitors in relation to the ongoing file management of clients of the Service in areas of Criminal, Civil and Family law.
2. Prepare documentation for briefing Counsel or other professionals as directed, including photocopying, collating and arranging delivery.
3. Receive phone calls on behalf of individual solicitors and follow up enquiries or record messages for action by solicitor.
4. Assist in arranging appointments for clients or making contact with clients directly.
5. Undertake filing of reports and other documentation on behalf of clients.
6. Update data base and electronic files as required.
7. Lodge and maintain Victoria Legal Aid grant applications within the ATLAS system as required.
8. Undertake relief work on reception, as rostered and participate in duties associated there.
9. Participate in the processing of ingoing and outgoing mail for the organisation.
10. Keep up to date with relevant procedures by attending professional education programs and maintain an understanding of issues impacting the justice system and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community.
11. As directed, undertake other duties which are incidental and peripheral to the main tasks, provided that such duties are reasonably within the employee's skills, competence and training

Personal accountability

1. Compliance with all VALS Values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant.
2. Demonstrate a commitment to the principles of social justice and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity and respect regardless of their background, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion
3. Ensure appropriate use of resources
4. Actively participate in initiatives to maintain, build upon and promote a positive and collaborative workplace.
5. Take reasonable care for your own health & safety, and health and safety of others (to extent required)
6. Promptly respond to and report health and safety hazards, incidents and near misses to management.
7. Attend mandatory training sessions (ie. equal employment opportunity, health and safety, cultural safety) and mandatory training specific to position.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Demonstrated ability and experience as a legal secretary.
2. Advanced skills in the use of MS Office Software (particularly MS Word, Excel, E-mail) to a legal practice and the capacity to quickly acquire competency in the use of VALS' client data base.



3. Professional and courteous phone manner and interpersonal skills and the capacity to communicate effectively with members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
4. A commitment to the legal issues faced by members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community in Victoria.
5. The ability to work collaboratively with others and to foster a co-operative and supportive team environment.
6. Ability to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and acknowledge their diverse backgrounds, personalities and varying needs and the unique cultural ways in which they may be expressed

Key Capabilities

- Plans and prioritises work - manages competing demands
- Adheres to organisation policies and procedures
- Is approachable, accessible and responsive
- Communicates attentively by phone
- Uses and manages email appropriately
- Gains insight into the client and stakeholder needs, priorities and expectations

Mandatory Requirements

On offer of this position, you must provide:

- a copy of your current Employee Working with Children card
- a copy of your current Victorian Driver's License
- you will be required to complete a current Criminal History Police Check
- proof of rights to work in Australia, i.e. a copy of an Australian Passport, Birth Certificate or Immigration VISA documentation

How to apply

Please send your resume together with a covering letter which addresses the **Key Selection Criteria** (found within the position description) to jobs@vals.org.au

Acceptance on position offer

I understand and am clear of the position expectations and requirements

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____