

Position Description

Assistant Principal Solicitor



POSITION DETAILS

Employment Status	Full Time
Classification	SCHADS Level 7
Reports To	Principal Solicitor
Location	Statewide

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 this is challenging work, and we offer staff a supportive environment that helps 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, both as individuals and as 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 before finalising employment.

POSITION OBJECTIVE

Under the supervision of and reporting to the Principal Solicitor, the Assistant Principal Solicitor will assist to manage legal staff and our numerous funding stream deliverables across the state. The Assistant Principal Solicitor will be responsible for their team's service delivery, reporting of key performance indicators (KPIs) and will support individual staff members through the oversight and quality control of legal practice.

This role will include some direct service delivery to clients, providing supportive, plain-language legal advice and information to women who contact the telephone legal advice line, and maintaining a connection with the lived experiences that inform our systemic advocacy work. A large percentage of calls received by WLST relate to family law issues; however, calls can relate to any area of the law, and as such, a commitment to professional development is important.

This particular Assistant Principal Solicitor role will be responsible to lead WLST's strategic law reform agenda, advocacy initiatives, and external partnerships to advance systemic change for women's justice, equality, and safety in Tasmania. They will be responsible for identifying, researching, and leading law reform opportunities based on emerging themes from WLST's

casework and client experiences. The Assistant Principal Solicitor will develop and maintain strategic partnerships with government, peak bodies, community organisations, and other stakeholders to amplify the voices of women experiencing disadvantage and discrimination. The role holder will represent WLST in key forums, coalitions, and consultations, positioning the organisation as a leading authority on women's legal issues and the prevention of gendered violence.

The role will also hold the primary responsibility for oversight of our statewide community legal education services: this includes oversight of our community legal education plan, resources, and sessions to ensure legal accuracy, accessibility, and consistency with WLST's values and practice frameworks.

The Assistant Principal Solicitor will commit to their own professional development, be open to feedback on their performance, be committed to self-reflection, and have open and honest conversations with their supervisor. While management experience in law reform and advocacy is desirable, WLST is committed to building women's capacity to hold these positions and will support the acquisition of strategic leadership skills for an applicant who commits to a professional development plan and shares the organisation's values.

The Assistant Principal Solicitor will also play a key role in ensuring that WLST provides a safe workplace for staff and that our law reform, advocacy, and community legal education work delivers on our Strategic Plan and mission to empower women and promote each woman's economic, civil, social, and cultural rights.

Some intrastate and interstate travel may be required to represent WLST at forums, conferences, consultations, and partnership meetings.

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

- Provide high-quality legal advice, information, and referrals to clients through the telephone advice line and face-to-face appointments, maintaining a connection with client experiences that inform law reform priorities.
- Work collaboratively with WLST's social workers and financial counsellors to provide integrated, holistic support to clients.
- Identify systemic issues and trends emerging from client work to inform law reform and advocacy priorities.

Law Reform & Advocacy

- Lead the identification, research, and development of law reform priorities based on systemic issues identified through WLST's casework, client experiences, and sector trends.
- Prepare high-quality, evidence-based law reform submissions to government, parliamentary inquiries, law reform commissions, and other bodies, working collaboratively with staff and stakeholders.
- Represent WLST in coalitions, working groups, and forums focused on women's legal rights, family violence, sexual assault law reform, and gender equality.
- Develop and implement advocacy strategies to influence policy, legislation, and systems change that advance women's access to justice and safety.
- Monitor legislative developments, case law, and policy changes affecting women in Tasmania and nationally, and contribute to WLST's strategic responses.

Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with government agencies, community legal centres, specialist women's services, peak bodies, universities, and other key stakeholders.
- Build collaborative relationships to strengthen integrated service delivery, information sharing, and coordinated advocacy efforts.
- Represent WLST at sector forums, conferences, consultations, and community events to profile the organisation's expertise and build sector capacity.
- Identify and pursue opportunities for collaborative projects, joint submissions, and partnership initiatives that advance shared goals.

- Facilitate knowledge exchange and sector collaboration through participation in networks, working groups, and communities of practice.

Community Legal Education & Sector Capacity Building

- Develop and implement a statewide, organisational community legal education plan, with input from staff, stakeholders, and community groups.
- Be responsible for maintaining the currency of organisational community legal education resources.
- Design and deliver community legal education initiatives and resources on women's legal rights, with particular focus on family violence, family law, and discrimination.
- Develop training and education programs for sector workers, community organisations, and other professionals to build an understanding of legal issues affecting women.
- Collaborate with partners to deliver integrated community legal education that addresses both legal and non-legal needs of women.
- Evaluate the impact of community legal education delivery against WLST's Outcomes Framework.

