

Position Description Review

Position	Director of Legal Services
Terms of Employment	Full time, Ongoing
Reporting to	CEO
Direct Reports	Managing Lawyers, Legal Practice Coordinator
Classification	Level 8 – Salary Above Award
Position Purpose	<p>The Director of Legal Services provides strategic leadership, governance oversight, and sector influence to ensure Barwon Community Legal delivers high-quality, trauma informed legal services that advance justice for priority communities. The role is responsible for setting the long-term direction of the legal practice, strengthening its impact, and ensuring alignment with organisational strategy, sector priorities, and emerging community needs, quality, trauma informed legal services that advance justice for priority communities.</p> <p>The Director leads the overall design, development and stewardship of BCLS’s legal service models, ensuring they are evidence informed, culturally safe, accessible, and sustainable. The role oversees legal risk, compliance, accreditation readiness, systemic advocacy and strategic</p>

	<p>partnerships across the justice ecosystem. Working closely with the CEO, the Director ensures the legal practice contributes meaningfully to organisational outcomes and drives innovation, capability building, and excellence across the legal team.-informed, culturally safe, accessible, and sustainable.</p>
<p>Position Context</p>	<p>Barwon Community Legal is undertaking a period of organisational and service evolution to strengthen its impact, respond to increasing community demand, and adapt to significant changes across the legal and community and social services sectors. To support this direction, the organisation is shifting from an operationally focused legal leadership model to one centred on strategic governance, sector influence, and long-term service development.</p> <p>The Director of Legal Services is a strategic leadership role responsible for ensuring BCLS’s legal programs are positioned for sustainability, innovation and systemic impact through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of values based guidance on complex legal, regulatory, and ethical matters impacting the organisation-based guidance on complex legal, regulatory, and ethical matters impacting the • The provision of organisation wide oversight of legal practice governance, accreditation readiness, legal risk and compliance, and sector partnerships. -wide oversight of legal practice governance, accreditation readiness, legal risk and compliance, and sector partnerships. • Coaching managing lawyers and emerging leaders to strengthen judgment, strategic thinking, and professional resilience. • Sponsors succession planning and leadership development to ensure continuity of high-quality legal advice and ethical standards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates clarity of expectations while empowering leaders to exercise sound professional discretion and accountability. <p>Operational management, day-to-day supervision, and program delivery responsibilities are delegated to Managing Lawyers, enabling the Director to focus on strategic leadership, future planning, and the broader justice system environment in which BCLS operates.</p> <p>-to-day supervision, and program delivery responsibilities are delegated to Managing Lawyers, enabling the Director to focus on strategic leadership, future planning, and the broader justice system environment in which BCLS operates.</p>
<p>Decision Making Authority</p>	<p>The Director of Legal Services exercises independent decision making consistent with the strategic leadership responsibilities outlined in the Position Purpose. The role has authority over practice wide governance, compliance, systemic advocacy priorities and strategic partnerships, operating within organisational policies and Delegations of Authority.</p> <p>Day to day operational decisions, including supervision, rostering, case allocation and quality assurance, are delegated to Managing Lawyers, who escalate significant risks or strategic matters to the Director.</p> <p>The Director consults with the CEO on major organisational issues, funding proposals or service changes requiring executive or Board approval.</p>

