

# Role Description

## Executive Director, Legal Services

Cluster	Stronger Communities
Agency	Legal Aid NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Executive Unit
Classification/Grade/Band	PSSE Band 2
Senior Executive Work Level Standards	Work Contribution Stream: Professional/Technical/Specialist
ANZSCO Code	111211
PCAT Code	2228192
Date of Approval	May 2025
Agency Website	<a href="http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au">www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au</a>

### Agency overview

Legal Aid NSW is the largest legal aid agency in Australia, comprising a Central Sydney office and 28 regional offices in metropolitan and regional centres across NSW including the two satellite offices located at Walgett and Bourke and a number of specialist services and advice clinics. It was established under the *Legal Aid Commission Act 1979* as an independent authority to assist economically and socially disadvantaged people to understand and protect their rights in the legal system. People with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women and children, Indigenous people and people with mental illness are some of the groups who may experience difficulties when enforcing and defending their rights.

Working in partnership with private lawyers, Legal Aid NSW provides legal advice, information and minor assistance and legal representation to eligible people in many areas of law. Legal Aid NSW also provides alternative dispute resolution services, community legal education programs, and publications on legal issues.

### Primary purpose of the role

Provide leadership and strategic direction in the organisational delivery of:

- Corporate legal services including in-house counsel, strategic law reform and client eligibility units;
- Risk management and audit functions including performing the role of Chief Risk Officer and Chief Audit Officer;
- The administration of the various funding programs administered by Legal Aid NSW;
- The delivery of administrative support functions;
- Private practitioner quality standards;
- Facilities and
- The Legal Aid NSW library

This role also provides corporate counsel to the Legal Aid Executive and the CEO as required and holds the title of *Solicitor on the Record*.

As a member of the Executive team, this role contributes to the development of the Legal Aid NSW broader strategies and service delivery planning to ensure the provision of high quality and innovative legal services.

## **Key accountabilities**

- Review, assess and implement policies, programs and practices to identify opportunities for improvement and excellence in the delivery of high-quality legal services on behalf of Legal Aid NSW.
- Lead and direct the management of the state-wide delivery of administrative support to achieve optimal levels of service delivery. Ensure administrative resourcing is delivered in accordance with needs consistently across regional and metropolitan offices.
- Provide leadership to the In-House Counsel Unit to ensure timely and accurate delivery of legal advice to or representation on behalf of the Board, Executive and staff on a range of complex matters.
- The Executive Director is the Chief Risk Officer, Chief Audit Officer and the Solicitor on Record for Legal Aid NSW and, as such, leads the organisational audit and risk functions and provide strategic advice to the Audit and Risk Committee, CEO and Executive to manage and mitigate risks.
- Lead and direct the Client Eligibility Unit to develop and support eligibility policies for legal assistance and the provision of advice on policy issues to the Legal Aid NSW Board, Executive and employees.
- Lead and direct the Private Lawyer Quality Standards Unit to ensure efficient and effective use of resources and the application of quality standards including implementation of the compliance framework and quality standards in accordance with the Legal Aid NSW's Private Practitioner Quality Framework.
- Lead, direct and guide the Director, Funding Program to ensure that Legal Aid NSW fulfils its mandate to administer and acquit funding to NGOs on behalf of Government and monitor and report on service delivery and service standard compliance by service providers.
- Lead both the library and facilities teams to ensure services are cost-effective and responsive to the needs of staff.
- Provide leadership, decision making and strong collaboration skills with key internal and external stakeholders including the service disruption, crisis and disaster response functions.

## **Key challenges**

- Co-ordinating and integrating Legal Aid NSW administrative services across different disciplines of law and regional offices within budget and time constraints and competing requests.
- Providing leadership and guidance when giving advice in relation to highly sensitive and often political matters with wide-ranging implications.
- Managing resources and workforce planning across a wide range of legal aid services and programs to meet existing and emerging community needs given limited funding and identifying initiatives for legal aid service and program improvements and developments that enhance quality, efficiency and equity of service delivery.
- Providing strategic insight and direction to ensure that Legal Aid NSW is able to identify, assess and respond to risks whilst also identifying and mitigating key enterprise risks and challenges

## Key relationships

Who	Why
<b>Internal</b>	
Audit and Risk Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receive guidance, exchange information and to provide timely, expert, strategic advice and reporting on audit and risk compliance.</li></ul>
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss priorities, strategic issues, interdependencies and interrelationships; obtain strategic signoff; provide timely, expert, strategic advice and counsel to the CEO and senior executives.</li></ul>
Executive team and senior managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide timely, expert, strategic advice and information to Executives and senior managers of units which report to this role</li></ul>
Directors/Managers who report to this role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide direction and leadership; determine strategic and operational priorities; monitor and review work performance; provide guidance and coaching to ensure effective performance and capability developments</li><li>• Act as the point of escalation for matters relating to audit, risk and the role of Solicitor on the Record.</li></ul>

## Role dimensions

### Decision making

The role works with a high level of autonomy and will escalate issues directly to the CEO and Audit and Risk Committee. The role is a member of the Executive Leadership team and contributes to organisational decision making, planning and continual improvement. The role is fully accountable for the quality, integrity and validity of information and advice provided.

