

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Solicitor - Family



Reporting to: Principal Solicitor

Classification: MEA 4/5

Direct Reports: Up to 3

Women's Legal Centre

The Women's Legal Centre (WLC) is a specialist women's community legal centre. Our vision is that women are safe, strong and in control of their lives. Our mission is to use the legal system to improve women's lives and advance gender equality.

WLC's legal practice areas include Family Law, Employment, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, Migration and the Sexual Violence Legal Service. WLC also includes the Mulleun Mura Access to Justice Program, which is a specialist program for First Nations women, led and delivered by First Nations women.

WLC provides assistance to women, trans and gender diverse people.

WLC provides legal assistance across the spectrum of need, including legal information and referral, legal advice and representation, and litigation. We provide legal services within a feminist, trauma-informed, multidisciplinary and integrated service model that incorporates social work, cultural supports and collaborative service models, to provide wrap-around support to the most at-risk clients. WLC also prioritises working in partnership and delivering services in collaboration with health and community-based services.

WLC is committed to building community capacity to understand and respond to gender-based violence and discrimination and being a visible and strong advocate for accountability and structural reform. WLC provides expert input into law, policy development and reform, and builds capability within government and the wider community to achieve deeper systems and cultural change.

The Role

Solicitors are responsible for delivering high-quality, trauma-informed legal services, working with other staff across the organisation, including social workers, paralegals and intake staff to deliver holistic and wrap around services to clients.

Solicitors work closely with staff in WLC's health and community partners to deliver legal services in community settings (ACT Domestic Violence Crisis Service and ACT Child and Family Centres in Gungahlin, West Belconnen and Tuggeranong), work closely with staff at these partnership locations and are rostered to work offsite at our partner locations on a weekly basis.

Solicitors work under general direction from senior staff, and are expected to apply a high level of expertise to provide support, advice and representation for clients dealing with a range of matters, including care arrangements for children, dividing property upon separation, family violence orders, early intervention care and protection advice and representation, and victims of crime compensation claims. This includes representing clients at Federal and State/Territory Courts.

Solicitors also contribute to the development and delivery of community legal education and contribute to law and policy reform processes.

Solicitors may coach and mentor junior practitioners to motivate and assist them to deliver legal services and build resilience in legal practice.

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Legal Advice and Case Work

- Provide high quality legal advice and casework to clients, including representation in ACT and Commonwealth courts, in family law matters
- Develop and maintain a high level of technical competence in the areas of family law, family violence and care protection
- Support the effective operation of partnerships, including providing legal services through partnership sites and teams
- Work collaboratively with WLC's social workers and case workers to ensure social work and legal services are well integrated and meet client needs
- Manage your own client case load under general supervision
- Adopt and implement trauma informed best practice principles in legal service delivery
- Ensure all legal service data collection is accurate, comprehensive and informs practice and advocacy
- Perform other duties within your capabilities as directed

Stakeholder Engagement

- Represent WLC in a variety of public forums to promote the work of WLC
- Develop relationships across legal, community and health services to support responsive service delivery to clients and appropriate and effective referrals
- Collaborate with other agencies to deliver outcomes for clients
- Manage the operation of small pro bono programs/clinic

Community Legal Education and Law Reform

- Deliver community legal education programs and campaigns in line with the work of the Practice and WLC
- Identify law reform issues for action and prepare law reform proposals, strategies, reports and submissions in consultation with the Principal Solicitor
- Manage discrete and ongoing projects to contribute to the strategic direction of WLC

Organisational Responsibilities

- Work in alignment WLC values and policies
- Participate in regular supervision and performance reviews
- Participate in reflective practice, clinical debriefing and other staff wellbeing and resilience initiatives
- Be responsible for applying WHS to daily tasks performed in the workplace, report all matters beyond your authority and take all practical measures to ensure that your workplace is safe and without risk to health or property
- Undertake ongoing professional development in consultation with supervisor
- Attend and participate in regular staff meetings, planning days and other organisational initiatives

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Position Requirements

The information below describes the capabilities that are required to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Qualifications

1. Tertiary qualifications in law from a recognised institution
2. Hold a restricted ACT Practising Certificate
3. Current Working with Vulnerable People (WwVP) clearance

Professional / Technical Skills and Knowledge

1. Developed skill and technical competence in relation to Australian and ACT law and using the legal system to deliver outcomes that improve women's safety and financial security
2. High level ability to analyse issues, resolve problems and contribute to process improvement
3. High level technical and digital literacy

Behavioural Capabilities

1. Developed organisational skills, including the ability to effectively manage multiple tasks, determine priorities and meet deadlines
2. Developed written and verbal communication skills
3. Initiative, sound judgement and the capacity to respond to requests for assistance while working in a team environment
4. Ability to work with people experiencing physical or mental illness, and people from disadvantaged or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
5. Ability to prioritise self-care for mental health and wellbeing