



PRINCIPAL LAWYER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Principal Lawyer – Practice Manager
Terms of Employment:	Permanent
Hours:	38 hours per week
Award Classification:	Community Legal Centres Multi Business Agreement certified agreement 2006-2009 (equivalent to Level 7 of the SCHCADS Industry Award 2010)
Salary:	\$71,955 salary package (inclusive of ALL & Superannuation) with the option of taking up salary packaging.
Position Purpose:	To ensure that St. Kilda Legal Service Co-Op. Ltd. provides a free, accessible and professional legal service to people living in and around the Cities of Port Phillip, Stonnington and Bayside.

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. KILDA LEGAL SERVICE

St. Kilda Legal Service was established in 1973 and provides free legal advice, referral and casework services to the local community. St. Kilda Legal Service is committed to undertaking community legal education, policy development and advocating for law reform as a core function and an integral part of the Legal Service's activities and recognises that this work complements the casework undertaken by the Legal Service. The central philosophy is one of empowerment and access to justice for all members of the community.

Whilst the Legal Service is strongly committed to being available to all residents within the catchment area, there is a specific commitment to assisting low-income earners and other disadvantaged members of the community, such as those experiencing domestic violence, homelessness or disability, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and young people.

The Legal Service is co-located with the Port Phillip Community Group, which provides information/support, financial counselling and a neighbourhood program. All Legal Service staff work collaboratively with the staff of the Community Group, particularly with the day-to-day operations of the St. Kilda Community Centre.

Role:

The Principal Lawyer has overall responsibility for the efficient and effective management of the legal practice and contributes to the ongoing development of SKLS. The legal practice operates as a team consisting of the Principal Lawyer, Family Violence Lawyer, Drug Outreach Lawyer, 2 part-time Community Education and Law Reform Lawyers, a Volunteer Co-ordinator and the Administrator of the Service. SKLS also has an extensive team of legal and non-legal volunteers who are integral to the provision of our night service which operates 3 nights per week and which generates much of our service's advice and casework.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

Organisation Leadership

- Work closely with other staff and Board of Management to ensure a consistent approach is applied across the organisation, specifically:
 - Planning, developing and reviewing the organisation's services, projects and partnerships
 - Developing and implementing strategies to deal with any human resource issues in consultation with the Administrator
 - Developing and reviewing program and funding opportunities
 - Participating effectively in a range of projects and strategic planning initiatives
 - Co-ordinating and developing pro bono partnerships with legal firms
 - Developing and reviewing SKLS's workplans and annual activity targets
 - Providing high-level advice and reports to the Board on issues relating to the provision of legal services
- Promote sound governance processes within the organisation to maintain best practice in the delivery of the legal advice, information & casework services

Legal Practice Management

The Principal Lawyer will:

- Ensure the quality of advice, casework, referrals and legal work undertaken by the service is maintained at a high standard including legal advice and casework provided by night service legal volunteers
- Ensure that SKLS operates in accordance with the Legal Practice Act and the Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) requirements, including participation in the Federation of Community Legal Services (Victoria) PII monitoring program
- Manage, supervise and monitor all the Service's legal practitioners, including Legal Volunteers and Legal Placement Students
- Hold regular casework meetings and reviews with legal staff
- Liaise with the Volunteer Co-Ordinator and the evening Volunteer Lawyer Co-Ordinators to ensure that all aspects of advice and casework conducted by the night legal volunteers is adequately supervised and monitored.
- Attend the night service sessions on a regular basis to liaise with the Volunteer Lawyer Co-ordinators and other volunteer lawyers.
- Ensure all lawyers comply with the Service's casework guidelines and provide high quality and professional legal work.
- Ensure that SKLS legal practice operates within the organisational policies and procedures
- Ensure that all government statistical data reporting requirements pertaining to the legal practice are met.
- Participate in the development and implementation of service delivery initiatives and service extension
- Conduct regular case reviews and staff performance appraisals as required
- Maintain a caseload, which may involve limited court appearances and outreach visits
- Liaise regularly with the Administrator in relation to administration, staffing and management issues

Community Legal Education, Community Development and Law Reform

- Ensure monitoring of advice and casework is undertaken with respect to identification of law reform, test cases and/or policy issues and maintain regular liaison with other staff particularly the CLE and Law Reform Lawyers and Board members and volunteers where appropriate
- To be involved in legal education and law reform activities with other staff where appropriate
- To be responsible for monitoring of CLE, publications and any other legal materials used for and by SKLS, law reform and policy submissions and media releases as appropriate to ensure legal accuracy and mitigate legal risk.

General Responsibilities

- Prepare and submit Board reports as required
- Attend internal staff and planning meetings
- Prepare a Principal Lawyer report for SKLS Annual Report
- Attend SKLS Annual General Meeting
- Attend, conferences, professional development training and other events as required
- Attend and participate in Federation working groups and relevant meetings as required
- Participate as a team member in the general day to day operations of the service as required in a co-operative and supportive work environment.
- Attend Board meetings from time to time
- Other general duties as directed by the Board

Qualifications (Mandatory):

- Admitted to practice as a Barrister and Solicitor in the State of Victoria and eligible to hold a current, Principal practicing certificate with authorisation to handle trust monies under the *Legal Professional Act 2004*
- At least 5 years post admission experience practising as a generalist lawyer

Key Selection Criteria:

Essential

- Demonstrated experience in the management of legal casework in a broad range of areas including family law and family violence, criminal law, administrative law, credit and debt, infringements,
- Experience in supervising staff, law students and volunteers
- Commitment to social justice and to meeting the legal needs of disadvantaged groups
- Commitment to delivering client service of high professional and ethical standard
- Demonstrated management skills to effectively direct, supervise and mentor staff in the management of the legal practice
- Knowledge of and commitment to the delivery of quality community development and legal education
- Excellent oral and written communication skills

Desirable

- Understanding of the principles and practice of the community legal sector
- Experience in networking, establishing programs and seeking funding
- Experience working with people from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, particularly marginalised groups.
- Word processing competency and computer literacy
- Current Victorian driver's licence.

Applications:

Applications close Friday 26 April, 2013 by 5pm. Applications addressing the selection criteria and including a current resume should be addressed to the Administrator and forwarded by mail or electronically to:

Suzy Fox, Administrator,
St. Kilda Legal Service Co-Op. Ltd.
161 Chapel Street, St. Kilda 3182
Email: suzy@skls.org.au

Direct Line: (03) 8598 6610