

Position Description

NE Outreach Solicitor

POSITION DETAILS

Employment Status	Full Time
Classification	SCHADS Level 6
Reports To	Principal Solicitor
Location	Hobart/Launceston/Burnie

ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

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. Our clients are also supported by in-house financial counselling and social work services. WLST operates from three offices in Hobart, Launceston, and Burnie.

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, as a primary carer of children, or through discrimination or lack of equal opportunity in employment or business.

Some women also face additional barriers in accessing justice due to factors such as cost, childcare 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's mission is to promote justice, equality, and safety for women, particularly those who are disadvantaged or facing discrimination. WLST also auspices a Working Women's Centre.

WLST is committed to protecting children, young people and other vulnerable people from harm and will require completion of screening checks prior to finalising employment.

POSITION OBJECTIVE

Under the supervision of the Principal or Assistant Principal Solicitor, the Solicitor will provide a high level of supportive, plain language legal information, advice and tasks for clients in outreach locations and deliver community legal education to women in rural and regional North-East Tasmania.

The Burnie and Launceston offices were established under the Australian Government Women's Safety Package, and function as a specialist domestic violence unit (DVU) to assist women and their families impacted by or experiencing family and domestic violence.

The provision of community legal education (CLE) workshops, drafting of law reform and lobbying submissions, along with organisational and administrative responsibilities are also a component of this position.

Some intrastate travel may be required from time to time.

A full-time employee, the normal hours of work will be 38 hours per week, between 9:00am and 5:06pm, inclusive of a 30-minute lunch break.

KEY ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

Legal Services

- Visit identified outreach locations in North-East Tasmania and deliver timely and responsive legal support to clients through the provision of high-quality legal information, advice, and referral to clients in both State and Federal jurisdictions.
- Provide an integrated and holistic client service, working with social workers and financial counsellors to address both legal and non-legal needs of clients.
- Assist to develop and co-deliver community legal education activities and resources, training and outreach programs in line with the work of the organisation, working collaboratively with key stakeholders to deliver these services.
- Assistance with research, preparation and presentation of law reform and lobbying submissions, working in consultation with other staff and key stakeholders to prepare submissions with reference to Women's Legal Service Tasmania's Strategic Plan.
- Provide efficient, appropriate and plain language services, including the preparation of documents, forms and correspondence.
- This role may also involve some casework and representation, guided by both client need, eligibility and the capacity of the organisation.

Organisational Responsibilities

- Carry out the responsibilities of the position in accordance with the Position Description, the funding requirements and the overarching vision, mission and values, policies and procedures and Strategic Plan of Women's Legal Service Tasmania.
- Collaborate with multidisciplinary teams, including financial counsellors and social workers, to provide holistic client services. Participate in regular case management meetings and contribute to team knowledge sharing.
- Contribute to organisational reporting, including reports to the Board, funders and other organisations.
- Be responsible for your own administrative work. The administration team provides some administrative support, however the nature of funding for community legal services does not enable full administrative support.
- Demonstrate the competencies in accordance with Women's Legal Service Tasmania's Core Competency Model. For reference, the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS) Award competencies for Level 6 are listed within this document.

KEY ROLE COMPETENCIES

Universal Competencies

Collaborative Approach

- Takes time to listen to and understand the perspectives of others.
- Uses language that demonstrates respect for colleagues and stakeholders at all times.
- Provides clear, concise information to others in verbal, written, electronic, and other communication methods for internal and external interactions.
- Listens actively and empathetically to the views of others.
- Delivers critical information to all stakeholders.

Diverse and Inclusive

- Displays a willingness to engage with all people in a non-judgmental or non-discriminatory way.
- Demonstrates unconditional positive regard toward internal and external stakeholders.
- Ensures own conduct aligns with the values of WLST.
- Supports the integrity of team practice by collaborating in decision making, following team processes and sharing team responsibilities.
- Is prepared to participate and openly discuss issues surrounding complaints processes and utilises appropriate guidelines.

Efficient and Contemporary

- Contributes to preparation of procedures and work practices, formation of programs and work practices and provides assistance and/or expert advice to other employees.
- Undertakes significant projects and/or functions involving the use of analytical skills.
- Leads the formation of programs and work practices, based on evidence, evaluation and feedback.
- Provides expert advice to colleagues, clients and external agencies.

Healthy Workplace

- Practices self-care for good mental health and wellbeing.
- Recognises the significance of policy and procedures that guide workplace behaviours.
- Effectively contributes to the development of new procedures and methodology, based on acquired knowledge.
- The ability to select methods and techniques based on sound judgement.
- Monitor and interpret legislation, regulations and other agreements relating to occupational health and safety, workers compensation and rehabilitation.

Quality Practices

- Displays motivation to engage in quality improvement projects and processes.
- Incorporates evaluation into the planning of services.
- Effectively communicates evaluation findings.
- Monitors programs and adjusts objectives and strategies based on the analysis of evaluation data.
- Critically analyses quantitative and qualitative data to report on program effectiveness.
- Proposes improvements to processes and procedures to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- Collects, consolidates and organises data and information for program evaluation and improvement.

