

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Financial Counsellor

1. Position Details

Position title	Financial Counsellor
Hours	22.8 hours per week (0.6 FTE)
Term of employment	Ongoing, subject to funding.
Industrial instrument	Community Legal Centres Multi Business Agreement 2006-2009
Pay level	Social Community Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 Pay Tables (SACS Employee Level 5), plus leave loading and superannuation. Salary packaging available.
Reports to	Director, Social Security Rights Victoria
Direct reports	No direct reports
Location	The position is currently based at Social Security Rights Victoria's office in Fitzroy, Melbourne. Travel to and work from other locations may be required.
COVID-19 arrangements	Staff may be required to work remotely from their homes from time to time depending on COVID restrictions.

2. Context

Employer:

Social Security Rights Victoria (SSRV) is an independent, state-wide community legal centre that specialises in social security and related law, policy and procedure. Our vision is for a fair and just society in which all people are able to receive a guaranteed income in order to enjoy a decent standard of living. SSRV's contribution to this vision is the provision of a range of legal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians and those who support them, which assist them to secure and protect their right to equitable social security entitlements.

Project Partner:

Financial Counselling Victoria (FCVic) is the peak body for financial counsellors in Victoria. Its roles include governing financial counsellor's professional standards in Victoria, running professional development in the sector, and undertaking policy work and advocacy on issues affecting people in financial hardship.

Project:

SSRV and FcVic have established a partnership to design, implement and evaluate an integrated service bringing together social security law specialists and financial counsellors to achieve the objectives of working together more effectively and improving client outcomes. The project provides direct client services and builds the capability of financial counsellors and community lawyers to identify and respond to social security law and related issues. This is achieved through direct service provision to clients, secondary consultation and support to other professionals, professional education and relationship building and joint work on addressing systemic issues raised through the project.

3. Key responsibilities

Working consistently with financial counselling professional obligations, within a community based legal practice and ensuring that all work is conducted within the requirements of the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014* and the Uniform Rules, SSRV's professional indemnity insurance and organisational policies and procedures:

- a. Contribute to the further development and implementation of integrated service practice involving the financial counsellor and community lawyers, including building awareness of respective skills, roles and professional obligations, and processes through which they may work together to improve client services and outcomes.
- b. Undertake initial client assessment, receipt and assessment of referrals, and triage duties.
- c. Provide direct client services (primarily by telephone), including:
 - assessing and analysing the client's situation
 - providing financial and related information and explanation of options to assist clients to address their situation and make informed decisions
 - assisting clients to complete relevant forms and documents
 - preparing reports and other support documents
 - advocating on behalf of clients where required and appropriate
 - liaising with other in-house and external professionals
 - client skills building
 - identifying associated issues and providing relevant resources and referrals.
- d. Provide information and secondary consultation support to other in-house and external professionals as relevant to the position.
- e. Collect client and service data and maintain file records and case management system.
- f. Contribute to professional development activities and development of cross sector networks.
- g. Identify legal and policy issues arising from financial counselling casework and integrated service delivery and contribute to addressing these issues.
- h. Participate in regular operational, casework and professional supervision.
- i. Undertake administration, reporting, evaluation and other related tasks as required.

4. Selection Criteria

Qualifications and Experience

- a. Must hold a Diploma of Financial Counselling (or equivalent) and be eligible for full membership of the Financial Counselling Victoria.
- b. 3 years+ experience as a financial counsellor.

Skills and Knowledge

- a. Relevant technical knowledge and skills – in particular, concerning credit and debt issues affecting clients and a knowledge of their rights, entitlements and obligations.
- b. Demonstrated ability to work within a financial counselling framework and to recognise the ways in which other issues, particularly those related to social security, may interact with personal financial issues.
- c. Ability to work within a legal practice framework and in a team environment with legal and other professionals.
- d. Ability to conduct financial counselling triage, advice, casework and advocacy both by telephone and face to face.
- e. Ability to establish rapport and work effectively with clients from diverse backgrounds, who are experiencing stress, vulnerability and disadvantage, and who may have complex needs.
- f. Highly develop communication skills, including active listening, verbal and written communication, and ability to communicate complex information in a practical, accurate and clear manner.
- g. Experience in engaging with a range of stakeholders to support effective client outcomes and other project objectives.
- h. Self-motivated, flexible and proactive, with strong organisational and time management skills, including the ability to manage competing demands, prioritise tasks and solve problems.
- i. Experience in report writing and contributing to monitoring and evaluation activities.

- j. Computer literacy, including word processing, databases, spreadsheets and electronic communication.
- k. Demonstrated commitment to human rights principles, understanding of the community/legal assistance sectors, and of the objectives and values of SSRV and FCVic.

5. Terms and Conditions of Employment

- This is an ongoing position subject to funding.
- A six-month probation period applies.
- Salary packaging is available.
- Four weeks pro rata annual leave, additional pro rata leave.
- The position is based in Fitzroy, some travel to and from other locations may be required. Reimbursement is provided for the use of personal vehicles for work purposes.
- The employer will cover reasonable costs associated with professional registration/ memberships, development and supervision.
- The successful applicant may be required to provide a satisfactory police check prior to final confirmation of employment.

Position Description Review and Version Tracking			
Version	Date Approved/Reviewed	Approved By	Next Review Date
4	September 2021	Director	June 2022