

Lawyer Family Law and Family Violence Practice



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Lawyer
Department:	Hume Riverina Community Legal Service
Program/Service:	Family Law and Family Violence Practice
Location:	Level 1, 9 Stanley Street, Wodonga, from time to time may be required to work at other UMFC sites either temporarily or permanently by negotiation
Award:	Victorian Community Legal Centres Multi Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027
Classification:	To be determined based on qualifications, skills and experience
Travel:	Travel to local and regional offices is required from time to time using a fleet vehicle.

UMFC is a Child Safe organisation and is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy, and empowered. We support and respect all children as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all children.

The Sanctuary Model promotes cultural, physical, emotional, psychological and social safety, as well as psychosocial wellbeing, fostering recovery from adversity through the creation of a trauma-informed community. Through the implementation of this model, UMFC aims to enhance the quality of care we provide and cultivate a workplace where everyone feels valued, supported and able to thrive.

1. POSITION CONTEXT AND SUMMARY OF POSITION

Consistent with Upper Murray Family Care's (UMFC) purpose that every child and young person is cared for and Hume Riverina Community Legal Service's vision of a society where all people enjoy equality of opportunity and have equal access to the law, the Lawyer will be responsible for delivering legal assistance services – including legal information, referrals, advice, and ongoing casework - to priority within our catchment area in particular, those experiencing family law, family violence and related legal issues.

This role involves fostering and maintaining strong relationships with staff from local community organisations, key service providers, and other community legal centres. The Lawyer will engage in a broad range of activities such as community engagement, legal education, professional development, and providing secondary consultations. The role includes broader sector responsibilities, actively engaging in sector-wide networks and initiatives as well as contributing to law reform and advocacy initiatives as needed.

2. COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS

Position supervised by:	Principal Lawyer or Managing Lawyer Family Law and Family Violence Practice
Direct reports:	NIL
Communicates internally primarily with:	HRCLS staff, volunteers and students, other relevant staff within UMFC.
Communicates externally primarily with:	Clients, community organisations, companies, specialist CLCs, local networks, peak bodies e.g. Federation of CLCs, Local Legal Practitioners, Police and Court Staff.

3. KEY RESPONSIBILITY AREAS (KRAS)

Consistent with the UMFC values of Unwavering integrity, Considered empathy, Determined advocacy, Passionately optimistic and Bravely collaborative, and the Sanctuary commitments, this position provides high quality, efficient services through the following Key Responsibility Areas:

KRA 3.1 Service Delivery

Deliver targeted, efficient, and effective legal assistance services to identified priority clients, including legal information, advice, casework, duty lawyering and court representation as required, in a client focussed, trauma-informed way to ensure all legal services are compliant with the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 (Vic)*, relevant professional and ethical standards, and in accordance with HRCLS policies, procedures and the Community Legal Centres Australia (CLCA) Risk Management Guide.

KRA 3.2 Partnerships and Stakeholders

Strengthen and maintain effective relationships working collaboratively with partners and stakeholders by:

- Monitoring and supporting effective referrals and pathways.
- Working with service providers to provide holistic support that addresses clients' legal and non-legal needs
- Representing the organisation at local events and activities.
- Actively participating in local network and interagency meetings.
- Attending and contributing to sector-wide meetings and forums.
- Collaborating in relevant community initiatives and programs.
- Providing secondary consultations and
- Preparing and delivering professional development and education sessions to partner organisations.

KRA 3.3 Law Reform and Advocacy

Collaborate with the Policy, Advocacy, and Communications Lead to contribute to law reform and advocacy initiatives relevant to the lawyer's area of practice, supporting systemic change and promoting access to justice.

KRA 3.4 Supporting Operational Requirements Actively contribute to the implementation of the program work plan, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and the HRCLS strategic objectives to ensure compliance with all funding, reporting, and service delivery.
KRA 3.5 Supervision and Support Provide guidance, supervision and support to HRCLS lawyers, paralegal, law and PLT students as well as non-legal volunteers, as required to ensure high-quality service delivery and professional development.
KRA 3.6 Risk Management and Compliance Work collaboratively with Senior Leadership and Operations team by actively identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks within the role by meeting all compliance-related tasks and expectations, including but not limited to monitoring activity, adherence to organisational policies and procedures and completion of compliance training and promoting a culture of risk awareness and compliance.
KRA 3.7 Child Safety and Cultural Inclusion Proactively promote and support a culture of child safety using the Sanctuary commitment of Cultural Humility to engage and grow cultural connections for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children who may be gender diverse or children who may be culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).
KRA 3.8 Organisational Culture and Values Contribute to the creation and maintenance of a culture that reflects the organisational values of Unwavering integrity, Considered empathy, Determined advocacy, Passionately optimistic and Bravely collaborative. Contribute to the creation and maintenance of a culture that reflects the Sanctuary Model Domains.
KRA 3.9 Team Collaboration and Professional Development Actively participate as a team member in relevant meetings, and professional development processes such as supervision, training, and quality improvement processes in line with program and UMFC guidelines and requirements.
KRA 3.10 OHS Compliance, Physical and Psychosocial Safety Responsibilities • Actively fulfil all Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) responsibilities relevant to this position, including both physical and psychosocial safety obligations. • Actively identify and report physical and psychosocial hazards in the workplace • Participate in risk assessments and implement agreed controls to reduce physical and psychological harm • Support a positive workplace culture that promotes emotional, psychological, social and physical wellbeing, with colleagues and clients. • Contribute to maintaining a safe, trauma-informed environment consistent with UMFC's policies, values and procedures.
KRA 3.11 Additional Duties Other duties as directed.

4. PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE POSITION

(Key of estimated daily requirements: Not required=0%, Marginal=1-5%, Occasional=6-20%; Regular=21-50%, Frequent=51-70%, Continuous=> 70%)

- Sitting – Frequent
- Standing/walking - Frequent
- Computer based tasks – Frequent
- Driving – Regular
- Lifting – Regular
- Twisting/carrying – Regular

5. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

COMPULSORY:

- 5.1 Eligible for an unrestricted practising certificate in Victoria.
- 5.2 Commitment to engaging and empathising with people often experiencing multiple and complex needs including those affected by family violence and those who have experienced trauma and/or are affected by poor mental health in a trauma informed manner.
- 5.3 Proven ability to work collaboratively as part of a team in a cooperative and respectful work environment.
- 5.4 Ability or capacity to work collaboratively in an integrated service including demonstrated understanding of the principles of working in partnership and managing stakeholders effectively.
- 5.5 Commitment to social justice and sound knowledge of the issues affecting the public in accessing community legal services, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas (RRR) of Victoria and NSW.
- 5.6 Ability to work autonomously whilst recognising own limitations and need for support whilst prioritising work effectively to meet deadlines and responding to the needs of key partners and service users.
- 5.7 Highly developed verbal communication skills, including the ability to effectively communicate complex information to range of people, via a variety of channels including through the development and delivery of community legal education sessions.
- 5.8 High level computer literacy – e.g. MS Office software including Teams, Outlook, Word, SharePoint, PowerPoint and client management programs

DESIRABLE:

- 5.9 Legal practice experience in civil law (e.g. tenancy, fines, consumer, credit and debt, insurance etc) as well as family law and family violence.
- 5.10 Experience providing representation services in the Magistrates' Court Vic and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

Demonstrated ability to:

- **Positive attitude and team values** – be a team player, a positive role model and put into practice passion for social justice whilst upholding the values of UMFC.
- **Excellent interpersonal skills** – build relationships with various groups of people (colleagues, other professionals, stakeholders, clients), assess situations and environment and adapt communication style to fit.
- **Resilient and adaptable** – be flexible and agile with openness to pivoting as program and organisational priorities change.
- **Creative and innovative** – take initiative, be innovative and a creative problem solver.
- **Emotional Intelligence/empathy** – manage complex situations and stories of trauma from service providers and service users with empathy and an understanding of own wellbeing.

6. ADDITIONAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS OF THE POSITION

- 6.1 A satisfactory National Police Check (International Police Check if relevant)
- 6.2 A satisfactory Victorian and NSW Working with Children Check
- 6.3 Current driver's licence

7. WORK CHALLENGES/PRESSURES

- Meeting deadlines under time constraints with competing program and organisation priorities
- Working with clients' expectations and meeting their needs
- Working with distressed clients with complex needs often affected by trauma and experiencing multiple issues
- Regular problem solving / challenges around various legal issues, referral options and cross border issues
- Understanding and dealing with funding and project evaluation requirements and expectations of funding bodies, external bodies and consultants
- Establishing partnerships and working with service providers' expectations and understanding of legal issues within professional and ethical boundaries

8. REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

At UMFC, Reflective Supervision is considered to be an integral part of service delivery and ensures oversight over workforce design and of psychosocial hazards. The development of skilled and supported staff is dependent on the support and structured reflection opportunities provided by the Reflective Supervision framework. The supervision framework is supported by our Sanctuary commitments such as social responsibility, open communication and democracy.

Reflective Supervision has a number of benefits for staff, clients, and the organisation, including:

- protection and a commitment to quality service provision for clients through case review.
- a forum of accountability for those to whom the staff is accountable (clients, organisation, profession).

- a reflective space for staff to identify their strengths, areas for development and any personal issues that may impact their professional practice.
- an opportunity for staff to build their skills and identify areas for future development in a supportive environment.
- trauma informed, consistent conversations that are a protective factor to decrease the likelihood of developing vicarious trauma when undertaking challenging work.
- reflection on psychosocial hazard exposure, understanding how work impacts wellbeing, and implementing strategies to enhance psychological safety.

Supervision is a requirement for all workers at UMFC and must, at a minimum, be provided:

- On an individual basis
- For 2 hours per month (pro rata) which may be in a single block or in smaller units.