Organisational Responsibilities

- Carry out the responsibilities of the position in accordance with the Position Description, the funding requirements, the overarching vision, mission and values, policies and procedures and the Strategic Plan of Women's Legal Service Tasmania.
- Contribute to organisational reporting, including reports to the Board, funders and other organisations, highlighting law reform achievements, advocacy impact, partnership outcomes, and emerging trends.
- Provide leadership and guidance to staff on trauma-informed practice, empowering women, and providing a client-centred approach to realising economic, civil, social and cultural rights.
- Be responsible for your own administrative work. The administration team provides some administrative support, but 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 7 are listed within this document.

KEY ROLE COMPETENCIES

Universal Competencies

Collaborative Approach

- Takes time to listen to and understand others' perspectives.
- Uses language that demonstrates respect for colleagues and stakeholders at all times.
- Provides constructive feedback effectively
- Uses tact and discretion when handling sensitive information and keeps staff informed of decisions and directives as appropriate.
- Leads effective and efficient meetings.

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 Women's Legal Service Tasmania.
- Uses knowledge of corporate politics to handle complex situations effectively and with discretion.
- Takes prompt and effective action to deal with unprofessional or unethical behaviour.

Efficient and Contemporary

- Allocates and controls financial resources within its own area in accordance with goals, priorities, and the budget.
- Organises people and activities, and separates and combines tasks into an effective workflow to deliver project outputs on time.
- Is willing and able to provide expert advice to other areas of the organisation.

- Develops appropriate methodology and applies proven techniques for specialised service development.
- Demonstrates complex professional problem-solving skills.
- Provides advice on policy content and contributes to its development.

Healthy Workplace

- Practices self-care for good mental health and wellbeing.
- Recognises the significance of policy and procedures that guide workplace behaviours.
- Is accountable for actions taken and ensures that they are in full compliance with WLST regulations and rules.
- Advises and/or develops practical solutions to address resource issues that impact the effectiveness of a team or project and the work to be delivered.
- Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of policies and procedures.

Quality Practices

- Prepares evaluation research proposals for funding.
- Plans, directs and evaluates operations, including providing analysis and interpretation of outcomes.
- Establishes operational procedures that impact activities undertaken and outcomes achieved by WLST.
- Interprets evaluation findings.
- Assesses the effectiveness of current practices and develops innovative approaches to programme development and implementation.
- Ensures understanding and consistent application of quality management standards by staff members and stakeholders.
- Regularly reviews procedures and systems with teams to identify required improvements and implement them in processes.

Organisational Culture

- Establishes, builds and sustains effective relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.
- Actively engages in supervision (reflective practice) and professional development opportunities.
- Encourages staff members to learn continuously and share knowledge through mentoring, networking, and training and development opportunities.
- Identifies and establishes systems and mechanisms to facilitate the development of best practices and knowledge management.

Client Related Competencies

Evidence-based best practice

- Is able and willing to provide expert advice to other areas of the organisation.
- Develops appropriate methodology and applies proven techniques for specialised service development.
- Demonstrates complex professional problem-solving skills.
- Provides advice on policy content and contributes to its development.

Client focused

- Establishes, builds and sustains effective relationships with clients and their supporters.
- 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, with clients, strategic and operational solutions that add value.
- Anticipates constraints in the delivery of services and identifies solutions or alternatives in compliance with WLST policies.
- Demonstrates commitment to quality services and assesses their effectiveness.

Knowledge and application

- Provide care and support to clients and families 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.
- Develops and implements significant operational procedures.

- Undertakes the control and coordination of major work initiatives.
- Develop appropriate methodologies and apply proven techniques to provide specialised services.
- Applies a high level of discipline and knowledge.

Outcome evaluation

- Invites and involves clients and families/carers in providing feedback on services in service planning.
- Prepares evaluation research proposals for funding.
- Plans, directs and evaluates operations, including providing analysis and interpretations of outcomes.
- Establishes operational procedures that impact activities undertaken and outcomes achieved by WLST.
- Interprets evaluation findings.

