

Position Title – Community Lawyer – African Australian Assistance Project

Division:	Family and Community Services – commUnity+ Legal
Award and Classification:	Victorian Community Legal Centres Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027 / Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Award (SCHADS) Level 5
Position ID	CLAAAP01

Position Objective:

commUnity+ Legal is a generalist community legal centre providing free legal services to diverse communities experiencing disadvantage across the Western suburbs of Melbourne.

The Community Lawyer plays a vital role in delivering high-quality legal advice, case work, advocacy, duty lawyer services, community legal education and other community activities. This position will support our African Australian Assistance Project, a project funded through the Victorian Legal Services Board Grant Program which aims to provide early intervention legal advice and legal education to African Australian youth in the Brimbank and Melton regions, with the aim of reducing the overrepresentation of this cohort in Victoria's criminal justice system. This will involve conducting advice appointments with African Australian clients on a range of legal issues. The Community Lawyer is also responsible for the delivery of legal and community services through the Centre's outreach-based clinics and services, including its Health Justice Partnerships.

In addition to direct service delivery, the Community Lawyer contributes to identifying systemic legal issues and supports law reform initiatives under the guidance of the Director commUnity+ Legal, Generalist Lead Lawyer, or Family Law Lead. The Community Lawyer demonstrates a strong commitment to social justice and community impact, consistently delivering high standards of legal practice with a focus on meeting the legal needs of communities experiencing vulnerability and marginalisation.

Part A: Organisation

Organisation, Vision, Purpose and Values

Our Organisation:

Comm Unity Plus Services Ltd (operating as commUnity+) is a multidisciplinary organisation located predominantly across Melbourne's western suburbs. We strive to enable positive change and growth for people through a range of prevention and early intervention programs including Community Education, Children's Contact Services, Neighbourhood House, Legal Services and community engagement and development activities.

commUnity+ has grown from a small residents' action group in Deer Park to a large community-based organisation that delivers programs from multiple locations. Our Head Office is located at Keilor Downs.

Our clients and participants are people facing disadvantage, hardship and social exclusion, with particular focus on members of communities new to Australia. We support vulnerable children and women, and those who need a helping hand to achieve justice and fairness when dealing with governments and the legal system.

commUnity+ is a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. commUnity+ receives funding from Local, State and Commonwealth Government departments; and partners with private, community and government agencies to enhance our service delivery, including through allied services, and to increase access for our communities.

Our Vision:

For all people, families and communities to thrive.

Our Purpose:

We empower and support people by unlocking pathways to connection, learning, work and justice.

Our Values:

- Empowerment: We respect the strength of our communities and support people to have agency over their own lives.
- Compassion: We embrace the lived experience of all people and approach our work with kindness, care and courage.
- Collaboration: We work well together as one team and with our partners to deliver holistic services.
- Responsiveness: We listen to diverse communities, measure impacts and make informed decisions about the services we provide.
- Accountability: We are responsible and self-reflective. We acknowledge and celebrate achievements.

Our Services:

- Community Education (RTO) accredited and non-accredited training across a range of Programs
- Legal Services (including commUnity+ Legal)
- Family Services (including Children's Contact Service and other family support)
- Neighbourhood House
- Other community engagement and development projects and activities

Part B: Operational Context

Legal Services (commUnity+ Legal)

commUnity+ operates commUnity+ Legal, funded by State and Commonwealth governments and supported through philanthropic project funding, to provide free legal services for people who live, work or study in the Brimbank, Melton and Bacchus Marsh communities.

commUnity+ Legal operates as a multi-site community legal centre and delivers services across a range of projects and outreach sites across the West, operating generalist and specialist legal clinics, providing outreach services through key community

organisations, undertaking casework, delivering legal representation, and actively contributing to social justice and law reform.

For more information please visit <https://www.comm-unityplus.org.au/legal-services>

Part C: Position Specifications

Relationships	
Division:	Family & Community Services
Program/Team:	commUnity+ Legal
Location:	<p>This position operates across commUnity+ sites and third-party locations throughout Melbourne's western suburbs, as required for work purposes.</p> <p>Usual commUnity+ work locations for this role may include any commUnity+ office, outreach site, third-party location, or other service delivery location where commUnity+ regularly provides services, including locations identified through rostered arrangements or operational requirements.</p> <p>The role requires regular attendance at, and work from, multiple commUnity+ work locations to support service delivery and assist with achieving program objectives.</p>
Reports to:	Generalist Lead Lawyer or Family Law Lead
Indirectly Reports to	Director commUnity+ Legal
Internal:	Senior Leadership Team, Corporate Staff, Other program staff, Lead Lawyers, Community Lawyers, Administrative Staff, Volunteers, and Student Placements
External:	Clients, community stakeholder groups, funding agencies

