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A Community Legal Centre

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION – Principal Solicitor

ABOUT FITZROY LEGAL SERVICE

The Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) opened its doors in December 1972. FLS is a community-based organisation, independent of government, assisting members of the community whose access to legal resources is limited.

Our services include:

- a legal advice service that operates five nights a week, staffed primarily by volunteer lawyers;
- an outreach service and four specialist legal advice clinics (specialising in family law, animal law and LGBTIQ-related legal issues);
- a self-funding day practice that offers criminal and family law casework and court representation;
- a Drug Outreach Lawyer program that provides community legal education, referral, advice, advocacy and ongoing casework services to drug users on an outreach basis through health justice partnerships;
- assistance with family law and family violence on an outreach basis through health justice partnerships in the City of Yarra;
- two community lawyers providing advice, representation and casework services at the Neighbourhood Justice Centre;
- community development and community legal education activities, public interest litigation, law reform and the development of legal research and policy; and
- Publication of *The Law Handbook* (hard copy, eBook and online) as well as other websites and resources.

VISION

To be an independent and influential voice that empowers and strengthens the community through access to legal services, education, information and law reform activities.

VALUES

Empowerment, integrity, respect, quality and participation.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

The position is offered as a 12 month contract (maternity leave replacement) for 22.8 hours per week / 3 days per week. However additional work hours (up to a full time load) would be considered. A start date of Tuesday 5th December 2017 is preferred.

Applicants are asked to address the Key Selection Criteria in the position description. Applicants who do not address all the selection criteria will not be offered an interview.

Candidates are requested to email Fitzroy Legal Service the following as one PDF document:

- A covering letter, no longer than one page;
- A document which addresses the key selection criteria and
- A resume which includes your contact details, education, previous work and volunteer experience.

Applications should be addressed to Claudia Fatone, Executive Officer, and emailed **by 5pm, Friday 20th October 2017**, to cfatone@fitzroy-legal.org.au.

Any enquiries should be directed to FLS Executive Officer Claudia Fatone via email cfatone@fitzroy-legal.org.au or telephone (03) 9411 1303.

DONATIONS OF \$2 OR MORE ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

ABN 46 187 177 143



POSITION OBJECTIVE

The Principal Solicitor position is part of the management team and is responsible for the overall effective functioning of the FLS legal practice, ensuring the practice complies with its professional obligations and aligns with the vision and objectives of FLS.

The Principal Solicitor oversees the following programs – Criminal, Family Law and Family Violence Practices, Drug Outreach Lawyer Program, Night Legal Advice Service, Neighbourhood Justice Centre and Trainee Lawyer program.

Direct reports to the Principal Solicitor are:

- Senior Criminal Lawyer
- Family Lawyer
- Senior Lawyer, Family Law and Family Violence
- Senior Community Lawyer, NJC
- Senior Lawyer & Night Service Manager
- Night Service Co-ordinator
- Trainee Lawyer

RESPONSIBLE TO

The Principal Solicitor reports directly to the Executive Officer.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Legal Practice Management

- Monitor and evaluate legal services in order to ensure quality and consistency of delivery. This involves
 - continuous liaison and regular meetings with legal staff regarding the standard of advice and casework undertaken, appropriate client contact / communication, and the implementation of processes to capture and communicate strategic work;
 - provision of regular supervision and mentoring for legal staff and volunteers;
 - assistance in the orientation, training and supervision of new legal staff and volunteers; and
 - ensuring effective maintenance and review of client files;
- Manage and assist the Criminal and Family Law Practice to meet income targets;
- Ensure effective recording of statistics and legal service activities and maintenance of records;
- Review and where possible, improve operational and case management systems, practices and work procedures amongst staff and volunteers;
- Be responsible for practice compliance with relevant professional and ethical standards and risk management practices relating to legal practice including professional indemnity insurance (PII), practice certificate requirements, the NALC Risk Management Guide and participation in the Federation of Community Legal Centres (FCLC) annual cross check;
- Manage and be responsible for the Fitzroy Legal Service Trust Account;
- Oversee Victoria Legal Aid panel memberships and reporting requirements;
- Authorise legal publications and other written material for legal accuracy;
- Involvement in legal staff recruitment, performance management and professional development;
- Monitor financial reports relevant to the legal practice; and
- Report activities to the FLS Board through the Executive Officer.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

