

Role Description

Solicitor Grade IV

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Cluster | Stronger Communities |
| Agency | Legal Aid NSW |
| Division/Branch/Unit | Criminal Law |
| Location | Various |
| Classification/Grade/Band | Legal Officer Grade IV |
| ANZSCO Code | 271311 |
| PCAT Code | 1118192 |
| | Reviewed June 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 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 Regional Program Coordinator.
- [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 |
|---|--|
| Internal | |
| 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). |
| Regional Program Coordinator (RPC) 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 |
| External | |
| 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

Regional Program Coordinator

Direct reports

Legal Officers I-III¹

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

Budget/Expenditure

Essential requirements

Legal Qualifications

Practising Certificate






A Working with Children Check (WWCC) will be required when a worker has direct contact with a child or children, and where that contact is a usual part of, and more than incidental to, their work.


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

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 | Display Resilience and Courage | Adept |
| | Act with Integrity | Intermediate |
| | Manage Self | Adept |
| | Value Diversity | Intermediate |
|  Relationships | Communicate Effectively | Adept |
| | Commit to Customer Service | Adept |
| | Work Collaboratively | Advanced |
| | Influence and Negotiate | Adept |
|  Results | Deliver Results | Advanced |
| | Plan and Prioritise | Adept |
| | Think and Solve Problems | Adept |
| | Demonstrate Accountability | Adept |
|  Business Enablers | Finance | Foundational |
| | Technology | Intermediate |
| | Procurement and Contract Management | Foundational |
| | Project Management | Foundational |
|  People Management | Manage and Develop People | Intermediate |
| | Inspire Direction and Purpose | Intermediate |
| | Optimise Business Outcomes | Intermediate |
| | Manage Reform and Change | Intermediate |

| Capability Group | Capability Name | Level |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------|
|  | Statutory Interpretation | Level 2 |
| | Legal Research | Level 2 |
| | Legal Advice | Level 2 |
| | Legal Drafting | Level 2 |
| | Litigation and Dispute Resolution | n/a |
| | Prosecution | n/a |
| | Advocacy | Level 2 |
| | Legislative Development and Drafting | n/a |

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.

| NSW Public Sector Capability Framework | | |
|--|-------|---|
| Group and Capability | Level | Behavioural Indicators |
| Personal Attributes | | |
| Display Resilience and Courage | Adept | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change • Give frank and honest feedback/advice • Listen when ideas are challenged, seek to understand the nature of the criticism and respond constructively • Raise and work through challenging issues and seek alternatives • Keep control of own emotions and stay calm under pressure and in challenging situations • 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 a high level of personal motivation |
| Manage Self | Adept | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 a high level of personal motivation |
| Relationships | | |
| Communicate Effectively | Adept | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write fluently in a range of styles and formats • Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups • Actively listen to others and clarify own understanding |

| Group and Capability | Level | Behavioural Indicators |
|---------------------------|--------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor communication to the audience • Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary • Create opportunities for others to be heard |
| Work Collaboratively | Advanced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a culture of respect and understanding across the organisation • Build co-operation and overcome barriers to information sharing, communication and collaboration across the organisation and cross-government • Recognise outcomes which resulted from effective collaboration between teams • Facilitate opportunities to engage and collaborate with external stakeholders to develop joint solution |
| Results | | |
| Deliver Results | Advanced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive a culture of achievement and acknowledge input of others • Seek and apply the expertise of key individuals to achieve organisational outcomes • Lead by example in achieving results that are on-time and on-budget and ensure others understand the importance of same. • Investigate and create opportunities to enhance the achievement of organisational objectives • Control output of business unit to ensure government outcomes are achieved within budget • Progress organisational priorities and ensure effective acquisition and use of resources |
| Business Enablers | | |
| Technology | Intermediate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply practical skills in the use of relevant technology • Understand and comply with information and communications security and acceptable use policies • Make effective use of records, information and knowledge management functions and systems • Apply computer applications that enable performance of more complex tasks • Support the implementation of systems improvement initiatives and the introduction and roll-out of new technologies |
| People Management | | |
| Manage and Develop People | Intermediate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly communicated • Collaborate on the establishment of clear performance standards and deadlines in line with established performance development frameworks • Develop team capability and recognise and develop potential in people • Be constructive and build on strengths when giving feedback • Identify and act on opportunities to provide coaching and mentoring |

Group and Capability

Level

Behavioural Indicators

- Recognise performance issues that need to be addressed and work towards resolution of issues
-