

NDIS Appeals Advocate

Employment status	Full time – Fixed Term to 30/06/2028
FTE	1.0
Team	Rights and Advocacy – NDIS Appeals Advocate
Award & Classification	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS) Industry Award 2010 - Level 5
Reports to	Advocacy Lead
Date	October 2026

About VMIAC	VMIAC is the peak Victorian non-government organisation for people with lived experience as consumers of mental health services. We work from a rights-based perspective. Our vision is a world where all mental health consumers stand proud, live a life with choices honoured, rights upheld, and these principles are embedded in all aspects of society.
What we do	We undertake individual, group and systemic advocacy and our work includes research and evaluation, education and training, information provision and resource development, as well as limited specialist support programs. We have a strong and continuous focus on engagement with members, and on informing and supporting them to have their voices heard.
Our organisation	VMIAC is owned, governed, managed and staffed by people with mental health consumer lived experience. We aim to be an organisation in which the diversity of people with mental health consumer lived experience can meaningfully and powerfully contribute to our thriving organisation. We aim to be the employer of choice for the mental health lived experience workforce. We know that by working well together we become a true force for systems change and reshaping consumer experience.
Diversity and inclusion	VMIAC values diverse consumer perspectives, and we aim to reflect this diversity in our staffing cohort. We are an equal opportunity workplace, and we strongly encourage applications by First Nations people, people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, d/Deaf and Disabled people and people from the LGBTIQ+ community. We understand the needs of people with family obligations, and we provide a hybrid workplace, and part-time positions. Crucially, we also understand the complexity of consumer experience and by negotiation offer reasonable adjustments and workplace supports to promote staff wellbeing.

POSITION DESCRIPTION



About you

You are a thoughtful, organised and thorough advocate who brings sound judgement, attention to detail and a rights-based approach to your work. You have strong administrative and written communication skills, maintain accurate and comprehensive case records, and can confidently manage competing priorities while delivering consistent, high-quality advocacy support.

You communicate clearly and sensitively and can navigate complex or challenging conversations with consumers and stakeholders using diplomacy and a calm, solutions-focused approach. You maintain clear professional boundaries, manage expectations and support consumer choice and self-determination.

You are a positive, collaborative and reliable team player who values working with others and contributing to shared goals. You communicate openly, share knowledge and support colleagues, bringing flexibility and a constructive approach to your work and working relationships.

Position overview and purpose

The Rights and Advocacy Team exists to:

- Support consumers to understand, exercise and uphold their rights.
- Deliver individual and specialist advocacy that supports consumer choice, self-determination and informed decision-making.
- Provide information and service navigation to assist consumers to understand their options and access appropriate services and supports.
- Identify and challenge systemic barriers and human rights issues affecting consumers, using evidence and insights from individual advocacy to inform systemic advocacy, policy development and broader reform.
- Strengthen rights-based, trauma-informed and consumer-led advocacy practice.
- Build relationships and collaborate with relevant organisations and stakeholders to improve outcomes for consumers.

The team brings together individual advocacy, systemic advocacy, policy and service navigation, connecting the experiences of individual consumers with opportunities to improve services, influence policy and contribute to broader systems change.

The NDIS Appeals Advocate provides information, guidance and individual advocacy to people with disability seeking external review of decisions made by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The role supports participants to navigate Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) processes, understand their options and make informed decisions, while encouraging self-advocacy wherever possible.

The NDIS Appeals Advocate manages an individual caseload while working collaboratively with the Advocacy Lead, colleagues, legal representatives and relevant agencies to deliver consistent, high-quality advocacy support.

Consumer Lived Experience requirement

This is a designated lived experience consumer position. Applicants must identify as having personal experience of mental health challenges, trauma or emotional distress and experience accessing mental health services to support their wellbeing.

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to draw upon their lived experience in a purposeful, reflective and professional manner and contribute to VMIAC's work through a lived experience lens.

