



Northern Territory
Legal Aid Commission



Family Advocacy
and Support Services
Funded by the Australian Government

CIVIL LAW PRACTICE

RESPONDENT EARLY ASSISTANCE LEGAL SERVICE SOLICITOR

Professional 3
(\$106,568 - \$119,351)
plus Superannuation and Salary Sacrifice

2 Year Contract
Flexible Working Arrangements available

DARWIN

The Civil law practice of the Commission provides services to the Respondent Early Assistance Legal Service (“REALS”). REALS is funded under the Family Advocacy and Support Services Program to provide integrated legal assistance services including legal support and advice for families affected by family violence, including those who have allegations of domestic violence against them.

REALS services include assisting people seeking legal assistance in responding to applications for Domestic Violence Orders under the *Domestic and Family Violence Act* (NT):

- a Duty Lawyer Service, for defendants to applications for a domestic violence order in the NT, at the Local Court in Darwin;
- legal advice and support to assist clients of the service to engage with family law court processes safely;
- Legal task assistance to clients to assist families transition between, and manage across, the Commonwealth family law, NT family violence and NT child protection jurisdictions.

The position operates within the Civil Law Practice. This position will undertake the primary responsibility for the REALS duties, however may undertake other duties as part of the civil law practice.

Employees of the Commission have similar working conditions to that of the Northern Territory Public Service.

A duty statement and selection criteria can be obtained from www.legalaid.nt.gov.au

To be considered for this position, applicants **must** address the selection criteria in writing. Applications should be submitted by email to the HR Manager at humanresources@legalaid.nt.gov.au by **10am Wednesday, 21 October 2020**.

**Civil Law Practice
Family Advocacy and Support Services**

**Respondent Early Assistance Legal Service
Senior Solicitor and Project Manager**

P3

DARWIN

The Position

The Civil law practice of the Commission provides services to the Respondent Early Assistance Legal Service (“REALS”). REALS is funded under the Family Advocacy and Support Services (“FASS”) Program to provide integrated legal assistance services including legal support and advice for families affected by family violence, including those who have allegations of domestic violence against them.

REALS services include assisting people seeking legal assistance in responding to applications for Domestic Violence Orders under the *Domestic and Family Violence Act* (NT):

- a Duty Lawyer Service, for defendants to applications for a domestic violence order in the NT, at the Local Court in Darwin;
- legal advice and support to assist clients of the service to engage with family law court processes safely;
- Legal task assistance to clients to assist families to transition between, and manage across, the Commonwealth family law, NT family violence and NT child protection jurisdictions.

REALS is supported by a dedicated Men’s Support Worker (Litigation Support Worker) who:

- Provides trauma informed and high quality social support services so that clients’ non-legal issues, particularly where they elevate the risk of family violence, are identified and responded to alongside legal issues; and
- Works with male victims and alleged male perpetrators to access appropriate support services including parenting programs and men’s behavioural change programs.

The position operates within the Civil Law Practice. This position will undertake the primary responsibility for the REALS duties, however may undertake other duties as part of the civil law practice.

Duty Statement

As directed by the Managing Solicitor of the Civil Law Service, the Solicitor will undertake the primary responsibility for REALS Services and undertake other duties:

1. Lead and manage adherence to requirements under Family Advocacy Support Services (FASS) of the REALS service within the Civil Law Practice, including undertaking coordination, service delivery, review, reporting and evaluation.
2. Provide duty lawyer and advice services for defendants to applications for a domestic violence order in the NT at the Local Court in Darwin;
3. Provide integrated legal assistance services including referral, legal support and advice for families affected by family violence, including:
 - a. Legal advice and support to assist clients of the service to engage with family law court processes safely;
 - b. Legal task assistance to clients to assist families transition between, and manage across, the Commonwealth family law, NT family violence and NT child protection jurisdictions.
4. Oversee and support the activities of the dedicated men's support worker (Litigation Support Worker) as it relates to legal matters
5. Deliver high quality legal information, education, advice, advocacy and legal task assistance and representation to members of the community, with a priority focus on assisting vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people, in civil and family law matters.
6. Ensure compliance with the *Legal Aid Act*, the *Legal Profession Act*, the Legal Aid guidelines, and all legislation, subordinate legislation and professional standards applicable to the conduct of the legal practice.
7. Liaise and network with relevant organisations and individuals, including the Courts, to ensure high levels of collaboration with relevant agencies and minimise duplication of legal services
8. Identify wider policy issues arising from the work of REALS and help develop strategies to advocate to relevant agencies in relation to those issues.
9. Ensure the planning and delivery of legal services is conducted in a culturally appropriate and responsive manner.
10. Participate in community legal education, law reform and policy initiatives as relevant.

11. Maintain and improve professional standards by:

- a. Keeping up to date with developments in relevant areas of legal practice.
- b. Participating in professional development activities in relevant areas of legal practice and comply with Continuing Professional Development.

12. Maintain effective file and diary management systems, administrative systems and procedures and quality assurance procedures.

Selection Criteria

Essential

1. Admission or eligibility for admission as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory of Australia.
2. A minimum of 5 years post-admission experience in legal practice, at least 2 years in civil law and/or family law, including substantial experience representing clients in court.
3. High level initiative including the ability to work as part of a team with minimal supervision in undertaking tasks and addressing challenges.
4. Ability to deliver high quality legal advice, community legal education and legal assistance and undertake related advocacy, policy and law reform work.
5. Knowledge of current legal issues affecting disadvantaged people in the NT and the provision of legal services in the NT.
6. Knowledge of or ability to acquire expertise in domestic and family violence, in particular in working safely with people who perpetrate violence and people who are victims of domestic violence
7. Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds.
8. Experience in assisting and supporting vulnerable clients who may be at risk of, or are experiencing or are affected by trauma, alcohol and drug dependence, domestic and family violence, homelessness, mental health conditions or cognitive impairments.
9. Good understanding of the organisation and management of legal practice well developed time management skills and the ability to manage client matters and meet deadlines.
10. Current NT driver's license or ability to obtain one.

Desirable

11. Post-admission experience in legal practice of 3 or more years in civil or family law.
12. Experience in Project Management.
13. Understanding of the FASS program and evaluation, including the need to promote client accountability for use of violence and to provide support without collusion.
14. Experience in addressing practice and policy concerns relevant to providing legal assistance to clients with allegations of domestic violence against them or with a history of using violence.
15. An understanding of specific issues affecting people who have a history of using violence.
16. Experience in the use of interpreters in legal service provision