




Are you an **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander** looking for a **legal career?**

Legal Aid NSW is committed to increasing its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to ensure that the organisation is reflective of our client base.

The Legal Aid NSW **Judge Bob Bellear Legal Career Pathways Program** offers employment and career development opportunities for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. This brochure outlines how you can benefit and where to apply.

Artwork: © Luke Penrith

Legal Aid
NEW SOUTH WALES



Legal Aid NSW is one of the largest practices in NSW, with 28 offices across metropolitan and regional areas.

Legal Aid NSW is established under the Legal Aid Commission Act 1979 and is an independent statutory body. We are a state-wide organisation providing legal services to socially and economically disadvantaged people across NSW, delivering legal services in most areas of criminal, family and civil law.

One of the functions of the legal system is to safeguard people's rights. The legal system can only perform this protective role if people have equitable access to it. Legal Aid NSW plays a special role in improving access to justice by providing a range of legal service to disadvantaged people.

Legal Aid NSW also works with community legal centres, the Aboriginal Legal Service and private lawyers to provide legal services to people throughout New South Wales.

Aboriginal people are a priority client group for Legal Aid NSW. To help ensure services and the work environment are culturally sensitive and appropriate, Legal Aid NSW has an Aboriginal Services Branch (ASB). The ASB coordinates, develops and implements initiatives relating specifically to Aboriginal clients, communities and staff.



Judge Bob Bellear

Judge Bob Bellear was a Noonucal/NI-Vanuatu man from Mullumbimby, on the north coast of New South Wales. Surrounded by poverty, he was forced to leave school at a young age to support his large family. After witnessing one too many instances of racism towards Aboriginal Australians, he went back and completed his Higher School Certificate before continuing on to university, where he studied law.



Judge Bellear became a barrister and Public Defender before being appointed Australia's first Aboriginal judge in 1996. He was also a mentor to many young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, encouraging and supporting them in the pursuit of a career in law. Judge Bellear helped establish the first Aboriginal Legal Service in Redfern and the Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern.

“Bob has spent his life fighting for Aboriginal people, and his dedication to social justice never faltered.”*

Judge Bellear also founded the Aboriginal Housing Company. He conducted three successful Land Claims for the traditional owners in the Northern Territory and was Counsel Assisting in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Judge Bob Bellear was an immensely respected community member, a trailblazer, a role model, and a tireless advocate of Aboriginal Australia.*

*Source: Vibe Australia 1 April 2005, <https://www.deadlyvibe.com.au/2007/11/judge-bob-bellar>



Graduate Experience



Tamara Grennan, graduate lawyer: Tamara's first rotation has been exciting and enjoyable. "I've been blessed with a team filled with experienced lawyers that have been incredibly welcoming and supportive of me."

The work of the Inner City Local Courts team is extremely rewarding and interesting and I look forward to developing my skills and contributing to the work that Legal Aid does over the next two years."



Lauren Davies, Former Graduate Lawyer: "The Graduate program allowed me to enhance my legal knowledge and skills in an area of law I had not yet practiced in and ended up growing to love. It was such an incredible employment opportunity, and I loved working with mob to address their legal issues. Legal Aid has such a diverse range of practice areas, I would encourage mob to expand their legal interests within Grad program if they get the opportunity."


Cadet Experience



Keya-Rose Lloyd, cadet: "The cadetship offers invaluable professional experience and financial support for the duration of your time. I was given guidance, flexible work times and shown patience and understanding. The flexibility of this program is the best thing about it. You can adapt it around your study which is so important. It has been the best experience. It pushes you out of your comfort zone and rewards you in the best possible way".



Jake Fing, cadet: "The cadetship program has allowed me to gain in-depth practical experience within the legal profession and has enlightened me to so many different career opportunities when working within the legal sphere. It has also allowed me to meet many different people throughout my journey; Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who make a difference every day."



The Judge Bob Bellear Legal Career Pathways Program was established in 2007 to support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through their tertiary studies and early legal career. The program is a key component of our Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy.

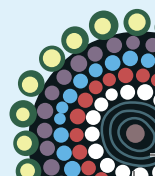
The Judge Bob Bellear Legal Career Pathways Program offers:


- **Identified positions and targeted recruitment** for recruitment of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, including Legal Officers, Legal Support Officers and other administrative positions (including Aboriginal Traineeships).
- **Cadetships** for full-time undergraduate law students to provide support in obtaining a law degree through financial assistance and paid work placement of twelve weeks each year.
- **Professional legal placements** which enable law graduates to complete their practical legal training to gain admission as a solicitor and provide valuable work experience in preparation for their legal career.
- **Graduate positions** which involves a two-year placement in two legal practice areas for law graduates who have completed Practical Legal Training and are eligible to practice.

Employment with Legal Aid NSW

Legal Aid NSW has a number of positions that are identified or targeted for recruitment of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, including legal officer, legal Support officer and other administrative positions. Identified positions are only open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants.

Legal Aid NSW advertises regularly for positions or programs that are identified or targeted at Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. These positions are advertised online at www.iworkfor.nsw.gov.au. All applications must be submitted online at www.iworkfor.nsw.gov.au





What support is available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members?

The Legal Aid NSW Aboriginal Services Branch provides the following support:

- An Aboriginal Staff Network
- Support and career development opportunities
- Updates and involvement in community events
- Aboriginal cultural awareness training for all staff

“The Bob Bellear Program is a great legacy to a great man and will lead to a new generation of Aboriginal lawyers.”

Kirsten Cheetham, former Legal Aid NSW Graduate

How to apply

Positions are advertised through the I work for NSW website:

www.iworkfor.nsw.gov.au

To find out if you are eligible to apply visit Legal Careers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on the Legal Aid NSW website:

www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/about-us/careers/careers-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islanders

For more information about our employment programs or support for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, contact the Legal Aid NSW Aboriginal Services Branch: aboriginalservices@legalaid.nsw.gov.au