

Family Violence Lawyer – Position Description

The Role

The Family Violence Lawyer will be a member of Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre's family violence legal team, delivering on the potential of the new Bendigo Law Courts' new jurisdictions, technology and integrated support agencies, to provide increased access to justice for Central Victorian communities. The Family Violence Lawyer is a new role as part of an expanding legal team at ARC Justice, and will be part of best practice in legal service delivery, multi-disciplinary partnerships, appear regularly in court and identify opportunities for service improvement and policy reform.

As a member of the family violence team, the lawyer will support the effective implementation of the new Specialist Family Violence Court, delivering high quality legal advice before and after court, as well as effective fast-paced negotiation and advocacy at court. Pleasingly, the team includes a new Information and Referral Officer role at ARC Justice, ensuring court users are linked with appropriate joined up services to address the causes of family violence and related legal problems. While predominantly focused on the new Bendigo Law Courts, there will be opportunities to appear in smaller satellite courts in the LCCLC catchment as a duty lawyer, and to consider access to justice issues across regional Victoria. The role involves proactive networking and community engagement, and the opportunity to identify systemic issues and think strategically.

The Family Violence Lawyer will be trained as an expert in all areas of family violence law, including related areas of family law, child protection, victims of crime and general civil law. A focused development plan will broaden expertise aligned with legal need and incumbent interest. This is a fantastic opportunity for an early years lawyer to sharpen their court advocacy skills, whilst building skills in multiple other areas of the law in a supportive team environment.

Key responsibilities

With supervision and support from the Senior Lawyers:

Legal Service Delivery

- Provide legal assistance to clients in our practice areas by way of:
 - Information, referral and legal advice across the range of our practice areas.

- Ongoing casework which may require conferences and appearance in courts and tribunals.
- Deliver family violence duty lawyer services at the Bendigo Specialist Family Violence Court and other relevant regional courts as required.
- Deliver place-based services at partner organisations as required.
- Deliver high standards of service to clients who often present with complex needs, with a focus on therapeutic, trauma-informed practice.
- Maintain a caseload of legal matters appropriate to experience.
- Participate in legal team meetings and debriefing sessions with colleagues.
- Ensure the complete and accurate collection of client data. Collate client stories for use in advancing advocacy priorities.
- Assist with other program areas within the CLC as required.

Project and partnership management

- Work with Senior Lawyers to identify priority partnerships to meet the needs of mutual clients.
- Work with Senior and Managing Lawyers to develop multi-disciplinary projects that intervene to resolve or minimise legal problems at the earliest opportunity.
- Collaborate on designing impact frameworks to demonstrate the true value of community lawyering, and compile robust quantitative and qualitative data.
- Build and maintain referral pathways and operational relationships with courts and local service delivery partners to achieve better outcomes for clients.

Stakeholder engagement, education and law reform

- Identify and develop community engagement and legal education opportunities and deliver legal education on occasion to partners or the community.
- Monitor casework to identify systemic issues and feed this information into the service's strategic plan and work plans.
- Monitor opportunities for, anticipate and collaborate in policy and law reform activities.

Other Roles and Responsibilities

- Comply with policy and procedures and maintain currency through training that relate to legal and regulatory requirements and our ways of working.
- Seek out training opportunities to further enhance professional development in accordance with duties as required within this position after consultation with your manager.
- Participate in regular supervision and meet agreed performance indicators and work plan activities.
- ARC Justice is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff. ARC Justice and its staff must comply with a range of statutory requirements, including equal opportunity, occupational health and safety and privacy laws. ARC Justice is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Ways of Working

- Support colleagues and the team environment – we value collaboration.
- Contribute actively in meetings and quarterly staff days – your insight and wisdom helps us improve.
- Maintain and consistently demonstrate organisational values and behaviours.
- Support the achievement of the ARC Justice Strategic Plan, through team planning and work plans.

Key selection criteria

Essential (Skills, knowledge, experience)

1. Eligible to hold a Practising Certificate in Victoria.
2. Strong advocacy skills including a demonstrated capacity for negotiation and court representation.
3. Demonstrated ability to work efficiently and responsively to time constraints while maintaining a consistent standard of quality service.
4. Knowledge of or experience with integrated practice, working with non-legal services to provide multidisciplinary support to clients.
5. Exceptional interpersonal skills, including the capacity to foster a cooperative and supportive team environment and an advanced ability to engage with people experiencing disadvantage and trauma.

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

1. Understanding of family violence law and policy environment.
2. Experience as a duty lawyer (any jurisdiction).
3. Experience in networking and building relationships with a broad range of organisations and stakeholders.

Prerequisites

1. Eligible for a Practising Certificate in Victoria.
2. Unrestricted Victorian driver's license.
3. Clear Police record check and either a Working with Children Check or willingness to obtain. ARC Justice will cover the costs of obtaining these.
4. As a child safe organisation ARC Justice requires disclosure of any formal disciplinary action taken by any current or former employer including any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct.