

Women's Legal Service NSW Position Description

Position: Solicitor / Senior Solicitor	Location: Sydney Office: Lidcombe
Salary Level: \$75,738.06 – \$102,592.61 Status: Fixed Term Hours: 35 hours per week (full time)	Award: (formerly linked to the Social and Community Services (State) Award) Salary: WLS NSW Enterprise Agreement Solicitor, Grade 5 Senior Solicitor, Grade 6
Supervisor	Accountability Structure
Responsible to: Assistant Principal Solicitor	Board of Management ↓ Principal Solicitor/Executive Officer ↓ Assistant Principal Solicitor ↓ Solicitor/Senior Solicitor
Role and Context of Position	
<p>All Solicitors:</p> <p>Women's Legal Service NSW (WLS) promotes access to justice through the provision of legal services, law reform and community legal education, particularly for women who are disadvantaged by their social and economic circumstances. The role of WLS is to foster legal and social change to redress inequalities experienced by women.</p> <p>WLS solicitors provide access to justice through the provision of legal services, law reform and community legal education, particularly for women who are disadvantaged by their social and economic circumstances.</p> <p>The Solicitor & Senior Solicitor positions may be required to make occasional short rural trips to provide community legal education and outreach advice services as part of state-wide service delivery.</p>	

Levels of Responsibility

Solicitor (Grade 5)

A Solicitor will start at a level in WLS Grade 5 commensurate with her experience and qualifications. She will be supervised at a level appropriate to her experience. All solicitors undertake a period of orientation of at least 3-4 weeks at the commencement of their employment. First year solicitors may undertake a longer period of orientation of up to 6 weeks, as considered appropriate by the Supervising Solicitor or Principal Solicitor.

After the orientation period, all solicitors undertake a broad range of legal work independently but with supervision appropriate to her level of experience. Legal work includes:

- providing telephone advice on a rostered basis
- representing clients at court/ tribunal
- providing legal advice at outreach clinics
- having carriage of client files in a range of legal matters of varying complexity depending on the solicitor's experience
- preparing for and conducting community legal education (CLE)
- undertaking law reform work and projects

Senior Solicitor (Grade 6)

A solicitor may be recruited by WLS as a Senior Solicitor at WLS Grade 6 or appointed to that position through an internal appointment process, depending on her experience and demonstrated ability to meet the selection criteria for a Senior Solicitor. In addition to the above duties, a Senior Solicitor will undertake a broad range of complex casework and have responsibility for the carriage of complex projects in CLE and law reform work. A Senior Solicitor undertakes a day to day mentoring role for less experienced solicitors and may lead and supervise less experienced solicitors in specific legal cases. A Senior Solicitor may also supervise the work of volunteer solicitors, students and Practical Legal Training (PLT) placements.

The Senior Solicitor may be required to assist the Assistant Principal Solicitor to develop policies and procedures and carry out casework audits. She may be required to supervise solicitors and be the nominated person for the PII Risk Management Scheme in the absence of the Assistant Principal Solicitor.

Solicitor to Senior Solicitor Transition

As per WLS Senior Solicitor Grade Transition policy.

The transition from Solicitor to Senior Solicitor is not automatic.

To achieve promotion to the role of Senior Solicitor, the Solicitor must meet the Additional Senior Solicitor Selection Criteria and meet all organisational and position expectations of Grade 5.

A Solicitor who has reached the anniversary of her employment at Grade 5 Year 3 may apply to be appointed as Senior Solicitor. She will be required to participate in a Transition Performance Appraisal conducted by the Principal Solicitor, the Assistant Principal Solicitor and one other external person selected by the Principal Solicitor.

If Transition is not achieved, a development plan will be negotiated to enable the Solicitor to meet the Additional Senior Solicitor Selection Criteria and meet all organisational and position expectations of Grade 5. The Solicitor may then again apply to be appointed as a Senior Solicitor at the next 6 monthly interval. If unsuccessful, the solicitor may then apply on her anniversary and annually thereafter.

