

# Position Description

## Position details



<b>Position Title:</b>	Practice Manager
<b>Purpose:</b>	The Practice Manager will ensure that First Step Legal (FSL) achieves its purpose, vision and strategic priorities, to provide exceptional service delivery to vulnerable and marginalised individuals. Specifically, the role will provide high level legal practice management, stakeholder support, policy and project leadership within a unique Health Justice Partnership (HJP).
<b>Classification:</b>	SCHADS Award, salary negotiable, commensurate with skills and experience
<b>Reports to:</b>	Director of Legal Services ( <u>see also</u> FSL Org Chart)
<b>Staff Responsibility:</b>	Principal Lawyer, Embedded Social Worker, Legal Administrator (shared with Principal Lawyer)
<b>Location:</b>	St Kilda + outreach locations with WFH arrangement as per any COVID19 requirements
<b>Employment Status:</b>	2 year fixed term contract, with possible continuation subject to funding
<b>Hours:</b>	Flexible, part-time 0.6 FTE (22.8 hrs per/week) subject to negotiation
<b>Probationary period:</b>	A six month probationary period applies.

## The Organisation

**First Step Legal (FSL)** operates as a Health Justice Partnership (HJP) within First Step, a not for profit mental health and addiction clinic in St Kilda. FSL is a unique Community Legal Centre providing pro bono, legal advice and representation to among the most marginalised in the community. Whilst FSL is embedded within First Step, FSL recently expanded to 3 additional HJPs - Windana Therapeutic Community, Star Health and Alfred Health (MH Outpatients).

FSL practices predominantly in relation to criminal law, family law and family violence matters. Assistance is also provided with infringement, debt, VOCAT and other matters on an ad hoc basis. FSL comprises a small, recently expanded team comprising: Director Legal Services, Principal Lawyer, a criminal lawyer, a family lawyer, a legal case manager, legal administrator and several volunteer paralegals. We have recently embedded a social worker in our practice.

FSL's vision is to increase access to justice for clients struggling with mental health, addiction issues and/or family violence, to enable them to access supports to rebuild and improve their lives and to achieve legal and court outcomes supportive of their continued recovery and rehabilitation in the community. FSL also works to champion HJPs and therapeutic, compassionate legal practice via law reform and advocacy opportunities.

FSL aims to embody a methodology of practice which values:

- Delivering excellence in the provision of our legal services to clients within a framework of compassionate legal practice
- Ensuring clients are well-informed about the process and conduct of their legal matters

- Assisting clients who are genuinely engaged or wanting to be engaged in treatment, recovery and therapeutic interventions that will support their ongoing wellbeing
- Giving clients agency in decisions regarding their treatment that best support them and their needs
- Working hard to achieve legal resolutions that will support ongoing recovery and rehabilitation.

## Funding Sources

FSL receives funding from a variety of sources including philanthropic, corporate, government and quasi-government sources. This now includes three-year Community Legal Services Program (CSLP) funding, administered through Victoria Legal Aid. This new funding has allowed FSL to expand its HJP model by undertaking some new HJP outreach pilots with increased staffing. FSL moved into a new expanded office space in St. Kilda, adjoining the First Step clinic.

## Key Responsibilities

<b>Key Responsibility Areas</b>
<p><b><u>Practice Management and Strategic Support</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide high-level support to the FSL Director of Legal Services with practice management, strategic and stakeholder areas, and policy and procedures including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensuring FSL and all its interface with FS and are operating effectively</li> <li>○ policy, procedures and quality data systems and management of the practice,</li> <li>○ Managing the FSL’s project budgets and financials to ensure that the programs and grants are properly acquitted and priorities are met, effectively liaising with stakeholders.</li> <li>○ Ensuring continuity of funding and support the development of new funding grants.</li> <li>○ Supporting First Step Board report preparation and back-up as required.</li> <li>○ Attending Steering committees and management meetings as required.</li> <li>○ Ensuring that the FSL Annual Report is developed and delivered on time.</li> <li>○ Engage and lead FSL in a short-to-medium term review of strategic outcomes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Remain alert to further partnership, law reform and advocacy opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Staff Management</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide high quality management to the Principal Lawyer including monitoring staff support and workloads, service quality, leave requirements, recruitment support and complaint management.</li> <li>• Effectively manage the embedded Social Worker, ensuring clear support mechanisms, and oversee the development of clear, effective systems and processes that support vulnerable clients.</li> <li>• Manage legal administrative roles collaboratively with the Principal Lawyer to ensure FSL is well supported.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Project Management Oversight</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the new HJP projects at Alfred Health and Star Health are successfully embedded by the FSL team, including working with consultants so that projects are delivered on time, on budget and to specifications.</li> <li>• Collaborate and support the development and maintenance of a monitoring and evaluation framework for all projects and programs, working with consultants.</li> <li>• Ensure that the two current HJPs at First Step and Windana are operating effectively with clear service design, policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Respond to opportunities for collaboration and training.</li> </ul>

### **Organisational Obligations**

- Become familiar with all aspects of FS and FSL's operations, including policies and procedures.
- Collaborate with the management at First Step and the legal team to ensure that there is cohesion across the organisation and a positive workplace culture.
- Meet organisational obligations, as agreed with the Director Legal Services, including by –
  - Undertaking training/professional development which meet FSL's organisational and professional development requirements.
  - Participating in FSL activities including staff, team and agency meetings, supervision and debriefing.

### **Health & Safety**

- Monitor and develop overall satisfaction, engagement and wellbeing of FSL staff.
- Actively contribute to health and safety at FSL by being aware of safety policies and procedures and consciously applying these every day to ensure the health and safety of our workplace including additional requirements to maintain a COVID-safe workplace.

## Key Selection Criteria

### Qualifications, Knowledge and Skills, Personal Attributes:

#### Highly Desirable

- Demonstrated experience (minimum of 3 years) in a leadership role and substantial experience in a policy development or influencing role.
- Experience managing teams and delivering projects in an integrated service setting ideally spanning legal, health and/or other support services working with marginalised and vulnerable communities.
- Excellent communication skills and demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and confidently to engage with a diverse range of stakeholders and to build strong partnerships.
- High level of organisational awareness and understanding of political processes.
- Ability to work autonomously with limited direction from the Director of Legal Services.
- Strong commitment to social justice and community engagement, including a demonstrated understanding of the social context of law and issues faced by vulnerable and/or disadvantaged communities.
- Strong computer literacy skills.

## Approval and Acknowledgement

Date PD last reviewed: October 2021

PD Approved by: FSL Director of Legal Services

Date of approval: October 2021