### Reporting line

CEO

### Direct reports

- Director, Administration of Funding Programs
- Manager Client Eligibility Unit
- Solicitor in Charge, In-house Counsel (includes legal library section)
- Manager Administration Transformation
- Solicitor in Charge, Private Lawyer Quality Standards Unit
- Manager Facilities
- Manager Strategic Law Reform
- Senior Internal Auditor
- Executive Assistant

### Budget/Expenditure

Staffing and Budget

Reporting Directly: 9

Budget Total: TBC

## Essential requirements

Demonstrated leadership experience in a senior executive role responsible for legal services

Legal Qualifications

Practicing Certificate (unrestricted)

Knowledge and understanding of the issues and challenges affecting vulnerable people and the impact on their socio-legal requirements

Demonstrated executive level experience in enterprise audit and risk management






## Capabilities for the role

The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at [www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework)

### Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 Personal Attributes	<b>Display Resilience and Courage</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
	<b>Act with Integrity</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	Manage Self	Advanced
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Adept
 Relationships	<b>Communicate Effectively</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	Commit to Customer Service	Advanced
	Work Collaboratively	Advanced
	<b>Influence and Negotiate</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
 Results	<b>Deliver Results</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>
	Plan and Prioritise	Advanced
	Think and Solve Problems	Advanced
	<b>Demonstrate Accountability</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
 Business Enablers	Finance	Adept
	Technology	Adept
	Procurement and Contract Management	Adept
	<b>Project Management</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
 People Management	<b>Manage and Develop People</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Advanced
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Adept
	<b>Manage Reform and Change</b>	<b>Highly Advanced</b>

### Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

This section needs to be updated with the correct behavioural indicators for the amended levels.

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Personal Attributes</b> Display Resilience and Courage	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain composed and calm and act constructively in highly pressured and unpredictable environments</li> <li>• Give frank, honest advice in response to strong contrary views</li> <li>• Accept criticism of own ideas and respond in a thoughtful and considered way</li> <li>• Welcome new challenges and persist in raising and working through novel and difficult issues</li> </ul>

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop effective strategies and show decisiveness in dealing with emotionally charged situations and difficult or controversial issues</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Personal Attributes</b> Act with Integrity	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Champion and act as an advocate for the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour</li> <li>Drive a culture of integrity and professionalism across the organisation, and in dealings cross-government, cross-jurisdiction and outside of government</li> <li>Define, communicate and evaluate ethical practices, standards and systems and reinforce their use</li> <li>Create and promote a climate in which staff feel able to report apparent breaches of rules, policies and guidelines and act promptly and visibly in response to such reports</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Communicate Effectively	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate complex concepts and put forward compelling arguments and rationales to all levels and types of audiences</li> <li>Speak in a highly articulate and influential manner</li> <li>State the facts and explain their implications for the organisation and key stakeholders</li> <li>Promote the organisation's position with authority and credibility across government, other jurisdictions and external organisations</li> <li>Anticipate and address key areas of interest for the audience and adapt style under pressure</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Influence and Negotiate	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in a range of approaches to generate solutions, seeking expert inputs and advice to inform negotiating strategy</li> <li>Use sound arguments, strong evidence, and expert opinion to influence outcomes</li> <li>Determine and communicate the organisation's position and bargaining strategy</li> <li>Represent the organisation in critical negotiations, including those that are cross-jurisdictional, achieving effective solutions in challenging relationships, ambiguous and conflicting positions</li> <li>Pre-empt and avoid conflict across organisations and with senior internal and external stakeholders</li> <li>Identify contentious issues, direct discussion and debate, and steer parties towards an effective resolution</li> </ul>
<b>Results</b> Deliver Results	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a culture of achievement, fostering on-time and on-budget quality outcomes in the organisation</li> <li>Identify, recognise and celebrate success</li> <li>Establish systems to ensure all staff are able to identify direct connection between their effort and organisational outcomes</li> <li>Identify and remove potential barriers or hurdles to ongoing and long term achievement of outcomes</li> </ul>

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Results</b> Demonstrate Accountability	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate and communicate high level priorities for the organisation to achieve government outcomes</li> <li>Use own professional knowledge and expertise of others to drive organisational and government objectives forward</li> <li>Design and develop systems to establish and measure accountabilities</li> <li>Ensure accountabilities are exercised in line with government and business goals</li> <li>Exercise due diligence to ensure work health and safety risks are addressed</li> <li>Oversee quality assurance practices</li> <li>Model the highest standards of financial probity, demonstrating respect for public monies and other resources</li> <li>Monitor and maintain business unit knowledge of and compliance with legislative and regulatory frameworks</li> <li>Incorporate sound risk management principles and strategies into business planning</li> </ul>
<b>Business Enablers</b> Project Management	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare scope and business cases for more ambiguous or complex projects including cost and resource impacts</li> <li>Access key subject-matter experts' knowledge to inform project plans and directions</li> <li>Implement effective stakeholder engagement and communications strategy for all stages of projects</li> <li>Monitor the completion of projects and implement effective and rigorous project evaluation methodologies to inform future planning</li> <li>Develop effective strategies to remedy variances from project plans, and minimise impacts</li> <li>Manage transitions between project stages and ensure that changes are consistent with organisational goals</li> </ul>
<b>People Management</b> Manage and Develop People	Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine roles and responsibilities over time to achieve better business outcomes</li> <li>Recognise talent, develop team capability and undertake succession planning</li> <li>Coach and mentor staff and encourage professional development and continuous learning</li> <li>Provide timely, constructive and objective feedback to staff</li> <li>Address and resolve team and individual performance issues, including serious unsatisfactory performance, in a timely and effective way</li> <li>Implement performance development frameworks to align workforce capability with the organisation's current and future priorities and objectives</li> </ul>
<b>People Management</b> Manage Reform and Change	Highly Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drive a continuous improvement agenda, define high level objectives and translate these into practical implementation strategies</li> </ul>

## NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build staff support and commitment to announced change, and plan and prepare for long-term organisational change, with a focus on the wider political, social and environmental context</li><li>• Create an organisational culture that actively seeks opportunities to improve</li><li>• Anticipate, plan for and address cultural barriers to change at the organisational level</li></ul>