Dimensions		
Staff / Volunteers Managed or Supervised	Direct	N/A
	Indirect	N/A

Key Accountabilities
<p>A. Provision of Legal Casework, Advice, and Duty Lawyer Services</p> <p>B. Community Legal Education and other Community Development Activities</p> <p>C. Law Reform and Advocacy</p> <p>D. Compliance, Risk and Accountability</p> <p>E. Stakeholder and Community Engagement</p> <p>F. Other</p>

Key Accountabilities

A. Provision of Legal Casework, Advice, and Duty Lawyer Services

- Deliver legal assistance across commUnity+ Legal's practice areas, including infringements, criminal law, family law (divorce, parenting, property), family violence, tenancy, civil, and consumer law.
- Represent clients in courts and tribunals, including duty lawyer services.
- Conduct client interviews and provide legal assistance at outreach locations across Melbourne's West.
- Maintain an active caseload and manage files in accordance with professional standards.
- Collaborate with lawyers and community service professionals to address clients' legal and non-legal needs.
- Ensure accurate and timely data collection to meet legal practice and funding requirements.

B. Community Legal Education and other Community Development Activities

- Develop and deliver targeted community legal education sessions and service presentations.
- Provide professional development sessions and secondary consultations to staff of partner services to build legal capacity and awareness.

C. Law Reform and Advocacy

- Demonstrate a commitment to social justice by identifying and responding to systemic legal issues and barriers affecting disadvantaged communities in the Brimbank and Melton region.
- Support law reform initiatives and advocacy efforts in collaboration with the Director commUnity+ Legal and Lead Lawyers.

D. Compliance, Risk and Accountability

- Contribute to the strategic direction of commUnity+ Legal through the delivery and reporting of legal projects and services.
- Maintain high standards of file management, case notes, and reporting.
- Assist the leadership team of commUnity+ Legal with program and project coordination, including monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, professional obligations, organisation and program specific internal policies and procedures.

E. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

- Build and maintain relationships with stakeholders through participation in community development activities, working groups, stakeholder meetings and professional development.
- Support the supervision and development of volunteers and student placements as appropriate.

F. Other

- Actively participate in and contribute to staff meetings (team meetings, commUnity+ Legal meetings and all staff meetings).
- Actively use any proficiency in community language to assist all aspects commUnity+ Legal's operations.

- Actively participate in relevant internal and external training and capacity-building sessions.
- Actively participate in and contribute to the broader activities of commUnity+.
- Carry out any lawful, safe, and reasonable instructions consistent with the employment contract and the requirements of the role.

Part D: Person Specification

Key Selection Criteria	
Essential:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of the African Australian communities in Melbourne's West, including demonstrated relationship building skills within these communities • Demonstrated experience in providing legal advice, casework, and representation across relevant areas of law, including infringements, criminal law, family law, family violence, VOCAT, motor vehicle accidents, and civil/consumer law. Experience in duty lawyering and representing clients in courts and tribunals. • Highly developed interpersonal skills, with a proven ability to engage effectively with clients from culturally diverse backgrounds and those experiencing social disadvantage. • Strong case management capability, including managing large and varied caseloads, prioritising competing deadlines, and working effectively under pressure within a busy legal team. • Ability to work independently in outreach settings, managing tasks and workloads related to mobile service delivery. • Strong verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to tailor messaging for a range of audiences and purposes, including legal advice, community education, and stakeholder engagement. • Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams, with the ability to generate correspondence and manage communications independently. • High level of professionalism, integrity, and accountability with a strong alignment to commUnity+ values.
Desirable:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in community-based legal practice, including work in Community Legal Centres and social justice settings, supporting vulnerable and marginalised clients. • Proficiency in a relevant community language (eg. Dinka, Arabic, Tigrinya, Swahili)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise in family violence duty lawyering, with a strong understanding of the needs of diverse communities in Melbourne's West.
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Qualifications

Essential:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Laws/Juris Doctor. Admitted with at least 2 years post admission experience. Victorian Legal Practising certificate or eligibility to obtain.
Desirable:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA

Other Requirements

Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current Working With Children Check, and ongoing validity. Current Criminal Records Check, and ongoing validity. Current valid Victorian Drivers Licence and access to a vehicle. Able and willing to travel to other locations to work.
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Part E: Declaration

Declaration

My position description has been explained in detail and I understand that this position description is an indication of the duties and responsibilities that I may be required to undertake. From time to time, there may be other reasonable duties within my skills and experience that I may be requested to undertake. I hereby accept the accountabilities and authority as outlined.

Employee	Name Signature Date: / /
Manager	Name Signature Date: / /