Supervision		
<p>As per WLS policy.</p> <p>Documented bimonthly supervision meetings to monitor and provide support with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing • Accountability • Work Health and Safety • Training and development 		
Annual Performance Appraisal		
<p>As per WLS policy.</p> <p>An annual performance appraisal will be conducted during a bi-monthly supervision meeting. The appraisal will assess achievement of expectations and requirements, including any relevant industry standards. Standards for assessment will be drawn from expectations in this position description.</p>		
Organisation Expectations		
<p>This section describes expectations that apply to all employees regardless of their role.</p>		
Expectation	Tasks	Evidence Guide
1. Governance and Accountability	<p>All employees will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Adhere to the WLS NSW Constitution, philosophy, policies and procedures including state & federal legislation, funding body service agreements, and industry standards 1.2 Write and complete work plans in line with the WLS outcomes if required. 1.3 Prepare progress reports on outcomes as required 1.4 Document work in line with required standards 1.5 Undertake data collection 1.6 Perform all reasonable duties requested by the EO or Principal Solicitor. 1.7 Undertake a yearly performance appraisal 1.8 Attend supervision sessions 	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.A Familiarity with and application of all relevant regulations and standards 1.B Appropriate monthly reports prepared and submitted 1.C Work plans in place and appropriate 1.D Communications clear and effective 1.E All set duties carried out
2. Teamwork	<p>All employees will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Attend staff, team and casework meetings when required 2.2 Contribute to WLS planning relevant to own work. 2.3 Contribute to a positive and cooperative work environment 2.4 Follow through on commitments 	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.A Effective working relationships with other staff. 2.B Appropriate contributions to meetings 2.C Appropriate contributions to planning activities. 2.D Supportive behaviour towards other staff and volunteers.

	<p>2.5 Contribute to housekeeping tasks</p> <p>2.6 Note and discuss areas for process improvement</p> <p>2.7 Act to support volunteers, management and other staff members</p>	<p>2.E Adapted to and/or suggested improvements to work processes</p>
3. Development	<p>All employees will:</p> <p>3.1 Participate in required training and ongoing professional education</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>3.A Improvements in skill or knowledge from development opportunities</p>
4. Work Health And Safety	<p>All employees will:</p> <p>4.1 Understand the WH&S Policy, and how they can participate and support the implementation of WH&S Policy</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>4.A Ability to identify safety hazards, report & document incidents or exercise duty of care</p>

Position Expectations		
Expectation	Tasks	Evidence Guide
<p>1. Legal Advice & Casework</p> <p>Outcome: Provision of high quality legal advice and services for disadvantaged women.</p>	<p>1.1 Provide high quality legal advice, assistance and referrals for clients of the advice line, outreach services and/or auspiced services</p> <p>1.2 Undertake legal casework in accordance with the WLS casework policy</p> <p>1.3 Conduct litigation</p> <p>1.4 Brief counsel and pro bono solicitors as required</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>1.A Quality of advice provided to clients</p> <p>1.B Cases undertaken completed to WLS standards</p> <p>1.C Court attendances</p> <p>1.D Counsel and pro bono solicitors briefed</p> <p>1.E Hearings conducted</p> <p>1.F Level of client satisfaction</p> <p>1.G Appropriate referrals</p> <p>Please note that legal practice policy specifies the number of non-minor cases solicitors should have at any one time</p>
<p>2. Community Legal Education and liaison</p> <p>Outcomes: Improve knowledge in the community about women's rights and legal processes.</p>	<p>2.1 Provide legal education and training</p> <p>2.2 Contribute to legal education publications for community members, legal practitioners and community workers assisting disadvantaged women</p> <p>2.3 Liaise with community organisations, police, chamber registrars, court staff and other stakeholders as appropriate</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>2.A Quality community legal education and professional training sessions</p> <p>2.B Quality resources produced</p> <p>2.C Client satisfaction with training and resources</p> <p>2.D Quality of liaison with community and stakeholders</p> <p>2.E Carriage of projects</p>

