

Solicitor Position Description

The Refugee Advice Casework Service (RACS) seeks a dedicated person to join its team of committed human rights lawyers as a Solicitor/ Caseworker. You must be an admitted solicitor. The position is a full-time fixed term contract for 12 months from commencement.

The remuneration package for the position is at the SCHADS Award rate Level 4.1 – 4.3 depending on the experience of the successful candidate pro rata, per annum, plus superannuation contribution and loadings. Salary packaging is available.

Note that as a Solicitor you will be required to travel throughout metropolitan Sydney as your place of work will alternate between our RACS' offices, Departmental locations and Tribunals, as well as our outreach locations and detention centres. Due to COVID-19 safe work requirements you may be required to work from home as advised.

RACS is committed to working together to achieve a more inclusive community. Our workplace strives to be one that embraces and celebrates diversity and the wide range of skills, expertise and experience we can all bring to strengthen our dynamic, collaborative and responsive environment. RACS encourages people from all backgrounds to apply, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people that identify as LGBTIQ+ and people with disabilities. RACS welcomes applications from those with the lived experience of seeking asylum, including those on temporary visas.

Application Procedure:

To apply, send your cover letter addressing the selection criteria in full and a CV to Kerrith Sowden at reception@racs.org.au. Applications close on 9am, Friday, 6 August 2021. Interviews will be held the following week with a view to commence at RACS as soon as practicably.

About RACS

The Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS) is one of Australia's oldest and most successful dedicated community legal centres with a vision of justice and dignity for refugees and a world where those who seek Australia's protection are able to live their lives with dignity, security, family unity and freedom.

RACS provides free, dedicated legal services for asylum seekers and refugees. Through individual advice sessions, community education and public advocacy, RACS strives to ensure that individuals and families, at risk of persecution or other forms of significant harm, gain access to equal and fair representation before the law, and are granted protection by Australia, and opportunities to seek family unity, in accordance with Australia's international obligations.

Our work is premised on a commitment to fundamental human rights, human dignity and international protection. RACS demonstrates this commitment through its independent, impartial and professional advice; the integrity of its staff and volunteers; its belief in continuous learning, including through partnerships with other organisations; and the fair and flexible conditions it provides for staff and volunteers.

RACS Solicitor Role

The primary role of the RACS Solicitor is to provide legal assistance to people seeking asylum and refugees in an immigration setting. The position reports to a RACS Supervising Senior Solicitor. The Solicitor will carry out their duties in accordance with RACS policy and funding guidelines. The successful applicant will be working at RACS' main Randwick office, but will be expected to travel to our outreach locations, to external meetings, detention centres and other locations as reasonably required.

RACS seeks a solicitor that holds or is eligible to hold a NSW legal practicing certificate with less than 3 years legal experience/PQE or less than 2 years' experience in the field of Refugee Practice or other relevant experience.

The RACS working environment can be high volume and the successful applicant must be skilled in managing time and priorities.

A RACS caseworker is expected to:

- Provide casework assistance, limited assistance and advice as required in accordance with RACS' Casework Guidelines to people seeking asylum and refugees. This can include advising and representing clients at Departmental, Immigration Assessment Authority and Administrative Appeals Tribunal and Judicial Review level.
- Identify and appropriately responding to the cultural needs or particular vulnerabilities of RACS' clients.
- Manage a large volume of client data and documentation in line with legal requirements. This includes maintaining files effectively and in accordance with RACS' file management policies and in accordance with the Risk Management Guide.

- Communicate with a wide range of stakeholders in a confident and a respectful manner.
- Be a contributing and supporting member of the RACS team, acting in accordance with RACS values in all conduct.
- Meet the reporting requirements of the Leadership Team.
- Attend external supervision and/or debriefing as arranged.
- Be alert to the danger of burnout, monitor your workload and be pro-active in self-care.
- Participate in RACS' training and education programs as required to maintain appropriate skills that will enable provision of high quality and professional migration assistance. This includes completing and maintaining records of MCLE/ CPD points completed.
- Consult with a RACS Supervising Senior Solicitor if at any time you are unsure about an aspect of best practice on a client's case.
- Work together with volunteers and with RACS Practical Legal Training students in the provision of services, which includes overseeing and supervising external (solicitor and migration agent) volunteers in performing these tasks as directed by and under the oversight of a RACS Supervising Senior Solicitor.
- Undertake administrative tasks as required in a small team.
- Perform other duties as reasonably required.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Demonstrated experience as a legal practitioner with knowledge of Australian immigration law and practice, particularly refugee law.
- Previously had or currently engaged in the direct supervision of volunteers, practical legal trainees or Paralegals.
- Experience working with clients from torture & trauma backgrounds and or/ culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- High-level communication and interpersonal skills, including an ability to communicate with a wide range of stakeholders in a confident and a respectful manner.
- Ability to work under pressure, manage time and priorities effectively and meet strict deadlines.
- Ability to work independently and in a diverse team.
- A commitment to refugee and human rights issues.

Desirable

- Experience working with people seeking asylum, including those in detention.
- Experience working in a Community Legal Centre and the ability to work in an environment with limited resources.
- Demonstrated language skills other than English will be considered favourably.
- Experience with or exposure to working in a court, tribunal or advocacy setting will be considered favourably.