



DJIRRA

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION DETAILS	
POSITION TITLE	Senior Lawyer
REPORTING STRUCTURE	Reports to: Managing Lawyer Direct reports: Paralegal Support Worker/s (as designated)
POSITION DIMENSIONS (BUDGET)	NA
PURPOSE - Why does this position exist?	
<p>The Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service (AFVLS) is a program of Djirra. AFVLS provides legal and non-legal assistance and facilitates access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have experienced family violence or sexual assault.</p> <p>AFVLS operates a culturally safe, trauma informed, holistic and intensive client service model. Clients are assisted by Lawyers and Paralegal Support Workers to access a variety of legal, social, psychological, cultural, health and other support services to address their complex needs and issues.</p> <p>Senior Lawyers provide legal services including advice, representation and advocacy in the areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child protection • family violence intervention orders • family law; and • victims of crime assistance. <p>Senior Lawyers also supervise legal and non-legal work undertaken by Lawyers and Paralegal Support Workers.</p>	

RESPONSIBILITIES

Client work

- Provide high quality legal advice, court advocacy, duty services, casework, assistance and referral to Aboriginal clients experiencing family violence and/or sexual assault in the areas of Family Violence Intervention Orders, Child Protection, Family Law, Victims of Crime Assistance, and other civil matters arising from the experience of family violence and sexual assault.
- Provide representation and advocacy services to clients either by personal appearance or by briefing Counsel to appear at Courts and Tribunals or at family dispute resolution.
- Maintain a significant case load with a focus on matters of greater complexity.
- Provide legal and related services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in a culturally safe and appropriate manner.
- Work collaboratively with Paralegal Support Workers to ensure clients are supported to access a variety of legal and support services to address their complex needs.

Networking, Liaison and Community Outreach

- Develop and maintain relationships with a broad range of regional stakeholders, including: Aboriginal cooperatives; Aboriginal Health Services; family and children's services; other Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations providing support to victims of family violence and sexual assault; mainstream health, mental health, housing, alcohol and drugs, and counselling services; police, courts and legal assistance services.
- Regularly attend significant stakeholder meetings and events.
- Conduct regular outreach services across the region and be responsible for the delivery and maintenance of specific outreach projects.

Community Legal Education

- Deliver community legal education, training and information to other Aboriginal community organisations and mainstream services.
- Support and assist Djirra's Early Intervention and Prevention programs including Sisters Day Out, Dilly Bag, and Young Luv.

Training

- Undertake and participate in the development and delivery of legal and support training for legal and other staff employed by Djirra.

Law Reform

- Contribute to and identify issues for Djirra's law reform and policy work.

Supervision

- Supervision of legal and non-legal work, and the day to day mentoring & development of Lawyers and/or Paralegal Support Workers.
- Carry out management duties delegated by the Managing lawyer following approval by the Manager Legal Services.
- When asked, act up during periods of the Managing Lawyer's leave following approval by the Manager Legal Services.

Administration

- Maintain client files and ensure they comply with AFVLS's file management policies, processes and procedures.
- Accurate and timely data entry using CLASS database.
- Prepare work plans, statistical analysis and other reports as required.
- Contribute to the ongoing development of relevant policies and procedures for Djirra and AFVLS and identify areas for improvement.



Accountability

- Comply with AFVLS’s Service Standards.
- Attend training as directed.
- Undertake travel to support the work of Djirra as required.

Occupational Health and Safety

- Implement, follow and help others to follow all health and safety procedures, and initiate, implement and participate in all relevant training and complete and manage timely reporting of any hazards, injuries or incidents.
- Proactively report on opportunities for improved health and safety.

Skills, knowledge and attributes

- Maintain thorough and current knowledge of the law in AFVLS’s practice areas.
- Demonstrate excellent client engagement skills and consistent ability to handle challenging situations with sensitivity, cultural appropriateness and tact.
- Maintain knowledge of best practice regarding trauma informed and culturally safe service delivery.
- Ability to work independently with limited supervision and as a member of various teams within AFVLS and Djirra.
- Demonstrate a flexible and collaborative approach to working with other staff and external stakeholders.
- Model collegial and professional standards in the workplace and with external stakeholders.
- Demonstrate capacity to provide creative solutions to improve effectiveness of service delivery for clients.
- Proactively manage workload and self-care.

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

Recognise when to involve/escalate issues to the Managing Lawyer.

KEY INTERACTIONS

Internal:

Colleagues, Managing Lawyer, Manager Legal Services, Community Engagement staff.

External:

Clients and members of the Aboriginal Community, Community Organisations, Government Agencies, Courts, other legal and non-legal Professionals.

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential:

Eligible to hold a legal practising certificate in Victoria.
 A degree in law.
 At least three years practical legal experience in family violence related law.

Desirable:

EXPERIENCE & SKILLS

Essential:

Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and cultures and the issues affecting these societies, including family violence, sexual assault, family law and care and protection of children as well as the underlying contributing factors.

Demonstrated high level oral communication and listening skills with particular capacity to communicate effectively and build strong trusting relationships with Aboriginal people and with clients who have experienced trauma.

Well-developed written communication skills, commensurate with high quality legal work; and ability to represent clients in Courts, Tribunals and dispute resolution conferences.

Demonstrated ability to provide legal advice and representation to a high standard in family violence related areas of law.

Demonstrated skills and knowledge in the area of family violence and its impact on community.

Demonstrated high level interpersonal, liaison, teamwork and collaborative skills.

Highly developed organisational skills and the ability to work under pressure and manage competing demands.

Good critical analytical skills in relation to policy and community issues.

Demonstrated leadership skills.

Ability to supervise and mentor the work of lawyers, paralegal support workers, volunteers or other staff.

Demonstrated ability to work autonomously, and to use initiative to solve problems; awareness of when to escalate legal and non-legal matters to Managing Lawyer.

Excellent stakeholder engagement and relationship management skills.

Computer literacy, including database operation to maintain AFVLS's client management database (CLASS) proficiency in the use of MS Outlook, MS Word and Excel.

A current driver's license is essential. Some out-of-hours and/or overnight travel will be required.

Desirable:

Knowledge of and commitment to working toward a trauma informed legal practice in the context of family violence and intergenerational and cultural trauma.

Experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Eligible to apply for VLA s.29A panel certification in Child Protection, Family Law or Family Violence; or commitment to work towards certification.



DJIRRA POSITION DESCRIPTION

This is a designated position established as a special measure pursuant to sections 12 and 28 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic). Applications for this position are open to female candidates only. Preference will be given to women of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. Djirra has been granted an exemption to employ women only in this role pursuant to section 44 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth). (Australian Human Rights Commission, Notice of Grant of a Temporary Exemption, granted on 6 August 2013).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Position Description and have read and understand its contents.

Employee Signature: _____

Date: / /

Name: _____

Direct Manager Signature: _____

Date: / /

Name: _____

HR CHECKLIST

- Return one copy of completed form and any attachments (e.g. current Organisation Chart) to the employee to keep.
- Place one copy of completed form and any attachments on the employee's Performance File.
- Retain original completed form and any attachments on the employee's Personnel File.

Initials: _____ **Date:** _____