



Community
driven justice.

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POSITION DESCRIPTION – Community Lawyer, Neighbourhood Justice Centre

Fitzroy Legal Service is a community-based organisation, independent of government, dedicated to assisting the most marginalised members of the community with legal information, advice and representation, as well as championing law reform and conducting public interest litigation. Our services are offered across the Cities of Darebin and Yarra, and the inner north of Melbourne. For further information please visit our website www.fitzroy-legal.org.au.

POSITION OUTLINE

Classification and conditions	<p>The terms and conditions of employment are set out in the <i>Community Legal Centres 2006-2009 Multiple Business Agreement (MBA)</i> and Fitzroy Legal Service policies.</p> <p>This position is classified at Level 5 of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHCADS) Industry Award.</p> <p>All positions at Fitzroy Legal Service are subject to the continuation of external funding.</p> <p>The position is offered as a 4 day per week (30.4 hours per week) position.</p>
Duration	Ongoing, commencing March 2023
Location	<p>The Neighbourhood Justice Centre (241 Wellington Street, Collingwood).</p> <p>The position will involve travel to the Fitzroy office, outreach and other courts as required</p>
Responsible To:	Senior Community Lawyer NJC
How to Apply	<p>Candidates are requested to email the following as one PDF document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A cover letter, no longer than one page;• A current resume• Response to Key Selection Criteria <p>Applications should be addressed to Lauren Gordon and emailed no later than 11.59PM Wednesday 22 February 2023 to lgordon@fls.org.au</p>

POSITION OBJECTIVE

The Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC) encompasses a Magistrates' Court, on-site services such as drug and alcohol, mental health, corrections, financial counselling, housing and an innovative team that focusses on working with community, reducing crime and implementing innovative solutions and ideas. The NJC provides services for people who live in the City of Yarra or who have legal matters listed at the NJC. It is part of a Victorian Government strategy to reduce crime and disadvantage and to improve access to justice. The NJC deals with tenancy, civil and criminal legal issues in an effort to reduce re-offending and crime rates, to enhance community perceptions of safety and confidence in the justice system. A major component of the NJC is the multi-jurisdictional nature of the court where one principal Magistrate hears all matters with engagement of support services to enable comprehensive resolutions of issues presenting at the Centre. VCAT members also sit at the NJC.

The NJC legislation was developed around a philosophy of therapeutic jurisprudence and the aim to assist individuals to manage their lives and underlying issues to reduce the risk of recidivism and work towards rehabilitation and recovery. The experiences of clients, as heard through casework, informs the community legal education, community development, law reform and policy work of FLS. The Community Lawyer NJC takes an active role in this.

RESPONSIBLE TO

The Community Lawyer NJC reports to the Senior Community Lawyer NJC.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Advocacy and Casework

- Provide duty lawyer services in relation to criminal matters (including consolidated plea hearings and contested bail applications), intervention orders, infringements and Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) tenancy matters;
- Provide casework, advice and referral for clients on a variety of matters, including criminal law, infringements, VCAT matters and Intervention Orders, in line with FLS guidelines;
- Develop links with relevant support agencies to assist with the varied and complex issues of clients;
- As appropriate, apply for VLA grants of legal assistance through ATLAS;
- Where eligible and appropriate, brief barristers to appear on behalf of clients;
- Provide legal advice and secondary consultation to community workers and agencies in relation to the legal rights and responsibilities of their client.

Community Legal Education and Community Development

- Develop and participate in community legal education programs as identified by the NJC and FLS;
- Inform the community about the role of the court and the availability of services; and
- Develop and co-ordinate community development projects and deliver community information consistent with the philosophy and priorities of FLS and NJC.

General

- Support the achievement of the FLS Strategic Plan and Business Plan;
- Participate in internal staff and planning meetings, supervision and performance review processes;
- Undertake professional development, meet CPD responsibilities and attend local networks and conferences as required;
- Supervise and mentor volunteers;
- Involvement in fundraising and other events as required;

- Adhere to organisational policies and procedures and support the agreed FLS Values and Behaviours;
- Share general office duties, including administration, as required; and
- Undertake other duties as reasonably required by the FLS Senior Community Lawyer NJC and Managing Lawyer COGS.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications

- To be admitted or eligible to practice as an Australian Legal Practitioner;
- At least 12 months of post-admission experience (experience in criminal law highly desirable).

Essential

- Demonstrated understanding of and strong commitment to social justice and the philosophy of FLS;
- Experience in the provision of high-quality legal advice, advocacy, and casework in relevant areas of law and strong court-based advocacy skills;
- High level verbal and written communication skills;
- Good understanding of issues arising for individuals that might make accessing legal services challenging;
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with clients and stakeholders in the community and legal sectors;
- Ability to provide legal services and legal education programs in non-conventional settings;
- Understanding of / demonstrated commitment to the necessary professional and ethical approaches and boundaries required to work, particularly in working with multidisciplinary teams;
- Proven ability to self-start, manage competing demands and work within a team; and
- Good self-care and stress management skills.

Desirable

- Experience in, or an understanding of, community legal centres, including demonstrated experience or an understanding of working with volunteers.