

# Role Description

## Solicitor Grade IV

<b>Cluster</b>	Stronger Communities
<b>Agency</b>	Legal Aid NSW
<b>Division/Branch/Unit</b>	<b>Criminal Law</b>
<b>Location</b>	Various
<b>Classification/Grade/Band</b>	Legal Officer Grade IV
<b>ANZSCO Code</b>	271311
<b>PCAT Code</b>	1118192
<b>Date of Approval</b>	Reviewed June 2022
<b>Agency Website</b>	<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 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 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 legal advice and representation to clients of Legal Aid NSW, including complex casework services, in accordance with Legal Aid NSW policies and guidelines in order to contribute to the implementation of Legal Aid NSW's mission to deliver high quality legal services to our clients and to assist them to resolve their legal problems. Supervise and lead junior legal staff in achieving this aim.

### Key accountabilities

- Provide an efficient and effective legal service to clients in accordance with legislation and directions, policy, guidelines and practice standards.
- Determine applications for Legal Aid under delegated authority and consistent with the Legal Aid Commission Act, policy and guidelines. Submit applications for Legal Aid to the Grants Division.
- Effectively utilise 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 documents and maintaining appropriate records in both soft and hard copy forms.
- Keep up-to-date on legal developments and procedures and identifying training needs and attend training to maintain professional standards and retain a practising certificate.
- Contribute to development and ongoing review of Legal Aid policies and guidelines, including contributing to law reform initiatives through providing feedback as requested on issues raised and/or documents distributed.

- Provide mentoring, guidance and direction to other solicitors in relation to legal practice, legal procedure and the conduct of litigation.
- [Where you have direct reports] Monitor the performance of direct reports, assure the quality of services delivered by criminal law staff and ensure compliance with Legal Aid, NSW policies and guidelines, delegations and relevant practice standards. Report on performance and quality standards of staff to Solicitor in Charge/Senior Solicitor and/or Associate Director.
- [Where you have direct reports] Maintain the wellbeing and mental health of solicitors in the team by closely managing work volume, vicarious trauma, psychological risks and viewing of disturbing material.

### Key challenges

- Being able to communicate with and take instructions from a wide range of people including those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people in crisis, people with a physical or intellectual disability or mental illness, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, or who have problem behaviours such as drug or alcohol addictions, in situations where the legal concepts involved are complex and difficult for the client to understand.
- Managing a high volume and/or complex practice of criminal law matters with autonomy, whilst mentoring and guiding other team members. Demonstrate leadership as a manager and/or peer.
- Adapting to and supporting the implementation of new systems and technology which have a significant impact on the legal practice.

### Key relationships

Who	Why
<b>Internal</b>	
Solicitor in Charge (SIC) or Senior Solicitor (Legal Officer Grade V)	You report to the SIC or Senior Solicitor for support, guidance and decision-making (where decision exceeds delegation).
Associate Director or SIC	You report to the RPC for resourcing assistance, recruitment and criminal law practice and procedure (if SIC is not a criminal lawyer)
Solicitors (Legal Officer I-III)	You provide direction and guidance, mentoring
<b>External</b>	
Solicitors and Barristers	Assigning Legal Aid work and instructing barristers
Justice Sector	Maintaining strong working relationships with other court and justice sector stakeholders
Clients	Representing clients

### Role dimensions

#### Decision making

Operate with autonomy in respect of day-to-day work priorities and the coordination of work and resources to meet service levels. Provide advice and decision making to Legal Officer I-III and other roles within the team. Consult with and report on decision making upwards to Solicitor in Charge or senior solicitor within practice area.

#### Reporting line

Solicitor in Charge or Senior Solicitor Legal Officer Grade V

Associate Director

## Direct reports

Legal Officers I-III<sup>1</sup>

## Budget/Expenditure

Nil

## Essential requirements

Legal Qualifications

Practising Certificate

A Working with Children Check (WWCC) will be required **for certain roles within the Criminal 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
	<b>Display Resilience and Courage</b> Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change</li><li>• Give frank and honest feedback and advice</li><li>• Listen when ideas are challenged, seek to understand the nature of the comment and respond appropriately</li><li>• Raise and work through challenging issues and seek alternatives</li><li>• Remain composed and calm under pressure and in challenging situations</li></ul>	Adept

<sup>1</sup> Not all Legal Officer IV roles have direct reports. This role description applies irrespective.



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### Manage Self

Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning

- Keep up to date with relevant contemporary knowledge and practices
- Look for and take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills and develop strengths
- Show commitment to achieving challenging goals
- Examine and reflect on own performance
- Seek and respond positively to constructive feedback and guidance
- Demonstrate and maintain a high level of personal motivation

Adept



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### Communicate Effectively

Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect

- Tailor communication to diverse audiences
- Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups
- Create opportunities for others to be heard, listen attentively and encourage them to express their views
- Share information across teams and units to enable informed decision making
- Write fluently in plain English and in a range of styles and formats
- Use contemporary communication channels to share information, engage and interact with diverse audiences

Adept



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### Work Collaboratively

Collaborate with others and value their contribution

- Recognise outcomes achieved through effective collaboration between teams
- Build cooperation and overcome barriers to information sharing, communication and collaboration across the organisation and across government
- Facilitate opportunities to engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop joint solutions
- Network extensively across government and organisations to increase collaboration
- Encourage others to use appropriate collaboration approaches and tools, including digital technologies

Advanced



### **Deliver Results**

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

- Seek and apply the expertise of key individuals to achieve organisational outcomes
- Drive a culture of achievement and acknowledge input from others
- Determine how outcomes will be measured and guide others on evaluation methods
- Investigate and create opportunities to enhance the achievement of organisational objectives
- Make sure others understand that on-time and on-budget results are required and how overall success is defined
- Control business unit output to ensure government outcomes are achieved within budgets
- Progress organisational priorities and ensure that resources are acquired and used effectively

Advanced



### **Technology**

Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology relevant to the work unit, and identify and select the most appropriate technology for assigned tasks
- Use available technology to improve individual performance and effectiveness
- Make effective use of records, information and knowledge management functions and systems
- Support the implementation of systems improvement initiatives, and the introduction and roll-out of new technologies

Intermediate



### **Manage and Develop People**

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













- Collaborate to set clear performance standards and deadlines in line with established performance development frameworks
- Look for ways to develop team capability and recognise and develop individual potential
- Be constructive and build on strengths by giving timely and actionable feedback
- Identify and act on opportunities to provide coaching and mentoring
- Recognise performance issues that need to be addressed and work towards resolving issues
- Effectively support and manage team members who are working flexibly and in various locations
- Create a safe environment where team members' diverse backgrounds and cultures are considered and respected
- Consider feedback on own management style and reflect on potential areas to improve

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
	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Intermediate
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	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
	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Adept
	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Foundational
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Foundational
	Project Management	Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods	Foundational
	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	Intermediate
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Intermediate



Manage Reform and Change

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

### Occupational Specific Complimentary Capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Statutory Interpretation	Interpret legislation, subordinate legislation and instruments in accordance with legislation and accepted legal principles	Level 2
	Legal Research	Undertake legal research	Level 2
	Legal Advice	Provide quality independent legal advice and explanation of legal issues	Level 2
	Legal drafting	Prepare legal documents to achieve client outcomes	Level 2
	Advocacy	Act as an effective and ethical advocate	Level 2