<p>Key Responsibilities</p>	<p>Leadership and Oversight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively lead and contribute to the realisation of BCLS’s Strategic Plan • Provide strategic leadership across the organisation by contributing legal practice insight to organisational strategy, planning, reporting and cross organisation initiatives. • Inform the development of, and regularly monitor and report on, the organisation’s Business Plan activities and CLSP plan. • Lead and support a diverse team to achieve service excellence and deliver holistic, client centred outcomes that elevate the voices and experiences of our clients and communities. • Partner with the CEO and Senior Leadership Team to ensure legal practice directions are aligned with organisational strategy, funding priorities and community need. • Provides executive leadership and strategic oversight of the Legal Team’s financial management by partnering with the Operations Manager to develop, endorse and implement the budget, ensuring alignment with organisational strategy, sustainable resourcing, and impact for clients. • Work collaboratively with Operations and Community Development to strengthen organisation wide systems, culture and capability. • Champion a values aligned, collaborative, reflective and high performing culture across the legal practice. <p>Service Direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic leadership of the multidisciplinary legal practice, ensuring services are evidence informed, trauma informed, culturally safe, accessible and responsive to priority communities.-informed, trauma-informed, culturally safe, accessible and responsive to priority communities.
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- Apply service design thinking to identify unmet need, emerging issues, and opportunities for earlier intervention or integrated practice.
- Lead evidence based legal service design, using data, practice insights, evaluation findings and client experience to shape future service models.
- Drive long term planning for legal services, including horizon scanning, strategic prioritisation, and development of multiyear practice goals.
- Implementation of service improvements and operational changes is led by Managing Lawyers, with the Director providing strategic direction only.

Governance and Organisational Influence

- Act as the Centre’s lead Responsible Person as defined in the National Risk Management Guide (RMG) and ensure the legal practice operates within Centre guidelines and professional obligations, including government and professional indemnity insurance requirements; appoint Managing Lawyers as additional Responsible Persons and/or Nominated Persons, consistent with the RMG.
- Provide high level governance and assurance over legal practice management systems and risk control, including accreditation readiness, risk management systems, professional standards, and internal legal policies.
- Exercise governance over the development and implementation of practice wide quality assurance frameworks, ensuring safe, consistent and high-quality service delivery.
- Respond to high level or systemic legal risks escalated by Managing Lawyers and develop organisation level risk mitigation strategies.
- Provide strategic advice to the CEO and Board on legal system developments, emerging risks and opportunities affecting the organisation’s direction.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen organisational capability by enabling multidisciplinary teams through effective systems, fit for purpose policies, shared learning practices, and intentional crossteam collaboration.-for-purpose policies, shared learning practices, and intentional cross-team collaboration. • Support organisational sustainability by identifying practice efficiencies, strategic partnerships and innovative service models. • Operational compliance monitoring is delegated to Managing Lawyers
	<p>Leadership of Managing Lawyers and Workforce Capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership, guidance and mentoring to Managing Lawyers, supporting them to deliver high quality supervision, operational leadership, and program management. • Provide high level governance oversight of legal service quality by conducting periodic, strategic file reviews of Managing Lawyers’ casework, focused on identifying systemic risks, practice trends and opportunities for improvement. Day to day file review, case supervision and operational quality assurance are the responsibility of Managing Lawyers. • Lead workforce planning for the legal team, including capability development, KPIs, succession planning, staff wellbeing frameworks and future skills planning.-skills planning. • Create the conditions for sustainable and high-quality legal team performance by shaping a culture that supports collaboration across teams, continuous learning, and reflective practice, aligned to BCLS values. • Coach and develop the Managing Lawyers to strengthen their leadership capability and build empowered, accountable teams aligned with best practice legal standards.-practice legal standards.

Sector Engagement, Advocacy and Law Reform

- Represent BCLS in local, state and national legal sector forums, working groups and networks, ensuring the organisation is actively engaged in policy, justice reform and sector development.
- Provide subject-matter expertise on legal system issues and reforms in sector forums, ensuring BCLS's technical expertise the broader organisation's external advocacy and reform agenda, led by the CEO.
- Monitor outcomes, trends and systemic issues to inform strategic priorities and influence future service directions.
- Ensure legal practice contributes to organisational impact goals, including outcomes measurement and systemic advocacy.
- Work collaboratively with the Director of Impact and Engagement to lead BCLS's systemic advocacy agenda, using evidence from practice and client experience to influence law reform, sector policy, and systemic change.
- Oversee the development and approval of strategic legal submissions and contributions to consultations, inquiries and reform processes, aligned with BCLS strategic priorities.
- Build strong relationships with courts, Victoria Legal Aid, government agencies, community organisations, and other justice partners to advance shared outcomes.
- Build high value strategic relationships across the justice ecosystem (courts, government, VLA, community partners, researchers) to enhance service effectiveness and influence system improvements.-**value strategic relationships**
- Identify opportunities for cross sector collaboration, innovation funding, and system reform partnerships.-**sector collaboration**

