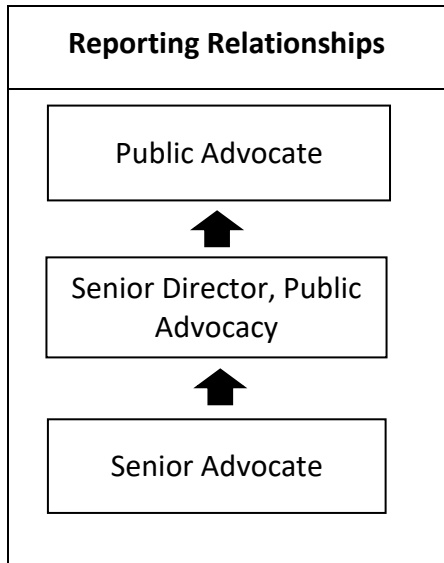




# POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Directorate</b>	Justice and Community Safety
<b>Business Unit/Agency</b>	ACT Human Rights Commission
<b>Branch</b>	Public Advocate and Children and Young People Commissioner
<b>Position Number</b>	P57485, Several
<b>Position Title</b>	Senior Advocate
<b>Classification</b>	Senior Officer Grade C (SOC)
<b>Location</b>	Canberra City
<b>Last Reviewed</b>	October 2025



The Australian Capital Territory Public Service (ACTPS) is a values-based organisation where all employees are expected to embody the prescribed core values of respect, integrity, collaboration, and innovation, as well as demonstrate the related signature behaviours.

## DIRECTORATE OVERVIEW

The Justice and Community Safety Directorate (the Directorate) seeks to maintain a safe, just and resilient and inclusive community.

Our purpose is to continuously improve the wellbeing of our community by delivering responsive justice and community safety services that:

- Maintain the rule of law and support a democratic society;
- Strengthens community safety;
- Protects people’s legal and human rights and interests;
- Cares for and supporting people who are at a higher risk of vulnerability;
- Enhances timely access to justice;
- Builds community and business resilience to emergencies and disasters/disruptions; and
- Supports formal partnerships and shared decision making with First Nations Peoples.

We will invest in the capability of our people, and we will support them to deliver innovative and sustainable services for our ACT Community.

We will do this by demonstrating strong public sector values and behaviours; we will be community minded; legal and human rights focussed; inclusive and diverse; passionate about our work and we will listen to and genuinely engage with our stakeholders.

The Directorate advises and supports the following ministerial portfolios:

- Chief Minister
- Attorney-General
- Manager of Government Business
- Minister for Gaming Reform
- Minister for City and Government Services
- Minister for Night-Time Economy
- Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services
- Minister for Corrections
- Minister for Women
- Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence
- Minister for Human Rights

## **BUSINESS UNIT / AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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The ACT Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is an independent agency established by the *Human Rights Commission Act 2005*. The role of the Commission is to promote individual and collective rights, including by:

- Advocating for the rights, safety, and wellbeing of adults experiencing vulnerability
- providing an independent, fair, and accessible process for resolving individual complaints
- promoting service improvement
- promoting the human rights and welfare of people, and
- fostering understanding of relevant legislation.

The Commission includes four statutory office holders:

- President and Human Rights Commissioner
- Public Advocate and Children and Young People Commissioner
- Discrimination, Health Services, Disability and Community Services Commissioner
- Victims of Crime Commissioner.

## **A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION**

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The ACT Human Rights Commission is committed to protecting and promoting the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people. The Commission is actively implementing the ten Child Safe Standards in a manner that is culturally safe and inclusive for all children and young people, including by respecting and valuing the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, and their families. The Commission takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse, and will seek to ensure all executives, employees, volunteers, and contracted staff uphold their responsibilities.

## **BRANCH OVERVIEW**

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The Public Advocate and Children and Young People Commissioner (PA&CYPC) branch comprises two teams – one with responsibility for the Public Advocate’s functions and the other for the Children and Young People Commissioner’s functions. This position sits within the Public Advocate team.