- Maintain and expand links with private sector partners;
- Undertake strategic stakeholder and community development activities to enhance the profile and accessibility of the organisation; and
- Network with a wide range of stakeholders to advance organisational objectives, including the Federation of Community Legal Centres, Neighbourhood Justice Centre, Victoria Legal Aid, Yarra Drug and Health Forum,

community legal centres, Courts, Department of Justice and Regulation, Law Institute of Victoria, and other relevant community agencies.

Policy, strategy, advocacy and law reform

Collaborate with leadership team in

- Planning and development of services, projects and partnerships;
- Fostering the identification and exploration of trends and issues emerging in advice, casework and community development activities;
- Developing and implementing specific initiatives, projects and partnerships in response to community trends and issues; and
- Engaging in strategic lobbying, law reform, policy, media and advocacy tactics in response to trends and issues.

General

- Support the achievement of the FLS Vision, Values and Behaviours, adhering to organizational policies and procedures;
- Attend internal staff and planning meetings, supervision and performance review processes;
- Participate in professional development, meeting CPD responsibilities as required;
- Involvement in fundraising and other events as required; and
- Perform other duties as directed and necessary to the proper performance of the role.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Prerequisites

- Law degree with significant post-admission experience;
- Australian Legal Practitioner eligible to hold a Principal Practising Certificate (authorised to receive trust money); and
- Relevant experience as a Solicitor to meet the Legal Practice Board requirements to supervise a trainee.

Essential (Skills, knowledge, experience, qualification and/or training)

- Strong commitment to social justice and the philosophy of FLS;
- Highly motivated with a demonstrated capacity for excellence, innovation and responsiveness in legal service provision;
- Demonstrated ability to effectively supervise, manage, motivate and mentor legal and non-legal staff and volunteers;
- Comprehensive knowledge of working and operating within organisational policies and procedures;
- Highly developed communication skills, both written and oral;
- Experience in maintaining best practice in the delivery of legal advice, information and casework services ensuring legal compliance;
- Demonstrated capacity to work in a small team and support a cohesive team environment;
- Proven stakeholder management and negotiation skills;
- Capacity to use initiative, set priorities, organise and manage workloads; and
- Good self-care and stress management skills.

Desirable (Skills, knowledge, experience, qualification and/or training)

- Prior experience as a principal lawyer or equivalent;
- Relevant knowledge to assist in reviewing files across criminal, civil and family law;
- Experience in managing a Trust Account; and
- Knowledge of and experience with community organisations and an understanding of the community legal / legal aid sector.

To be eligible to apply for this position you must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, permanent resident or

hold a valid work permit or visa.

LOCATION, TRAVEL AND WORK OUTSIDE OFFICE HOURS

The position will be based at the FLS office on Level 4 of the Fitzroy Town Hall. Some travel may be required (e.g. to attend meetings). Reasonable travel expenses are reimbursed. Normal hours of work are between 8.00am – 6.00pm (7.6 hours per day), Monday to Friday. Occasional work outside normal office hours may be required. Overtime is not payable but time in lieu is available within FLS policy guidelines.

CLASSIFICATION

The position is classified under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHCADS) Industry Award at Level 7

SALARY & CONDITIONS

Terms and conditions of employment are based on the Community Legal Centres Multi-Business Agreement with remuneration to be negotiated with the successful applicant. FLS's tax exempt status allows generous additional tax benefits through salary packaging. Four weeks annual leave plus paid leave between Christmas and New Year.