	<p>Strategic Partnerships and Funding Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive a strategic partnership agenda that builds, aligns, and sustains relationships across courts, community organisations, government, education, and pro bono sectors to enhance integrated legal service delivery in collaboration with the Director of Impact and Engagement. • Identify and pursue opportunities for new funding, pilot programs, and innovative service models, working closely with the CEO and leadership. • Oversee the preparation of legal practice content for funding submissions, tenders and reporting, ensuring accuracy, clarity and alignment with organisational strategy.
	<p>Reporting, Evaluation and Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic oversight of reporting on legal service activity, outcomes, risks and impacts for the CEO, Board, funders and sector partners. • Ensure the legal practice contributes high quality data, insights and reflective practice to organisational evaluation and reporting processes, enabling evidence informed service improvement and strategic planning quality data, insights and reflective practice to organisational evaluation informed service improvement and strategic planning.-quality data, insights and reflective practice to organisational evaluation -informed service improvement and strategic planning. • Embed a culture of monitoring and evaluation that utilises high quality legal practice insights, data and analysis
	<p>General Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent BCLS professionally at events, meetings, conferences and sector engagements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to a safe and healthy workplace and adhere to all organisational policies and procedures. • Undertake other duties consistent with the seniority and strategic nature of the role, as required by the CEO.
<p>Key Selection Criteria</p>	<p>Mandatory Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible to hold (or currently holds) an unrestricted principal practising certificate in Victoria. • Extensive post-admission experience in legal practice within community law, social justice, public interest law, or a related justice sector environment. <p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven senior leadership experience, including setting strategic direction, leading organisational or practice level change, and influencing sector or system level outcomes.-level change, and influencing sector or system-level outcomes. • Demonstrated experience in legal practice governance, including risk management, accreditation, professional standards, and compliance oversight. • Experience developing or leading legal service models, initiatives, or programs that address systemic or community identified legal need.-identified legal need. • Strong record of sector collaboration and advocacy, including participation in policy reform, working groups, or systems level partnerships.-level partnerships. • Experience leading or contributing to funding proposals, business cases, pilots or innovation projects for legal services.

Knowledge, Skills and Capabilities

- Strong strategic thinking skills, with the ability to understand community trends and systemic issues and apply this insight to service development, planning and advocacy.
- Sound knowledge of trauma-informed, culturally safe and accessible legal practice, and the ability to model these approaches across the team.-informed, culturally safe and accessible legal practice, and the ability to model these approaches across the team.
- Excellent communication and relationship building skills, with the ability to work effectively with courts, government agencies, community organisations and legal sector partners.-building skills, with the ability to work effectively with courts, government agencies, community organisations and legal sector partners.
- Ability to identify and manage legal practice risks at a strategic level, ensuring safe, high-quality service delivery through strong systems and oversight.-quality service delivery through strong systems and oversight.
- Demonstrated capacity to lead and support senior practitioners, fostering a collaborative, values aligned and high performing culture.-aligned and high-performing culture.
- Encourages open discussion of legal reasoning, strategy and outcomes to strengthen collective capability, and promotes reflective practice, peer learning and shared technical development across the team.
- Strong analytical and evidence informed decision-making skills, with the ability to interpret data and practice insights for planning, reporting and advocacy.-informed decision-making skills, with the ability to interpret data and practice insights for planning, reporting and advocacy.
- A deep commitment to equity, fairness, social justice and to the mission and values of Barwon Community Legal.