The Public Advocate protects and promotes the rights and interests of people in the ACT whose situation or condition gives rise to a need for protection from abuse, exploitation or neglect, or a combination of those things, and often includes those who are subject to involuntary statutory intervention.

Some of the Public Advocate's functions are specific to children and young people, and others encompass people with complex disability needs, including those with mental health conditions and/or forensic patients. The Public Advocate's statutory responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- providing advocacy for children, young people, and adults whose condition or situation makes them potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, or neglect
- monitoring and fostering the provision of services for persons experiencing vulnerability
- providing oversight in respect of the systems that support and respond to the needs of persons experiencing vulnerability.

The role of Public Advocate is given effect through the *Human Rights Commission Act 2005* however many of the Public Advocate's statutory responsibilities are articulated in other legislative instruments.

## **POSITION OVERVIEW**

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Senior Advocates provide both leadership of, and direct responsibility for, operationalising the Public Advocate's advocacy and oversight responsibilities in respect of children, young people and adults in the ACT who are engaged with services and systems that by their nature have the potential to infringe people's rights. This includes monitoring the situations of children, young people, and adults subject to intervention under a range of legislation, including but not limited to the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, *Mental Health Act 2015*, *Personal Violence Act 2016*, and *Family Violence Act 2016*.

Leading small teams of staff, Senior Advocates work with significant autonomy to review and analyse information concerning children, young people, and adults who are brought to the attention of the Public Advocate, and to decide when and how to intervene in response to identified needs and/or risks. This includes providing individual and systemic advocacy and performing a range of oversight functions including but not limited to compliance monitoring; inspections and visits; investigations and reviews; service development and improvement; and participation and engagement.

The role is underpinned by a commitment to ensuring that the supports, services, and systems that exist to ensure the well-being of clients do so in a way that is appropriately cognisant of their rights, including the right of clients to make their own decisions, to participate in decision-making processes, and/or to have their views considered in decision-making about their own lives.

## **WHAT YOU WILL DO**

Under the limited direction of the Senior Director, Public Advocacy, the Senior Advocate will:

1. Providing objective and independent oversight of services and systems that support and respond to persons experiencing vulnerability in the ACT, in accordance with responsibilities accorded to the Public Advocate through legislation.
2. Responding to individual or generic concerns or allegations, including by providing information and advice to members of the public and to the Public Advocate and Senior Director, Public Advocacy, as appropriate.
3. Advocating for children, young people, and adults whose situation or condition makes them vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and disempowerment, including by intervening in court, the ACAT and other forums to promote their rights and interests, in particular their right to have their views heard and considered in decision-making.
4. Liaising with key stakeholders, including other statutory bodies, the ACT Government, non-government service providers and community agencies, to facilitate the provision of services that improve outcomes for those experiencing vulnerability, both individually and as a cohort.
5. Interpreting, implementing, and promoting relevant legislation and providing high-level policy advice and systemic advocacy that facilitates improvements to services and systems, improves protections and upholds rights.

6. Prioritising activities that maximise positive outcomes for those experiencing vulnerability, including by supporting and mentoring other members of the team to achieve business unit objectives, and representing the Public Advocate as required.

This position involves direct supervision of 1-2 staff who support Senior Advocates in undertaking the above activities. The position also involves inspections of and visits to secure environments including inpatient mental health facilities and other places of detention.

## WHAT YOU REQUIRE

The following capabilities form the criteria that are required to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position. Please ensure your **two-page 'pitch'**, together with your **resume/ curriculum vitae**, address these requirements.

### Professional / Technical Skills and Knowledge

1. **Professional experience** – You have extensive experience in human services and/or professional disciplines/fields relevant to the role for example, Social Work, Psychology, Law, Mental Health, Child Protection, etc.
2. **Human rights** – You have a strong practice framework that reflects your understanding and application of human rights principles and other relevant practice orientations, including the ability to make decisions that facilitate effective and sustainable individual and systemic outcomes that uphold and further human rights.
3. **Leadership and management** – You have highly developed organisational skills and demonstrated experience in leading and managing staff to achieve and deliver outcomes, including by developing systems and processes and sharing information and knowledge in ways that enhance the collective development and effectiveness of the business unit.