Leadership Competencies

Supporting and collaborating

- Encourages and values input from others.
- Creates an environment of trust and open communication.
- Provides supervision to assigned staff.
- Encourages different opinions and manages constructive conflict effectively.
- Encourages and values teams' input.
- Identifies and responds to underlying attitudes or behaviour patterns that may lead to team disharmony.
- Reacts purposefully to frustrations.
- Prepares and effectively runs meetings to achieve a specific objective.
- Negotiates constructively when tackling difficult issues.
- Makes realistic compromises during negotiations.

Critically evaluating

- Is sought out by others for advice and solutions on how to interpret best and use information.
- Develops conceptual frameworks that guide analysis.
- Draws sound conclusions based upon a mixture of analysis and experience.
- Reviews operations to determine their effectiveness.
- Establishes and monitors work outcomes.

Achieving results

- Establishes operational procedures that affect the activities undertaken and the outcomes achieved by the team.
- Sets challenging goals for their area of responsibility.
- Assess and monitor the risks involved in team operations.
- Undertakes managerial functions across a range of services to achieve results in line with set goals.

Leading and deciding

- Shares new ideas and perspectives to adjust work approaches.
- Encourages others to see the positive outcome of doing things differently.
- Provide clear directions and priorities to teams.
- Delegates responsibility to individuals to make them accountable for successful execution.
- Organises teamwork to encourage co-operation and bring together complementary skills and expertise.
- Credits individual contributions and acknowledges team accomplishments.
- Facilitates the discussion and resolution of conflict or disagreement.
- Develops work practices and procedures for various projects.

Strategic thinking

- Manages complaints, ethical and other issues to protect WLST's reputation and respect its obligations.
- Promotes a shared understanding of WLST needs and strategic direction.
- Develops and implements projects, programmes, and processes aligned with WLST's strategic direction and needs.
- Actively and continuously expands own network to meet strategic goals.
- Identifies and creates opportunities to initiate new partnerships that will help achieve strategic goals.
- Identifies and considers emerging development opportunities and risks when articulating new options and recommendations.

Managing resources

- Seeks ways to reduce costs.
- Ensures that required resources and skill sets among staff are aligned with task requirements.
- Monitors budget usage and ensures critical costs are covered.
- Understands outcome requirements and aligns resources to achieve them.
- Responsibly allocates and accounts for the use of resources, weighing alternatives and their benefits.

- Demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between effective resource management and core WLST functions.
- Identifies emerging risks and takes action to address them.
- Effectively mitigates risks by selecting the best methods to manage or avoid them.

SELECTION CRITERIA TO BE ADDRESSED IN AN APPLICATION

Essential

- Admission as a Solicitor in the Supreme Court of Tasmania and the Federal Court of Australia, with demonstrated experience in family law and an understanding of family and domestic violence through a gendered violence lens.
- Demonstrated experience in law reform, policy development, and advocacy, including the preparation of evidence-based submissions to government, parliamentary inquiries, or law reform bodies on issues affecting women's access to justice.
- Experience in community legal education design and delivery, with demonstrated ability to translate complex legal information for diverse audiences.
- Proven ability to develop and maintain strategic partnerships with government, community organisations, peak bodies, and other stakeholders, with demonstrated capacity to represent an organisation in high-level forums and consultations.
- Excellent written communication skills, including the ability to prepare complex policy and advocacy documents, research papers, and submissions that synthesise legal analysis, client experiences, and evidence-based recommendations.
- High-level verbal communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse stakeholders, deliver presentations and training, and represent WLST professionally in public forums.
- Strong project management and organisational skills, with the ability to manage multiple law reform and advocacy projects simultaneously, meet deadlines, and work independently with minimal supervision.
- Ability to work within and positively advance the mission and values of Women's Legal Service Tasmania, including a commitment to social justice, gender equality, and the empowerment of women, with an understanding of intersectionality and trauma-informed practice.
- Hold a current Tasmanian Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Employment registration, and a current and clear National Police Check (no more than twelve months old) or the ability to obtain one.

Desirable

- Knowledge of laws relevant to women, including but not limited to family violence, child safety, discrimination, employment, and sexual assault laws in Tasmania and nationally.
- Understanding of the community legal sector, including funding models, service integration, and collaborative practice frameworks.
- Demonstrated ability to analyse trends and systemic issues from casework data and translate these into law reform and advocacy priorities.
- High-level computer and system skills, including Microsoft Office suite, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, email and calendars, and competence with Apple computers, preferred.
- Current First Aid Certificate.
- Full driver's license.
- Prepared to travel intrastate and interstate as required.