

Role Description

Senior Solicitor

Grade IV



Cluster	Stronger Communities
Agency	Legal Aid NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Legal Services - Family Law Division, Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities
Classification/Grade/Band	Legal Officer Grade IV
ANZSCO Code	271311
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	07 July 2022
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 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 information, legal advice, 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.

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 management and leadership in the Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities team, including the provision of family law, care and protection law, domestic violence law and other services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, in accordance with the Legal Aid NSW Plan and the Family Law Division Business Plan. This includes directly providing legal services to clients of Legal Aid NSW, including in more complex matters.

Key accountabilities

- Providing an efficient and effective legal service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in accordance with legislation and directions, policy, guidelines, and practice standards.
- Determining applications for legal aid under delegated authority and consistent with the Legal Aid Commission Act, policy, and guidelines and/or submitting applications for Legal Aid to the Grants Division.
- Contributing to development and ongoing review of legal aid policies and guidelines.
- Contribute to law reform and policy initiatives to improve access to justice and address systemic legal issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.
- Supervise, lead and manage solicitors including providing advice and guidance on the management of a legal practice, induction and training of new staff, performance planning and reviewing, conducting regular file reviews and ensuring compliance with Legal Aid NSW policies and guidelines, delegations and relevant practice standards
- Utilising new systems and technology including the Legal Aid NSW electronic case management/tracking system and database including entering data in accordance with the standards and requirements of the systems, preparing required documentation and maintaining appropriate records in both soft and hard copy forms.
- Keeping up-to-date on legal developments and procedures including best practice provision of family and child protection services, changes in Legal Aid policies, systems, guidelines, and practices and community needs.
- Determining applications for legal aid under delegated authority and consistent with the Legal Aid Commission Act, policy and guidelines and/or submitting applications for Legal Aid to the Grants Division; including making recommendations about merit and exercising discretion as required, preparing reports for the Legal Aid Review Committee as required and complying with practice standards for case management including performing case related accounting duties.

Key challenges

- Being able to communicate with, take instructions from and effectively represent a wide range of people including people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, those who may be distressed, have a physical or intellectual disability, or have problem behaviours such as drug or alcohol addictions, when the legal concepts involved are complex and difficult for the client to understand.
- Maintaining and enhancing professional competence, keeping abreast of legal developments, changes in Legal Aid policies, systems, guidelines and practices and community needs.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of creative, effective and tailored strategies to build the capacity of legal officers in the Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities and Family Law Division, support the legal work undertaken through regional offices, outreach and Family Law projects and respond effectively to legal and systemic issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Solicitor in Charge, FamAC	Support and guidance
Grade V Solicitor, FamAC	Reports to this position

Who	Why
Solicitors, mental health workers, paralegals and other team members	Providing Supervision, direction, guidance and mentoring
Regional offices and other specialist teams	Work in partnership to deliver services Provide guidance and direction on areas of specialist expertise.
External	
Clients	Provide advice, assistance and representation
Aboriginal communities	Work with communities to identify needs and address systemic issues and provide community legal education
Private practitioners	Assigning legal aid work
Legal and non-legal service providers	Work in partnership or collaboration to deliver services Keep informed of relevant projects and services

Role dimensions

Decision making

Working under the supervision of the Grade V or SIC of Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities in relation to day-to-day work priorities and the coordination of work and resources.

Reporting line

Solicitor in Charge – Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities

Grade V Senior Solicitor – Family Law Service for Aboriginal Communities

Direct reports

Legal Officers I-III and/or Paralegal Officers

Essential requirements

- Legal Qualifications
- Practising Certificate
- Must hold valid NSW drivers license and the ability for remote travel
- A Working with Children Check is required for some roles within the Family Law Division

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
	Act with Integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Represent the organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so Act professionally and support a culture of integrity Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate Act to prevent and report misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour	Adept
	Manage Self Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning	Adapt existing skills to new situations Show commitment to achieving work goals Show awareness of own strengths and areas for growth, and develop and apply new skills Seek feedback from colleagues and stakeholders Stay motivated when tasks become difficult	Intermediate
	Influence and Negotiate Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Negotiate from an informed and credible position Lead and facilitate productive discussions with staff and stakeholders Encourage others to talk, share and debate ideas to achieve a consensus Recognise diverse perspectives and the need for compromise in negotiating mutually agreed outcomes Influence others with a fair and considered approach and sound arguments Show sensitivity and understanding in resolving conflicts and differences Manage challenging relationships with internal and external stakeholders Anticipate and minimise conflict	Adept



Deliver Results

Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes

Use own and others' expertise to achieve outcomes, and take responsibility for delivering intended outcomes

Make sure staff understand expected goals and acknowledge staff success in achieving these

Identify resource needs and ensure goals are achieved within set budgets and deadlines

Use business data to evaluate outcomes and inform continuous improvement

Identify priorities that need to change and ensure the allocation of resources meets new business needs

Ensure that the financial implications of changed priorities are explicit and budgeted for

Adept



Demonstrate Accountability

Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines

Be proactive in taking responsibility and being accountable for own actions

Understand delegations and act within authority levels

Identify and follow safe work practices, and be vigilant about own and others' application of these practices

Be aware of risks and act on or escalate risks, as appropriate

Use financial and other resources responsibly

Intermediate



Project Management

Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods

Perform basic research and analysis to inform and support the achievement of project deliverables

Contribute to developing project documentation and resource estimates

Contribute to reviews of progress, outcomes and future improvements

Identify and escalate possible variances from project plans

Intermediate



Manage and Develop People

Engage and motivate staff, and develop capability and potential in others

Define and clearly communicate roles, responsibilities and performance standards to achieve team outcomes

Adjust performance development processes to meet the diverse abilities and needs of individuals and teams

Develop work plans that consider capability, strengths and opportunities for development

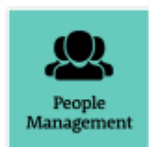
Be aware of the influences of bias when managing team members

Seek feedback on own management capabilities and develop strategies to address any gaps

Address and resolve team and individual performance issues, including unsatisfactory performance, in a timely and effective way

Monitor and report on team performance in line with established performance development frameworks

Adept



Manage Reform and Change

Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change

Promote change processes and communicate change initiatives across the team or unit

Accommodate changing priorities and respond flexibly to uncertainty and ambiguity



Support others in managing uncertainty and change











Intermediate

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
	Display Resilience and Courage	Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	Adept
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Adept

	Communicate Effectively	Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect	Adept
	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
	Work Collaboratively	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Adept
	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Adept
	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	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	Adept
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Adept