POSITION DESCRIPTION



Key responsibilities

Individual advocacy and appeals	• Provide information and individual advocacy to people seeking external review of NDIA decisions, including matters before the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART). • Support consumers to understand their rights and options, make informed decisions and self-advocate wherever possible. • Prepare for and attend relevant conferences and meetings and liaise with ART registry staff and NDIA representatives as appropriate. • Liaise with Victoria Legal Aid and other legal services where advice or representation is required and available. • Apply rights-based, trauma-informed and culturally responsive approaches in advocacy practice.
Casework and service delivery	• Independently manage an allocated caseload, including planning and progressing advocacy matters, monitoring deadlines, maintaining communication with consumers and meeting service delivery requirements. • Follow established intake, waitlist, referral and exit procedures. • Manage advocacy relationships professionally, including establishing clear expectations, communicating the scope and limitations of support, maintaining appropriate boundaries and supporting timely and planned case closure. • Maintain accurate, comprehensive and timely case notes, correspondence, documentation and records in accordance with organisational requirements. • Complete required program reporting, including SCORE data where applicable under funding arrangements. • Identify and escalate complex matters, risks and service delivery concerns in accordance with organisational procedures.
Practice development and collaboration	• Maintain current knowledge of relevant NDIS legislation, external review processes and tribunal procedures, and apply this knowledge to advocacy practice. • Contribute to the development and improvement of self-advocacy information, resources, procedures and work practices. • Identify and share recurring issues, systemic barriers and emerging trends arising through individual advocacy to inform broader systemic advocacy and policy work. • Provide guidance to intake colleagues as appropriate. • Develop and maintain constructive working relationships with legal services, the NDIA, the ART and other relevant stakeholders.
Teamwork and organisational practice	• Work collaboratively with colleagues and the Advocacy Lead and contribute to broader Rights and Advocacy priorities and initiatives led by the General Manager, as appropriate. • Participate in team meetings, reflective practice and relevant organisational forums. • Share knowledge, contribute to service improvement and support colleagues in achieving team objectives.

POSITION DESCRIPTION



	• Work in accordance with VMIAC Ways of Working, organisational policies, privacy and confidentiality requirements. • Demonstrate respectful and inclusive workplace behaviours. • Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the role as directed by management.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	• Take reasonable care for personal health and safety and that of others. • Identify and report hazards, incidents and risks, and raise safety concerns promptly. • Follow workplace health and safety requirements and contribute to a safe, healthy and inclusive environment.

Key selection criteria

Essential	• Demonstrated commitment to human rights, consumer choice, self-determination and rights-based advocacy. • Strong organisational, administrative and digital skills, including the ability to manage competing priorities, meet deadlines, use case management systems and maintain accurate, comprehensive records. • Excellent written and interpersonal communication skills, including the ability to explain complex information clearly, prepare professional correspondence and communicate effectively across a range of experiences, identities and circumstances. • Ability to navigate complex or sensitive conversations with diplomacy and sound judgement, maintain professional boundaries and communicate clearly about the scope of advocacy support. • Experience in the community, mental health or disability sectors, or comparable experience, with an understanding of the experiences of people with disability, including psychosocial disability, in accessing services and exercising their rights. • Ability to work independently under general direction, manage a caseload, monitor progress and recognise when consultation or escalation is appropriate. • Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively as a team player, build respectful relationships, share knowledge and contribute to team priorities and continuous improvement. • Understanding of intersectionality and systemic barriers, with the ability to apply culturally responsive, inclusive and trauma-informed approaches to advocacy practice.
Desirable	• Experience providing individual advocacy (legal or non-legal), particularly NDIS Appeals advocacy, including supporting consumers to understand and exercise their rights. • Qualifications or experience in law, community services, community development, disability advocacy or a related field. • Knowledge of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth), relevant review legislation and Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) processes, or the ability to develop this knowledge quickly.