

Senior Tenancy Lawyer – Position Description

The Role

The Senior Tenancy Lawyer is a key member of an innovative multi-disciplinary team providing integrated access to legal, financial counselling and social work support for renters impacted by the Victorian 2022 floods. Working closely with a social worker and financial counsellor, with support of the generalist legal team, the interdisciplinary team will deliver long-term and sustainable financial, legal and social help to flood victims, leading to better housing and broader life outcomes.

The Senior Tenancy Lawyer will provide legal assistance to private and social housing renters in the area of tenancy law, with a focus on preventing evictions and ensuring renters have access to healthy and sustainable housing. The role involves proactive networking and community engagement, the provision of legal information, and the opportunity to identify and respond to systemic issues and think strategically about preparation for and response to natural disasters. The integrated team will work closely with ARC Justice's disaster-focused Community Engagement Officers and will be a key element of building our capacity to respond to climate related legal need.

The position can be based out of either our Bendigo or Shepparton office. Travel between all our locations (Bendigo, Shepparton and Maryborough) would be expected, for which a fleet vehicle is available.

Key responsibilities

Legal Service Delivery

- Provide legal assistance to renters by way of:
 - Information, referral and advice
 - Ongoing casework which may require conferences, mediation and appearance at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
 - With support, identification of systemic matters appropriate for appeal to the Supreme Court of Victoria

- Delivering placed-based services at partner organisations as required.
- Undertake strategic casework and services and link these to our law reform, policy and community engagement work
- A focus on therapeutic, trauma-informed practice, with a high standard of service to clients experience disadvantage and recovering from a natural disaster
- Ensure quality and consistency of delivery of integrated legal services, aligned with our project partner WestJustice
- Participate in legal team meetings and debriefing with colleagues

Integrated Practice

- Coordinate seamlessly with the social worker, financial counsellor and paralegal to ensure fully integrated service delivery
- Minimise trauma to disaster impacted renters by reducing referrals and ensuring a renter does not unnecessarily have to repeat their story or their needs
- Ensure a holistic approach is taken to support the long term recovery needs of the renter, with sustaining housing as a core outcome
- Collaborate with colleagues in the generalist legal practices and Housing Justice program to address other related legal and practical needs

Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy

- Monitor emerging legal and other needs among flood impacted communities to identify systemic issues and areas of related legal need
- Collaborate internally and across the sector to explore strategic law reform solutions to systemic issues
- Monitor trends in demand and casework to identify systemic issues relating to service design, feeding into organizational strategic planning and work plans
- Raise awareness with the public and partners of the role of community lawyers in supporting individuals and communities in recovering from disasters
- Represent the organisation on designated stakeholder networks and working groups

Evaluation

- Work with the Management Team to evaluate the program and advocate for statewide rollout of the model as an appropriate response to natural disasters
- Contribute to the strategic direction of ARC Justice during a growth phase, with a focus on climate related legal problems, preparing for and responding to natural disasters

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
- Undertake any reasonable additional tasks as directed by management
- 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 stepping outside of our day-to-day work and working collaboratively
- Contribute actively in meetings and quarterly staff days – we value your input and feedback 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. Minimum of 4 years' experience (or equivalent) providing legal advice, casework and representation in the area of residential tenancies law
2. Experience in implementing, advancing and reporting on projects with a strategic focus
3. Demonstrated ability to deliver legal practice within a multi-disciplinary framework
4. Experience networking and building relationships with a broad range of organisations and stakeholders
5. Knowledge and experience in delivering community legal information
6. Exceptional interpersonal skills including a demonstrated ability to engage with people with experience of trauma and disadvantage

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

1. Experience working within a community development and therapeutic framework
2. Experience with community organisations and an understanding of the community legal assistance

sector

3. Experience in policy, law reform and strategic advocacy

Prerequisites

1. Eligible for an unsupervised 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 organization ARC Justice requires disclosure of any formal disciplinary action taken by any current or former employer including any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct