

Role Description

Solicitor in Charge VI - Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities



Cluster	Stronger Communities
Agency	Legal Aid NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Family Law
Classification/Grade/Band	Legal Officer Grade VI
ANZSCO Code	271311
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	28 September 2021 Reviewed May 2024
Agency Website	www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

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. Legal Aid NSW also has specialist services for priority client groups and an extensive outreach program. 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, refugees and people with mental illness are some groups who may experience difficulties when enforcing and defending their rights.

Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities

The Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities is a state-wide specialist team within the Family Law Division that delivers targeted and holistic legal services to disadvantaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities through outreach and by phone. The Unit provides support, training, and guidance to the Family Law Division in the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in the family law and care and protection jurisdictions and works in partnership with other legal and non-legal service providers. The Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities also engages in strategic advocacy about systemic issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families across NSW.

Primary purpose of the role

Provide senior leadership and management of the Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities and contribute to the strategic direction of the Family Law Division.

Key accountabilities

- Lead an innovative and targeted specialist family law service for Aboriginal families and children.

- Manage a legal practice that delivers high quality, efficient and effective case work, advice, minor assistance and extended legal assistance in accordance with service delivery plans and the strategic direction of the organisation, the Family Law Division and team.
- Managing a diverse workforce of lawyers, support staff and allied professionals to deliver a holistic service within resource and service delivery constraints.
- Provide training, supervision, guidance and mentoring to ensure a highly capable workforce that is flexible, developed and equipped and provides culturally safe and appropriate services to Aboriginal communities.
- Develop and deliver on strategies and contribute to law reform and policy initiatives to improve access to justice and address systemic legal issues facing Aboriginal people and communities.
- Lead the delivery of services in any specialist Aboriginal lists established in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia and the Children's Court.
- Develop and maintain effective partnerships and relationships both internal and external to improve access to justice for Aboriginal clients and communities.
- Contribute to the overall leadership and direction of the Family Law Division through the Family Law Executive.

Key challenges

- Developing and maintaining a responsive statewide legal service that is culturally competent and safe for clients and staff that maintains culturally safe and appropriate ways of working with Aboriginal clients and communities within a mainstream organisation.
- Prioritising resources and service responses to Aboriginal clients and communities with the greatest unmet legal need.
- Developing and maintaining a large number and range of internal and external relationships and partnerships, including the Aboriginal Legal Service, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, and the Department of Communities and Justice, to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people, including through the development of referral pathways for early intervention in care and protection matters, managing and taking account of competing views and different priorities.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Associate Director, Family Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalate issues, keep informed of key risks and projects, seek support and guidance • Provide advice and expertise on issues affecting Aboriginal clients, communities and staff
Family Law Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the strategic direction and service delivery priorities of the Family Law Division • Provide advice and expertise on issues affecting Aboriginal clients and communities
Family Law Division and the Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership, direction, guidance and mentoring • Build the capability of staff, particularly senior solicitors • Obtain the team perspective on organisational initiatives and direction • Share information, knowledge and expertise

Who	Why
Aboriginal Services Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on and contribute to initiatives on cultural competency, cultural safety and best practice approaches to working with Aboriginal clients Ensure that Aboriginal staff are supported in the workplace, and career pathways are developed in alignment with the Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy
Regional offices and other specialist teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership to deliver services Provide guidance and direction on areas of specialist expertise
External	
Aboriginal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with communities to identify needs and address systemic issues
Legal and non-legal service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership or collaboration to deliver services Keep informed of relevant projects and services
Other stakeholders including government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to law reform, engage in systemic advocacy, develop legal service delivery and contribute to other joint projects

Role dimensions

Decision making

The Solicitor in Charge provides senior Aboriginal leadership and strategic direction to the Family Law Program. The role operates with autonomy for day to day work priorities and the coordination of work and team resources to meet service delivery needs. The Solicitor in Charge provides advice, decision making and supervision to solicitors and staff reporting to the role. The role has delegation for certain policy and casework decisions within relevant legislation and guidelines. They can approve expenditure within budget for travel and outreach costs.

Reporting line

Associate Director, Family Law

Direct reports

Legal Officers V,

Legal Officers IV

Legal Officers I-III

Office Manager, Clerk Grade 5/6

Caseworkers, Clerk Grade 5/6

Aboriginal Field Officers, Clerk Grade 5/6

Budget/Expenditure

Nil

Essential requirements

- Aboriginality
- Qualifications to practice as an Australian legal practitioner
- NSW Practising Certificate
- Working with Children Check
- Capacity to travel regularly, and to regional and remote areas
- Comprehensive understanding and knowledge of working with Aboriginal clients and communities

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.


The capabilities are separated into focus capabilities and complementary capabilities

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Focus capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain composed and calm and act constructively in highly pressured and unpredictable environments • Give frank, honest advice in response to strong contrary views • Accept criticism of own ideas and respond in a thoughtful and considered way • Welcome new challenges and persist in raising and working through novel and difficult issues • Develop effective strategies and show decisiveness in dealing with emotionally charged situations and difficult or controversial issues 	Advanced



Value Diversity and Inclusion

Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives

- Encourage and include diverse perspectives in the development of policies and strategies
- Take advantage of diverse views and perspectives to develop new approaches to delivering outcomes
- Build and monitor a workplace culture that enables diversity and fair and inclusive practices
- Implement practices and systems to ensure that individuals can participate to their fullest ability
- Recognise the value of individual differences to support broader organisational strategies
- Address non-inclusive behaviours, practices and attitudes within the organisation
- Champion the business benefits generated by workforce diversity and inclusive practices

Advanced






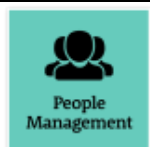
Influence and Negotiate

Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts

- Influence others with a fair and considered approach and present persuasive counter-arguments
- Work towards mutually beneficial 'win-win' outcomes
- Show sensitivity and understanding in resolving acute and complex conflicts and differences
- Identify key stakeholders and gain their support in advance
- Establish a clear negotiation position based on research, a firm grasp of key issues, likely arguments, points of difference and areas for compromise
- Anticipate and minimise conflict within the organisation and with external stakeholders

Advanced

	Think and Solve Problems Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and apply critical-thinking techniques in analysing information, identify interrelationships and make recommendations based on relevant evidence • Anticipate, identify and address issues and potential problems that may have an impact on organisational objectives and the user experience • Apply creative-thinking techniques to generate new ideas and options to address issues and improve the user experience • Seek contributions and ideas from people with diverse backgrounds and experience • Participate in and contribute to team or unit initiatives to resolve common issues or barriers to effectiveness • Identify and share business process improvements to enhance effectiveness 	Adept
	Project Management Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand project goals, steps to be undertaken and expected outcomes • Plan and deliver tasks in line with agreed project milestones and timeframes • Check progress against agreed milestones and timeframes, and seek help to overcome barriers • Participate in planning and provide feedback on progress and potential improvements to project processes 	Foundational
	Manage and Develop People Engage and motivate staff, and develop capability and potential in others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine roles and responsibilities over time to achieve better business outcomes • Recognise talent, develop team capability and undertake succession planning • Coach and mentor staff and encourage professional development and continuous learning • Prioritise addressing and resolving team and individual performance issues and ensure that this approach is cascaded throughout the organisation • Implement performance development frameworks to align workforce capability with the organisation's current and future priorities and objectives 	Advanced



Inspire Direction and Purpose










Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements





- Promote a sense of purpose and enable others to understand the links between government policy, organisational goals and public value
- Build a shared sense of direction, clarify priorities and goals, and inspire others to achieve these
- Work with others to translate strategic direction into operational goals and build a shared understanding of the link between these and core business outcomes
- Create opportunities for recognising and celebrating high performance at the individual and team level
- Instil confidence, and cultivate an attitude of openness and curiosity in tackling future challenges

Advanced



Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities. Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self	Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning	Advanced
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect	Adept
 Relationships	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Adept
 Results	Deliver Results	Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes	Adept
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Adept
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Intermediate

	Technology	Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Adept
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Adept
	Manage Reform and Change	Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change	Adept

Occupational Specific Complimentary Capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Legal Advice	Provide quality independent legal advice and explanation of legal issues	Level 3
	Advocacy	Act as an effective and ethical advocate	Level 3