### Behavioural Capabilities

1. **Oversight** – You have a demonstrated ability to rigorously monitor and provide oversight for services and systems that support those experiencing vulnerability in ways that ensure the independence and autonomy of business unit operations from the services and systems being oversights, including the ability to develop and embed appropriate effectiveness measures in oversight practice, with both an internal and external focus.
2. **Systemic Advocacy** – You demonstrate highly developed skills in analysing and distilling information from multiple sources. You use this to design and deliver advocacy services and systemic projects that improve outcomes for people, including those accessing disability and mental health supports, services, and systems, who are experiencing vulnerability. You effectively drive, facilitate, and make recommendations for systemic change and reform.
3. **Direct Advocacy** – You have highly developed skills in listening to, building rapport with, and representing the views, rights, and interests of people from a range of diverse backgrounds, across a variety of settings and who may have challenges in communicating with authorities. Your approach demonstrates empathy for people whose situation or condition makes them vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and disempowerment, while building their trust and respect, and that of their parents/carers and others who provide support to them.
4. **Communication and Engagement** – You have excellent written and verbal communication skills and the demonstrated ability to communicate effectively and with impact across a broad range of internal and external stakeholders, including by drawing upon individual and collective expertise to lead collaborative projects that achieve business unit outcomes.
5. **Personal Resilience** – You are highly skilled in managing information and situations that are highly sensitive and confronting, while remaining objective and outcome-focused. You have a

demonstrated ability to seek and obtain support for yourself when needed, while also being able to mentor and support staff in identifying and responding to these challenges.

### **Compliance Requirements/Qualifications**

1. Tertiary qualifications in a relevant field such as Social Work, Psychology, Law, Mental Health, Child Protection, etc. are highly desirable.
2. A Class 'C' driver's licence is desirable.
3. This position does not require a pre-employment medical.
4. This position does require Working with Vulnerable People registration.

## WORK ENVIRONMENT DESCRIPTION

The following work environment description outlines the inherent requirements of the role of the Senior Advocate (P57485 several) and indicates how frequently each of these requirements would be performed. Please note that ACTPS is committed to providing reasonable adjustment and ensuring all individuals have equal opportunities in the workplace.

ADMINISTRATIVE	FREQUENCY
Telephone use	Frequently
General computer use	Frequently
Extensive keying/data entry	Occasionally
Graphical/analytical based	Occasionally
Sitting at a desk	Frequently
Standing for long periods	Never
Designated workstation	Frequently

STANDARD HOURS	FREQUENCY
Flexible working hours (access to flex time)	Frequently
Fixed or specified start/finish times	Occasionally
Expected to work extensive hours over a significant period due to the nature of the duties	Never
Access to Accrued Days Off (ADO's)	Occasionally
Peaks and troughs	Occasionally
Frequent overtime	Never
Rostered shift work	Never

SOCIAL DEMANDS	FREQUENCY
Work with others towards shared goals in a team environment	Frequently
Work in isolation from other staff (remote supervision)	Occasionally
Working in a call centre environment	Never
Working directly with the public	Frequently

<b>PHYSICAL DEMANDS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Distance walking (large buildings or inter-building transit)	Never
Working outdoors	Never

<b>MANUAL HANDLING</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Lifting 0 – 5kg	Occasionally
Lifting 5 – 10kg	Never
Lifting 10kg+	Never
Climbing	Never
Reaching	Never
Bending/squatting	Never
Push/pull	Never
Sequential repetitive movements in a short amount of time	Never

<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Frequent travel – multiple work sites	Occasionally
Frequent travel – driving	Never
Frequent travel – interstate	Never

<b>SPECIFIC HAZARDS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
Working at heights	Never
Exposure to extreme temperatures	Never
Operation of heavy machinery e.g. forklift	Never
Confined spaces	Never
Excessive noise	Never
Low lighting	Never
Handling of dangerous goods/equipment	Never
Working with asbestos	Never
Potential to encounter agitated customers	Occasionally
Exposure to potentially distressing case material	Occasionally

OTHER	FREQUENCY
Uniform required	Never
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required	Never