<p>3. Law reform</p> <p>Outcome: Law and policy is influenced to improve access to justice for disadvantaged women.</p>	<p>3.1 Identify suitable public interest cases.</p> <p>3.2 Research and prepare reports, submissions, recommendations and commentaries on law and policy reform issues</p> <p>3.3 Advocate for law and policy reform with other community organizations</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>3.A Identification of cases</p> <p>3.B Issues researched or written work prepared</p> <p>3.C Participation in community networks</p> <p>3.D Media contact</p> <p>3.E Carriage of projects</p>
<p>Additional Duties of Senior Solicitors</p>		
<p>4. Management of projects and staff</p> <p>Outcome: Staff and project management is timely and of a high standard</p>	<p>4.1. Undertake a mentoring role for less experienced solicitors on a day to day basis</p> <p>4.2. Participate in recruitment and undertake day to day management and supervision of PLT placements, volunteer solicitors and student volunteers</p> <p>4.3. Lead and supervise less experienced solicitors in specific legal cases</p> <p>4.4. Supervise solicitors in the absence of the Assistant Principal Solicitor</p> <p>4.5. Undertake the responsibilities of the nominated person under PII Risk Management Scheme in the absence of the Assistant Principal Solicitor</p> <p>4.6. Assist the Assistant Principal Solicitor with casework audits and other quality improvement processes</p> <p>4.7. Manage complex community legal education and law reform projects</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>4.A Recruitment of volunteers and PLT</p> <p>4.B Effective mentoring and supervision of solicitors in specific legal cases</p> <p>4.C Efficient day to day management of volunteers and PLT</p> <p>4.D Effective supervision of staff, volunteers and PLT in absence of Assistant Principal Solicitor</p> <p>4.E Case work audits completed</p> <p>4.F Effective completion of complex community legal education and law reform projects</p>
<p>5. Complex Advice & Litigation</p> <p>Outcome: Provision of high quality legal advice and casework services of a complex and strategic nature</p>	<p>5.1 Undertake more complex matters where appropriate with limited supervision</p>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <p>5.A Managing complex legal matters</p> <p>5.B Conduct hearings, including appeals</p> <p>5.C Effective use of casework and litigation to meet WLS strategic goals</p>

Selection Criteria

Essential:

1. Eligible to hold a current NSW Practising Certificate.
2. Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to social justice issues for women, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and those experiencing economic, social and cultural disadvantage and lack of access to legal services
3. Understanding of cross cultural issues for women, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault or family break down
4. Demonstrated ability to provide sound legal advice in areas of law relevant to the work of Women's Legal Service NSW, including domestic violence, sexual assault, family law and discrimination.
5. Ability to design and implement community legal education and engage in law reform and policy development.
6. Demonstrated high level oral and written communication skills.
7. Demonstrated ability to work in an electronic environment including the use of word processing, email and web browsing tools and the capacity to acquire a working knowledge of the WLS client database system.
8. Ability to travel to rural areas.

Additional Criteria for Senior Solicitor:

1. Substantial post admission experience in areas of law relevant to the work of Women's Legal Service NSW (such as domestic violence, sexual assault, discrimination or family law) and managing and litigating complex cases.
2. Understanding of the strategic function of community legal education, law reform and policy work, and the demonstrated ability to design and implement community legal education and law and policy reform initiatives.
3. Demonstrated ability in managing projects and volunteers / students.
4. Capacity to undertake a mentoring role and supervision of less experienced solicitors.

Being a woman is a Genuine Occupational Qualification for the purposes of WLS service provision (Section 31 Anti Discrimination Act 1977).

Certification

I have carefully reviewed this Position Description and am satisfied that it fully and accurately describes the requirements of the position

WLS Authorised Officer

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I have read this document and agree to undertake the duties and responsibilities as listed above. I acknowledge this profile is only an indication of tasks and understand that I may be required to undertake additional duties and responsibilities from time to time that are not detailed herein, yet are within or aligned to my skills set.

SOLICITOR/ SENIOR SOLICITOR (strike out whichever is not appropriate)

Name: _____

Signature: _____ (Ensure each page of this agreement is initialled)

Date: _____

Development Date:	Review Date:	Next Review Date:
June 2010		