

Position Description

Paralegal, Criminal Law Practice, Homeless Persons' Legal Service

12-month fixed term contract with possible extension

Part time, 3 days per week

Sydney based

1. The Justice and Equity Centre

The Justice and Equity Centre (formerly the Public Interest Advocacy Centre) is a leading social justice law and policy centre. We build a fairer, stronger society by helping to change laws, policies and practices that cause injustice and inequality.

Our work combines:

- legal advice and representation, specialising in test cases and strategic casework;
- research, analysis and policy development; and
- advocacy for systems change and public interest outcomes through media, communications, submissions and engagement with decision-makers.

We work across 5 focus areas: First Nations justice; reducing homelessness; disability rights; energy and water justice; and civil rights.

2. Homeless Persons' Legal Service

The Homeless Persons' Legal Service (HPLS) provides people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with legal assistance, advice and representation, to protect their human rights and progress our vision of a community where everyone has a safe and secure home.

HPLS operates free legal outreach clinics at host agencies that provide services to people who are experiencing homelessness in inner-Sydney, Western Sydney and the Hunter region. These clinics are primarily staffed by solicitors from private law firms acting pro bono. The service also relies on the support of Practical Legal Trainees and other volunteers to assist with intake and triage.

The HPLS consumer advisory committee, StreetCare, empowers people with lived experience of homelessness to initiate, inform and influence positive change. The group also helps drive our policy priorities.

Informed by our casework and consumer feedback, HPLS addresses causes of homelessness through strategic engagement and policy advocacy with government and service providers.

3. Position overview

Reporting to the Managing Solicitor, Homeless Persons' Legal Service (HPLS), the Paralegal supports the work of the Criminal Solicitor Advocate as well as assisting with administration for the HPLS team more generally.

HPLS is the JEC's largest project, providing free legal assistance for people experiencing homelessness at outreach clinics in Sydney and the Hunter region. We also provide a specialist criminal law service in Sydney, with a particular focus on diverting clients with mental health conditions from the criminal justice system. The criminal law practice is a busy one that seeks to provide a responsive and individualised service.

4. Major accountabilities

For the HPLS criminal practice:

- 4.1 Manage files including opening, updating, filing, closing and archiving files/client records (both hardcopy and electronic) as required
- 4.2 Process files post-court, including drafting outcome letters and diarising dates
- 4.3 Liaise with clients, including responding to their enquiries and making bookings for appointments with clients in custody
- 4.4 Liaise with stakeholders eg. Police, Corrections, Courts to seek information
- 4.5 Provide administrative assistance including photocopying, document preparation, diary management
- 4.6 Assist the Criminal Solicitor Advocate with legal drafting tasks as required.

As part of the HPLS team:

- 4.7 Respond to HPLS phone and email enquiries from clients, volunteers and the general public
- 4.8 Assist with reception cover as required
- 4.9 Assist the HPLS Administrator with administrative tasks as required
- 4.10 Train volunteers and new staff on relevant HPLS systems and procedures.
- 4.11 Support the successful implementation of the JEC's Reconciliation Action Plan
- 4.12 Other duties as reasonably required.

5. Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- 5.1 Experience working in a legal practice;
- 5.2 Experience in the delivery of administrative support services including word processing and data entry skills.
- 5.3 Capacity to exercise sound judgment in dealing with sensitive and confidential matters;
- 5.4 Demonstrated skills in dealing confidently and courteously with a range of different people, including in stressful situations;

- 5.5 Ability to draft correspondence;
- 5.6 Excellent attention to detail;
- 5.7 A capacity to successfully manage competing priorities and meet deadlines; and
- 5.8 The ability to work cooperatively as part of a team.

Desirable

- 5.9 Experience in a criminal law practice
- 5.10 Experience working at a Community Legal Centre

6. Conditions

We are an equal opportunity employer and are committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Annual salary range: \$73,345 to \$79,739 (pro rata where applicable) plus leave loading and superannuation.

We are a Public Benevolent Institution and are currently able to offer salary packaging options subject to our Salary Sacrifice Policy. Staff who take full advantage of salary packaging options can significantly increase their take-home pay.

Our Enterprise Agreement provides benefits including additional paid leave between Christmas and New Year and paid cultural and ceremonial leave. See further: [Justice and Equity Centre Enterprise Agreement](#).

This position is a part time position, 0.6FTE, for a fixed period of 12 months, with flexible working arrangements available.

We are committed to flexible working arrangements and provides opportunities for professional development and mentoring. Our workplace culture is collaborative, dynamic and committed to cultural safety.

7. Applications

Your application should be no longer than 6 pages in total. An application should comprise a cover letter, resume, and a statement outlining your suitability for the role with reference to the selection criteria (see 'Knowledge, skills and experience').

Applications should be sent by email to jobs@jec.org.au

Inquiries about the position should be addressed to:

Wes Burton
Managing Solicitor, HPLS
wburton@jec.org.au

If you would like to discuss the recruitment process and any reasonable adjustments you may require, please contact jobs@jec.org.au