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A Community Legal Centre

POSITION: Solicitor Advocate/ Managing Solicitor

Fitzroy Legal Service

The Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) opened its doors in December 1972.

FLS provides critical analysis of legal issues within a broad social context. It functions as a community-based organisation; independent of government with involvement in activities that are reflective of rights based services. It serves members of the community whose access to legal resources is limited.

FLS has:

- a large volunteer night advice service operating 5 nights a week as well as an outreach service and two specialist clinics,
- a self funding day practice offering criminal and selected general law casework and court representation, and a Duty Lawyer Service at the Neighbourhood Justice Centre in Collingwood and
- a web and publications unit that produces the Law Handbook annually and an online version of the publication as well as other publications

FLS is active in law reform, development of legal policy and research.

FLS has a team based organisational structure. The work teams are the Administration team, Casework team and Social Action team. FLS also has a Finance committee and a Publications committee.

POSITION OBJECTIVES:

The Position oversees and manages the legal practice of the organization and ensures that all the legal and administrative requirements for the Professional Indemnity Insurance are met

Like all Fitzroy Legal Service employees, the Principal Solicitor is also expected to participate in the life of the service and to promote the objectives of the Fitzroy Legal Service.

RESPONSIBLE TO:

The Management Committee (MC) shall control and manage the business of the organization.

BY APPOINTMENT MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9AM-5PM
NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY 6.30-9PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY

DONATIONS OF \$2 OR MORE ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

ABN 46 187 177 143

On behalf of MC, the Executive Officer assumes day-to-day management of all matters relating to recruitment, induction and staffing, work planning and organization, work environment, employee relations. The Principal Solicitor reports directly to the Executive Officer.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Duties:

Advocacy and Casework

Appearing in court almost daily on behalf of clients in summary criminal matters in the Magistrates' Court and Children's Court in pleas of guilty and bail applications (including contested).

Casework with an emphasis on criminal law

Arranging for and briefing Barristers to represent clients at court

Giving advice on the telephone to individuals in custody, and also community groups who need general advice.

Directing and referring people during the day

Income generation and practice

- Assist the Practice Team staff to meet income target as set by Management Committee, the Practice team and the FLS finance committee
- Assist and support the Executive Officer to identify income generation opportunities for the Practice team Maintain and expand the links with the private sector partners (particularly Allens.)
- Apply for grants of Legal Aid and report to VLA
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Trust Accounts

- Manage and be responsible for the Fitzroy Legal Service Practice Trust Account

Management and administration

- Ensure that FLS complies with its obligations under applicable funding agreements
- Ensure that FLS complies with professional indemnity insurance requirements
- Attend professional indemnity insurance meetings of the Federation of Community Legal Centres
- Ensure that FLS complies with its obligations under the Legal Profession Act 2005
- Coordinate at least fortnightly Practice team meetings
- Attend FLS staff and management meetings
- Ensure that the Management Committee and Executive Officer of FLS are properly apprised of the FLS casework activities

Supervision and support

- Provide regular supervision for lawyers and volunteers in Practice team as appropriate,
- Provide regular supervision for the legal trainee
- Oversee the volunteer night service files and liaise with Night Service Coordinators to ensure effective file management of the Night Service
- Ensure effective maintenance and review of client files for day service.
- Ensure effective recording of statistics and legal service activities and maintenance of records
- Assist in the developing orientation, training and supervision of volunteers and new legal staff

Professional development

- Ensure that FLS lawyers meet professional development requirements
- Identify and address training needs of FLS lawyers
- Participate in appropriate staff development including conferences and seminars

General:

- Participate in annual planning and evaluation the organisation.
- Attend monthly staff meetings, management committee meetings and other meetings as required from time to time.
- Administrative work incidental to other tasks.
- Other appropriate duties as may be required from time to time by the Executive Officer and Management Committee

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA:

Qualifications:

- To be admitted or eligible for admission to practice as an Australian Legal Practitioner and hold a practicing certificate in the State of Victoria.
- At least five years relevant experience as a Solicitor to meet the Legal Practice Board requirements to supervise a trainee

Essential:

1. Extensive experience as a Solicitor Advocate with appearance work in criminal law
2. Experience in working in complex environments and meeting a demanding practice budget
3. Extensive supervision and legal management experience
4. A demonstrated experience or ability to supervise legal and non legal staff, including volunteers
5. An understanding of community legal centres and principles of non-profit organizations.
6. Highly developed communication skills, both written and oral
7. Experience or an ability to manage a Trust Account

SALARY & CONDITIONS:

Permanent full-time 38 hours/week

Annual Salary of \$60,000 per annum (excluding superannuation and salary packaging)

Superannuation benefits and other professional development opportunities offered.

Salary packaging is currently offered to all permanent employees i.e. salary to non-taxable fringe benefit

Work hours will be flexible but the worker will be expected to spread the hours over the day service and to have regular contact with the night service. Attendance at some night meetings is required. Over-time is not paid but FLS has a time-in lieu policy.

A compulsory superannuation scheme paid by the employer applies to all positions at FLS. A travel allowance is also paid at the rate governed by the Public Service scales in Victoria for any travel undertaken in the course of work.

Closing date 2 August 2010 5PM