



women's
legal
service
tasmania

Senior Social Worker (NLAP)
Position Description

Women's Legal Service Tasmania (WLST) provides a statewide community legal service for women in Tasmania, providing legal advice and information about legal and non-legal options through a dedicated telephone advice line, as well as face to face appointments, community legal education, outreach, drafting of law reform submissions and referrals to appropriate support services. All offices will operate as Domestic Violence Units offering social supports. This includes access to a financial counsellor and social workers to assist clients consider their legal options.

WLST is a community legal service funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department in recognition that in addition to the general legal problems that can affect everyone, there are some areas of law in which a woman's experience is different – as a victim of a crime (including family violence), as a primary carer of children, or through discrimination or lack of equal opportunity in employment or business. This Senior Social Worker position is funded through the National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP).

Some women also face additional barriers in accessing justice due to factors such as cost, child care responsibilities, and feelings of intimidation in going to Court or dealing with a male dominated legal profession and judiciary. Our work focuses on the needs of vulnerable women who often have experienced family violence, sexual abuse, child sexual abuse and or other forms of discrimination or abuse. We understand that this is challenging work and we offer staff a supportive environment that aims to maintain their resilience. Other issues such as language barriers, cultural backgrounds, disability, sexuality, or geographical isolation can compound to make access to a legal service intimidating and difficult. Workers at WLST are sensitive to the diverse needs of women as individuals and as a part of the community. WLST are committed to addressing the structural barriers that prevent women from accessing their legal rights as identified in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. We strive for gender equality in all its forms.

WLST operates from three sites in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie. Statewide, the WLST team consists of the Chief Executive Officer, Principal Solicitors, casework and advice line solicitors, a specialist Health Justice Partnership team of solicitors, a specialist Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Family Violence Pilot program, a specialist Workplace Sexual Harassment program and an allied health team encompassing social work and financial counselling, supported by a Finance Manager, an Operations Manager, and Administration Officers.

The statewide team meets regularly to share information, discuss case management issues, collaborate on projects, plan community education programs and service promotion opportunities.

WLST operates under a governance model with a volunteer Board of Management who provide leadership in relation to the strategic direction of the organisation, and oversight of the financial position of the organisation. The Board of Management consists of members with diverse backgrounds and professional experience, meeting once each month.

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POSITION DETAILS

Employment Status	Full Time
Classification	By reference to SCHADS Level 6-7 (to be determined)
Reports To	CEO

POSITION OBJECTIVE

Under the supervision of the CEO, the Senior Social Worker will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the allied services team, be available to provide some supervision and constructive debriefing to the legal and administration teams and will have the opportunity to provide client support through face-to-face and telephone client interactions, as well as providing liaison between other WLST staff and the client. Assisting to manage client safety and risk will also be a key feature of this position.

The Senior Social Worker will work within the Leadership Team, providing expertise and support to the running of the organisation, supporting open communication, and facilitating a safe working environment for all staff, contributing to systems reform to facilitate client wellbeing, and assisting with preparing reports for funders and the Board of Management.

The Senior Social Worker will also have a role in providing community education and training in relation to family violence to the community and to the sector.

Some intrastate travel may be required from time to time.

This position is new to WLST, funded through the extension to the National Legal Assistance Partnership announced by the Attorney-General of Tasmania. The contract will run until 30 June 2025, with terms and conditions negotiable for the right applicant.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Contribute to the operation of WLST through management of the allied services team, including social workers and financial counsellors, and through the provision of supervision and constructive debriefing to the legal and administration teams.
- Support women with an experience of family violence to navigate their interaction with the legal system in a trauma informed way, using a feminist framework.
- Provide quality services in accordance with national standards for social workers and follow WLST policies and procedures.
- Oversee the co-ordination of collaborative client support, both internally and externally, during the course a client's engagement with the legal system in a way that manages their wellbeing and maintains confidentiality, including:

- Offering risk and safety assessments, planning, and monitoring to clients engaged with WLST.
 - Offering short-term counselling to support the client.
 - Support the client to consider all possible options addressing her specific legal matter, and the implications for her wellbeing.
 - Advocate, negotiate and co-ordinate on the client's behalf with relevant stakeholders, including court support.
 - Connect clients to other longer term supports available throughout the community sector.
 - Modelling respectful behavior in interactions with clients, stakeholders, and others.
 - If capacity exists, offer these same supports to other women in the community who are experiencing family violence who have engaged a private solicitor.
- Oversee the maintenance of accurate client records and contribute to program reporting and evaluation through the provision of a monthly statistics report, the provision of a written consideration of the impact of the work delivered through the allied services team, including case studies or other reporting methods as directed.
- Develop, implement and co-deliver community education concerning family violence in the community, maintaining positive channels of communication with community service providers and key stakeholders.
- Attend and participate in WLST team meetings, access supervision to use debriefing processes, and maintain professional support through interaction with the wider social work profession in Tasmania.
- Engage in professional development activities through a connection with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) or another similar professional affiliation and maintain an up-to-date knowledge through accessing professional journals and related resources.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Hold a degree in Social Work, or other relevant university qualification, optimally with five years' relevant experience (negotiable).
2. Demonstrated personal attributes consistent with the philosophy of WLST.
3. Experience managing and developing the capacity of staff, including the provision of supervision, and in particular willingness to encourage and develop staff through reflective practice.
4. Demonstrated experience working in an interdisciplinary way with other professionals, and experience in working with a trauma informed approach.
5. An understanding of legal issues affecting women, including barriers to justice, and knowledge of the law as it relates to family violence.
6. Have demonstrated knowledge and experience in the therapeutic management of clients with complex care needs, including the ability to advocate, negotiate and liaise effectively on a client's behalf with other service providers in a non-judgemental manner.

7. Ability to assess and monitor a client's safety, develop safety plans and work with solicitors to explain possible options to progress the legal matter and support the provision of instructions in a trauma informed way, assisting the client to develop their own self-determination skills.
8. Ability to network and establish effective links with both government and non-government services and have knowledge of other services and resources available within the community and the capacity to refer appropriately.
9. Proven strong level of initiative and organisational abilities, including time management skills and the ability to plan, organise and prioritise workloads.
10. Ability to maintain accurate and complete client file records in accordance with WLST procedures and good file management, as well as an ability to collate statistics and prepare written reports.
11. Commitment to professional and personal development, and willingness to develop further professional skills relevant to the workplace.
12. Hold, or be eligible for, a current Tasmanian Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Employment registration.
13. Willingness to submit to a National Police Check (no more than twelve months old).
14. Aptitude in using Mac computers and Microsoft Office programs (such as Word and Excel) necessary to complete required tasks.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

15. Hold a current unrestricted driver's licence.