

2027 NLP Placement Pathway options

NB: Our website also has an accessible version of this information, here:

<https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/new-lawYERS-program>

Overview – targeted practice area pathways

Placement pathways 1-7 offer a development pathway towards a specific legal practice area. They offer a range of experiences and development areas that contribute to a balanced but more specialised practice, with (mostly) centralised locations for Lawyers who are unable to relocate for the program.

No.	Home Directorate	Placement 1 February to October 2027	Placement 2 October 2027 to June 2028	Placement 3 June 2028 to February 2029
1	Criminal Law	Frankston: Criminal Law and Family Violence	Civil Justice Law- Mental Health and Disability Law (CBD)	Therapeutic Courts (CBD)
2	Criminal Law	Ringwood: Criminal Law	Broadmeadows: Criminal Law and Family Violence	Indictable Crime (CBD)
3	Criminal Law - Youth Crime	Summary Crime (CBD)	Dandenong: Criminal Law and Family Violence	Youth Crime (CBD)
4	Criminal Law	Geelong: Criminal law	Summary Crime (CBD)	Sunshine/Wyndham: Criminal law
5	Civil Justice Law	Civil Justice Law Mental Health and Disability Law (CBD)	Civil Justice Law Economic Social Rights (CBD)	Civil Justice Law Equality (CBD)
6	Family, Youth and Children's Law – Family Law	Family, Youth and Children's Law: Family Law	Legal Help (CBD)	Family, Youth and Children's Law: Child Support/Child Protection (CBD)
7	Legal Help	Legal Help (CBD)	Ringwood: Criminal law	Civil Justice Law: Economic Social Rights (CBD/Metro)

Notes:

- "CBD" refers to Central Business District (Melbourne)

Overview – Generalist pathways

Placement pathway options 8-11 offer a broad range of hands-on experience in our busy metropolitan and/or outer regional service delivery offices.

These generalist pathways provide experience in each of VLA's core legal practice areas, with significant breadth and depth unique to working in a location-based front-line service delivery office.

These pathways support you to become a well-rounded legal aid Lawyer, or offer a 'try before you buy' career opportunity if you're not sure of your preferred practice area and would like experience in a wide range of matters.

No.	Home Directorate	Placement 1 February to October 2026	Placement 2 October 2026 to June 2027	Placement 3 June 2027 to February 2028
8	Metropolitan Melbourne (Generalist)	Family Law	Criminal Law	Civil Law
9	Outer Regional (Generalist)	Family Law	Criminal Law	Civil Law
10	Outer Regional (Generalist)	Criminal Law	Civil Law	Family Law
11	Outer Regional (Generalist)	Civil Law	Family Law	Criminal Law

Metropolitan Melbourne

Our metropolitan Melbourne pathway may be based at any of our metropolitan Melbourne offices including Geelong. Placement locations will be arranged with the successful candidate

Outer regional placements – a unique opportunity

Our outer regional placements (pathways 9-11) can be based at any of our outer regional offices (tell us your location preference), enabling you to work consistently with the same team and community throughout the two-year program.

Relocate for the program, or land this brilliant professional development opportunity close to home – our Victorian community benefits either way and so do you!

These rare experiences offer:

- **Broader casework:** Handle a diverse range of cases with increased responsibility.
- **Community impact:** Work closely with clients and communities, where your advocacy has visible outcomes.
- **Mentorship:** Build strong relationships with senior Lawyers and leaders.
- **Professional growth:** Develop resilience and adaptability in new settings.

We strongly encourage applicants to preference an outer regional pathway, as these placements are often career-defining experiences. When preferencing an outer regional pathway, let us know the Regional Office location you want to join.

Choosing a pathway

You are asked to rank your top three preferred placement pathways as part of your application.

Each pathway consists of three rotations and is linked to a home directorate. This is where you'll be placed after completing the program.

We know that everyone's lives, interests and responsibilities are different.

By including your placement pathway preferences in your application, we can ensure that any employment offer for the New Lawyers Program will match your skills and interests. This includes your location preferences.

If you're only interested in one placement pathway option, you can list that pathway at all three preferences.

How placement pathways are assigned

Offers will be made to the candidate with the highest performance in our order of merit, and who expresses a high preference for that pathway.

To ensure our less popular placement pathways are assigned fairly, offers will be made based on a combination of your:

- pathway preference
- performance throughout the recruitment process.

We will also prioritise applications from First Nations people, and people with strong connection to regional Victorian communities who wish to work in that regional area.

How to increase your chances of getting an offer

Preferencing one of the less popular pathways (such as a pathway in an outer regional area) may increase your chances of securing an offer.

Also, if you don't mind where you're placed, or what area of law you are assigned, we have an 'anywhere' option you can choose in the application.

For more information on the kind of work we do, visit:

[About us](#)

[What we do](#)

[News | Victoria Legal Aid](#)