

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Solicitor - Family



Reporting to: Principal Solicitor
Classification: MEA 4
Direct Reports: Nil

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 social work from a recognised institution
2. ACT Practicing Certificate
3. Current Working with Vulnerable People (WwVP) clearance

Professional / Technical / Behavioural Capabilities

1. Ability to contribute to strategic thinking
2. Ability to achieve results
3. Ability to support productive working relationships
4. Personal drive and integrity
5. Ability to communicate with influence
6. Technical and digital literacy
7. Ability to prioritise self-care for physical and mental health and wellbeing

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Professional / Technical / Behaviour Capabilities Explanatory Notes

This attachment sets out the type of information we are looking for against each of the selection criteria listed above. You will see that under each selection criteria there is a list of bullet points which provides guidance on the types of things that are considered relevant against the criterion. Please note that you are not limited to the dot points provided and that you are not expected to address each dot point - they provide additional guidance only...

Ability to contribute to strategic thinking

- actively support the goals and direction of the organisation
- clearly communicate goals and objectives to staff, colleagues, clients and/or stakeholders
- use your understanding of the work environment and objectives to consider how your work will impact on others
- draw on information, experience and common sense
- maintain an awareness of the organisation and keep yourself and others well informed on work issues
- undertake objective systematic analysis and draw accurate conclusions based on evidence
- identify problems and work to resolve them

Ability to achieve results

- establish clear plans and timeframes for project implementation
- identify and use resources wisely
- build and apply your own professional expertise
- adapt to, support and manage change
- take responsibility for managing projects to achieve results
- identify opportunities for improvement
- deliver outputs under challenging circumstances

Ability to support productive working relationships and manage staff

- build and sustain positive relationships with team members, stakeholders and clients to produce effective outcomes
- anticipate and cater to client and stakeholder needs and expectations
- consult and share information
- value individual differences and diversity
- provide, seek and value constructive and regular feedback
- guide and support the development and contribution of others by identifying and providing learning opportunities
- identify the cause of and deal with underperformance proactively and constructively

Shown personal drive and integrity

- apply and promote WLC values and Code of Conduct
- comply with legislative, policy and regulatory frameworks and foster this in others
- committed, active and focused on work outcomes, even in uncertain or difficult circumstances
- show initiative and innovation in a changing environment and assist others to understand and cope with change
- acknowledge mistakes and learn from them
- ensure a positive working environment and balanced workload while working within agreed deadlines
- seek and recommend development opportunities based on capabilities

Ability to communicate with influence

- communicate in “plain English” and deliver messages clearly and concisely to individuals or groups
- lead and encourage discussion to share ideas, clarify and confirm understanding and appreciate diverse views
- convey ideas, concepts and arguments successfully to individuals or groups
- show judgment, understanding and skill in negotiating and working to resolve conflict
- influence others by presenting credible and persuasive views
- actively listen, consider and work to reconcile differing ideas and views
- ensure information given is accurate, timely and unambiguous
- select the most appropriate medium for conveying information