Organisational Culture

- Establishes, builds and sustains effective relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
- Actively engages in supervision (reflective practice) and professional development opportunities.
- Ensures team members stay up to date with current and contemporary practice.
- Fosters continuous exchange of information, knowledge and experience within their team.
- Identifies the learning needs of others and creates development opportunities.

Client Related Competencies

Evidence based best practice

- Has an understanding of trauma and its impact across the lifespan.
- Delivers a variety of appropriate interventions demonstrating a high level of knowledge and expertise.
- Leads the formation of programs and work practices, based on evidence, evaluation and feedback.
- Provides expert advice to colleagues, clients and external agencies.
- Effectively contributes to the development of new procedures and methodology, based on acquired knowledge.

Client focused

- Establishes, builds and sustains effective relationships with clients and their supports.
- Demonstrates respect for family members and carer roles, acknowledging diverse family capacities and value systems.
- Seeks feedback on client satisfaction and takes remedial action as required.
- Develops strategic relationships in support of project development and implantation, identifies areas where they can extend partnerships with clients beyond the scope of the project.
- Advises senior management in identifying long term and mutually beneficial solutions for clients and WLST.
- Develops the capacity and attitude of staff members, ensuring that clients' needs are met.

Knowledge and application

- Provides care and support to clients within the boundaries prescribed by law and professional, national and local requirements, and codes of ethical practice.
- Participates in professional development relevant to role and professional interests.
- Engages in reflective practice.
- Provides oversight, education and training for less experienced staff and peers in the delivery of interventions.

- Demonstrates to peers and less experienced staff members the use of a range of assessment tools including age specific, discipline specific and culturally relevant assessments.
- Provides support with intake decision-making, risk assessment and triage to less experienced peers.

Outcome evaluation

- Invites and involves clients in providing feedback on services and in service planning.
- Incorporates evaluation into the planning of services.
- Effectively communicates evaluation findings.
- Monitors programs and adjusts objectives and strategies based on the analysis of evaluation data.
- Critically analyses quantitative and qualitative data to report on program effectiveness.

Leadership Competencies

Supporting and collaborating

- Encourages and values input from others.
- Creates an environment of trust and open communication.
- Provides supervision (management) to assigned staff.
- Encourages staff to try new and innovative approaches to their work.
- Openly shares information and keeps staff informed of news and changes.
- Encourages staff to work together, within and across teams.
- Encourages others to identify problems and develop solutions.
- Provides assistance and expert advice to other staff.

Critically evaluating

- Is sought by others for advice and solutions on how to best interpret and use information.
- Shows a clear understanding of the impact of specific activities on program provision and client outcomes.
- Undertakes significant projects or functions involving the use of analytical skills.

Achieving results

- Engages in action at the right time to achieve results.
- Sets outcome measures for areas they are responsible for.
- Achieves set outcomes or objectives for the program.
- Supervises and leads the operation of specific programs and monitors outcomes.

Leading and deciding

- Establishes guidelines and work practices.
- Negotiates matters on behalf of WLST.
- Makes clear decisions and communicates these to other staff.

Strategic thinking

- Negotiates on matters of significance within WLST with clients and stakeholders.

Managing resources

- Develops improved ways of doing things, including new approaches or methods.
- Anticipates and prepares for upcoming events, ensuring adequate resources are available.
- Identifies the sequence of tasks and the resources needed to achieve a goal and prioritises key action steps.
- Anticipates the impacts and risks of decisions and actions.
- Identifies emerging risks and takes action to address.
- Ensures that the risk control and mitigation activities are effective in both design and operation.

SELECTION CRITERIA TO BE ADDRESSED IN AN APPLICATION

Essential

1. Admitted in the Federal Court of Australia and the Supreme Court of Tasmania, or eligible to hold a Tasmanian Practising Certificate with demonstrated experience in the practice of family law and an understanding of family and domestic violence through a gendered violence lens.
2. Knowledge of laws relevant to women, including but not limited to family law, family violence and child safety matters, and the ability to advocate, negotiate and liaise effectively on a client's behalf in a non-judgmental manner, assessing their safety, identifying risks and developing effective strategies which address their needs in a trauma informed way.
3. Excellent verbal communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse groups, including working collaboratively within a team environment, supporting colleagues and contributing to a positive workplace culture.
4. High level written communication skills, including the ability to maintain accurate and complete client files in accordance with Women's Legal Service Tasmania procedures, and the ability to draft complex reports, collating statistics to demonstrate program effectiveness and case studies highlighting client outcomes.
5. Well-developed organisational and time management skills and ability to set priorities and monitor workflow.
6. Ability to work within and positively advance the mission and values of Women's Legal Service Tasmania, including a commitment to the social justice, equity, and empowerment of women, with an ability to drive innovation and continuous improvement in service delivery.
7. Hold a current Tasmanian Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Employment registration, and current and clear National Police Check (no more than twelve months old) or ability to obtain.

Desirable

1. Some knowledge of integrated and trauma-informed practice, as well as a familiarity and understanding of the role and challenges faced by the community services sector.
2. Demonstrated success in developing and maintaining community networks.
3. High level computer and system skills, including Microsoft Office suite, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, email and calendars, and competence in Apple computers preferred. Experience in using legal information programs such as Actionstep will be an advantage for this role.
4. Current First Aid Certificate.
5. Full driver's license.
6. Prepared to travel intrastate as required.