

Paralegal Position Description

The Refugee Advice Casework Service (RACS) seeks a dedicated person to join its team of committed human rights lawyers as a Paralegal. The position is a full-time, fixed term contract for 12 months.

The remuneration package for the position is at the SCHADS Award rate Level 2.3 to 3.1 depending on the experience of the successful candidate pro rata, per annum, plus superannuation contribution and loadings. Salary packaging is available.

Note that as part of this role you will be required as a condition of your employment to travel throughout metropolitan Sydney, as such your place of work may alternate between RACS key locations in Randwick, Parramatta & Auburn as well as throughout metropolitan Sydney. Due to COVID-19 safe work requirements you may be required to work from home as advised. Working from home arrangements can be negotiated in line with RACS Flexible Working Policy. Please note, various locations where RACS team members work require full COVID-19 vaccinations as per ATAGI advice here.

RACS is committed to working together to achieve a more inclusive community. Our workplace strives to be one that embraces and celebrates diversity and the wide range of skills, expertise and experience we can all bring to strengthen our dynamic, collaborative and responsive environment. RACS encourages people from all backgrounds to apply, particularly those that identify as part of LGBTIQ+ community, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and people with disabilities. RACS strongly welcomes applications from those with the lived expertise of displacement & seeking asylum, including those on temporary visas.

Application Procedure:

To apply, send your cover letter addressing the selection criteria in full and a CV to Kerrith Sowden at reception@racs.org.au. Due to the urgency of this recruitment, we encourage applicants to apply early. Applications will close on 9am, Tuesday 28 February 2023. Interviews will be held ASAP with a view to commence at RACS as soon as practicably. **Please note, that as we have an urgent need for staffing, we may make decisions prior to the close of applications should we find appropriate candidates.**

About RACS

The Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS) is one of Australia's oldest and most successful dedicated community legal centres with a vision of justice and dignity for refugees and a world where those who seek Australia's protection are able to live their lives with dignity, security, family unity and freedom.

RACS provides free, dedicated legal services for people seeking asylum and refugees. Through individual advice sessions, community education and public advocacy, RACS strives to ensure that individuals and families, at risk of persecution or other forms of significant harm, gain access to equal and fair representation before the law, and are granted protection by Australia, and opportunities to seek family unity, in accordance with Australia's international obligations.

Our Mission: To achieve justice and dignity for and with refugees through the provision of dedicated legal services and advocacy

Values: Respect – Integrity – Compassion – Fairness – Empowerment – Perseverance

Our work is premised on a commitment to fundamental human rights, human dignity and international protection. RACS demonstrates this commitment through its independent, impartial and professional advice; the integrity of its staff and volunteers; its belief in continuous learning, including through partnerships with other organisations; and the fair and flexible conditions it provides for staff and volunteers.

RACS Paralegal Role

The primary focus of the position is to provide paralegal and administrative support to the Solicitors at RACS.

The Paralegal will report to the Supervising Solicitor or Coordinator supervising the relevant project and must carry out their duties in accordance with RACS' policies and funding guidelines.

The RACS working environment can be high volume and the Paralegal must be highly skilled in managing time and priorities.

The Paralegal's principal duties are:

- Managing referrals from caseworkers, other welfare agencies and directly from clients;
- Completing client intake and taking instructions from clients as required;
- Liaising with clients and agencies to obtain all necessary documents and information to enable effective provision of legal advice and/or assistance;
- Providing scripted advice to clients;
- Preparing and reviewing briefs, letters and documentation as instructed;
- Liaising with sector partners and other stakeholders;
- Undertaking legal research and keeping up to date with case law developments as requested;
- Managing a large volume of client data and documentation in line with legal requirements including file management; and
- Keeping comprehensive records and tracking clients' progress and time limits as arising.

The Paralegal is also expected to:

- Be a contributing and supporting member of the RACS team;
- Participate in RACS training and education programs as required;
- Attend external supervision and/or debriefing.
- Be alert to the danger of burnout, monitor own workload and be proactive in self care; and
- Perform other duties as required.

Selection Criteria

Essential Criteria

- Demonstrated commitment to refugee and human rights issues
- Ability to work independently and in a legal team
- Ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders in a confident and a respectful manner
- Demonstrated ability to work under pressure, manage time and priorities effectively and meet strict deadlines
- Ability to work with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ability to work with vulnerable people who may have experienced torture or trauma
- Computer literacy and file management skills

Desirable Criteria

- Experience working with people seeking asylum, including those in detention
- Experience working in a Community Legal Centre and the ability to work in an environment with limited resources
- Demonstrated ability to use CLASS
- Demonstrated language skills other than English will be considered favourably