



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position:	Generalist/Tenancy Project Lawyer with CLE component
Duration:	6 months fixed term
Hours and days of work:	Full time – 5 days per week (38 hours per week) (neg) .05 Generalist/.05 Tenancy project lawyer 9am – 5.06pm with ½ hour lunch break (7.6 hours per day)
Classification:	Level 5 (<i>Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010</i>)
Reports to:	Manager, Principal Solicitor

History

The Moonee Valley Legal Service Inc (MVLS) is a not-for-profit organisation which commenced operation in 1985 (previously known as Essendon Community Legal Centre). The centre is a not-for-profit community service managed by a volunteer Board of Management funded primarily by the Commonwealth and State Governments through the CLSP Program. MVLS provides free legal advice, assistance and referrals to people who live, work or study within the City of Moonee Valley catchment, as well as free community legal education to organisations, services and the wider community.

Our Mission

To work with our diverse community to provide high quality, culturally appropriate legal services, community legal education and advocacy.

Our Vision

Social justice and equality for all. To provide a high quality legal service to the most disadvantaged members of the community.

Position Objective

The purpose of this role is to perform the duties of a community lawyer in providing high quality legal services to the local community as well as assisting in the implementation of community development strategies for the service and the provision of community legal education.

This position will include the role of the Project Lawyer to develop and oversee pro-bono public housing clinics and provide public housing tenants with legal advice and assistance, with a particular focus on

tenancy rights and responsibilities, bills and utilities. The Project Lawyer will be responsible for developing and conducting a community engagement campaign to increase the legal literacy of public housing tenants in relation to these common issues, developing multi-lingual community resources and building relationships with key stakeholders.

Main Responsibilities and Duties

Advocacy and Casework

1. Provide expert legal advice, casework and information to clients on a range of matters including: family violence, criminal and traffic matters, fine negotiations and revocation applications, urgent family law matters, motor vehicle accidents, civil and consumer disputes, social security and civil litigation, VOCAT matters with a particular focus on tenancy, bills, utilities and other relevant matters for the project tenancy component;
2. Provide legal advice to individuals and community groups as required, including through legal clinics at the Ascot Vale and Flemington public housing estates;
3. Contribute to the development of MVLS policy in relation to issues connected with the project;
4. On occasions represent clients in tribunals and courts on matters under authority as required;
5. Brief Barristers as required;
6. Provide legal advice to individuals and community groups as required;
7. Liaise with court staff, VCAT, practitioners and other persons and organisations that impact on the work of the legal service and the project;
8. On occasion if required, supervise the night service drop in clinic at MVLS, including providing advice to clients, overseeing the smooth operation of the clinic and supervising volunteer lawyers on the night;
9. Provide outreach legal services at various locations as required;
10. Ensure that MVLS complies with its obligations under applicable funding agreements and the *Uniform Legal Profession Act*;
11. Perform other duties as required by the Principal Lawyer, Manager or Board of Management.

Community Development and Legal Education

1. Assist in the development and maintenance of relationships with key individuals and agencies, including:-
 - a. Moonee Valley City Council;
 - b. Local Settlement Services;
 - c. Language schools;
 - d. Housing agencies;
 - e. Community groups; and
 - f. funding bodies.
1. Participate in relevant network meetings and regional forums, attend and participate in relevant network meetings, community meetings and forums as required by the project;
2. Develop, oversee and deliver public housing tenancy clinics in accordance with project guidelines;
3. Develop and implement a project specific community engagement strategy, in consultation with project stakeholders;
4. Develop and publish project specific, clear, understandable and culturally appropriate community legal education resources and materials for non-English speaking community members, under the supervision of the Principal Lawyer and Manager and in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
5. Partner with other CLC's and agencies to deliver community legal education programs;
6. Develop and deliver community legal education programs to relevant low-income and disadvantaged members of the community, particularly refugee and recently settled communities;
7. Ensure that MVLS completes all community legal education as required by funding agreements;
8. Develop strategies for community development for new and existing projects, with community and agency partners;
9. Participate in annual strategic planning sessions;
10. Improve and promote MVLS to the community by providing information about the service to clients and community organisations;
11. Assist in drafting applications for funding for community development projects;
12. Contribute to the maintenance and updating of the MVLS website and social media accounts as appropriate;
13. Research opportunities to conduct joint projects with other agencies.
14. Coordinate and deliver community forums and other legal education activities to members of the community, in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders;
15. Develop and maintain partnerships and relationships with community groups, key individuals, agencies and other stakeholders;
16. Convene and support project meetings, co-design workshops, focus groups and forums as required;
17. Ensure project responsiveness to existing and emerging needs, and assist in identifying further legal need as appropriate;
18. Improve and promote MVLS to the community by providing information about the service to clients and community organisations.

Compliance, Administration and Supervision

1. Ensure that MVLS complies with professional indemnity insurance requirements;
2. Attend MVLS staff and management meetings as requested;

3. Provide written bi-monthly reports to the Board of Management on the community legal education activities of MVLS;
4. Ensure effective recording of statistics and legal service activities in CLASS and general maintenance of records;
5. Assist in the induction, training and supervision of volunteers and new legal staff as required;
6. Lead by example through clear and effective communication and create a positive team environment;
7. Participate in annual strategic planning and evaluation for the organisation.

Selection Criteria

Essential

- Law degree
- Eligibility to hold an unrestricted Victorian Practising Certificate
- Casework and advocacy experience in a number of the following areas of law: fines, family law matters, motor vehicle accidents, consumer issues, social security, civil litigation and other relevant matters
- Ability to work as part of a small team and collaboratively with other agencies and Board members
- Demonstrated commitment to the philosophy of community legal centres
- Excellent written and interpersonal communication skills
- Computer literacy and understanding of and experience in the use of information technology
- Ability to manage and mentor staff at the legal centre in the development of community development initiatives, and delivery of community legal education services to low income and disadvantaged residents of Moonee Valley and particularly the refugee and recently settled communities.
- Ability to determine the legal needs of marginalized clients and communities, and develop strategies to address those needs.
- Ability to create and deliver community legal education to small and large groups, in a simple format suitable for non-English speaking audiences.
- Ability to conduct policy work and undertake law reform projects.
- Ability to work unsupervised, meet deadlines and initiate own work which is consistent with the philosophy of the Centre and priorities established by the Board of Management.

Desirable

- Experience in the community sector particularly in Community Legal Centres
- Experience in community development and education in a legal context
- Current Victorian Drivers' Licence

Conditions of Employment

As provided for in the *Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010* and the *Community Legal Centres Multi Business Agreement 2006 – 2009*.