

**A program of Advocacy & Rights Centre Ltd (trading as ARC Justice)
ABN 23 082 541 240**

Position Description

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| POSITION: | Community Lawyer |
| DIRECT REPORTS: | No direct reports. Supervision of volunteers and contractors may occur on occasion. |
| CLASSIFICATION AND APPLICABLE INDUSTRIAL INSTRUMENT: | <p>The applicable industrial instrument is the Community Legal Centres 2006-2009 Multi Business Agreement (CLC MBA)</p> <p>This position will be classified between level 5 to level 6 within the SCHADS Award, remuneration will be dependent upon skills and experience.</p> |
| LOCATION AND TRAVEL: | <p>Your usual place of work will be:</p> <p>Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre, which is based at Suite 1 1-11 High St, Shepparton.</p> <p>However, ARC Justice may require you to perform your duties at other locations either temporarily or permanently.</p> <p>You agree you may be required to travel and work elsewhere throughout and beyond the region set out above in the performance of your duties and responsibilities. A vehicle is available for this purpose.</p> |
| SUPERVISOR / MANAGER | This position initially reports to the Senior Coordinating Lawyer |

OVERVIEW

Organisational Overview

ARC Justice is an independent, not-for-profit, human rights organisation that incorporates the Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre, the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre and Housing Justice.

Our programs deliver accessible legal services, tenancy advice and support to those in our community in the greatest need. We deliver community education and advocate for systematic change that enhances the rights of rural and regional Victorians. We recognise that housing and legal issues do not occur in isolation and we work with local partners to ensure a whole-of-person approach to our work.

Vision

An inclusive community built on a foundation of human rights and equality.

Purpose

We promote equality before the law for people in rural and regional Victoria by: providing legal, advocacy and support services; elevating justice as an issue in public discourse; and advocating for systemic change that upholds human rights.

Principles that underpin our work

Community: We serve, build capacity and are accountable to the community to which we belong.

Learning: We are inquisitive and receptive to new ideas, use evidence-based practice and share our knowledge to achieve the greatest impact for our communities. We learn from both our successes and mistakes.

Partnership: We believe partnership and collaboration with individuals, communities and organisations is the only way to create meaningful and sustainable change.

People: We are committed to ethical and sustainable practice that values our people in achieving our purpose.

Recognition of First Peoples: We celebrate the strength, culture and contribution of our First Peoples. We recognise the systemic injustices brought against them, and work in partnership with local Aboriginal communities to bring justice.

Respect: In all of our work, we show respect. We value diversity and acknowledge differences, knowing these strengthen our community.

ARC Justice is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff. ARC Justice and its staff must comply with a range of statutory requirements, including equal opportunity, occupational health and safety and privacy laws. ARC Justice is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre (GVCLC)

Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre (GVCLC) operates in the Goulburn Valley, encompassing the local government areas of Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Strathbogie, Benalla and Mansfield.

GVCLC services include:

- Legal Assistance (information, referral, advice and casework)
- Legal Education
- Policy and Law Reform Work

GVCLC provides generalist services and a range of specialist services including:

- Family Violence prevention legal services including family violence duty lawyer services at Shepparton, Seymour, Benalla, Mansfield, and Cobram Magistrates' Courts.
- Family law and child protection advice and casework assistance
- Clinical Education Program with Deakin University law students
- A Health-Justice Partnership with Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd
- An Employment Law Partnership with Job Watch providing services for Working Holiday Makers

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Specialist Family Violence Court

In 2016 The Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV) recommended the establishment of Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVCs) across the state to take a therapeutic and specialist approach to family violence matters that supports victims through the system and promotes perpetrator accountability.

In response, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria (MCV) developed an operating model to provide a framework for family violence specialisation in the MCV. The vision for the SFVC by this operating model is for "each venue to service as a centre for excellence in the delivery of integrated family violence court services."

The SFVC is a therapeutic problem-solving court that assists both victims and perpetrators of family violence. It aims to hear all legal matters related to family violence and provide support services to parties to proceedings, including making counselling orders for perpetrators of family violence.

Shepparton Courthouse was the first site in Victoria to establish a SFVC and it officially commenced operation in October 2019.

Victoria Legal Aid, Federation of Community Legal Centres and Victoria Police have worked closely to develop an ideal legal service delivery model to ensure that the requirements and vision of the SFVC are met.

THE ROLE

This Community Lawyer position will provide family violence intervention order support at the Shepparton SFVC and ongoing legal assistance with related matters such as Family Law, Child Protection, Criminal Law and Victims of Crime assistance (VOCAT).

Working with both victims and perpetrators, the Community Lawyer will ensure that all legal issues are identified, and referrals are made to support services to address underlying issues. The Community Lawyer will aim to provide ongoing legal assistance with all related matters, with a focus on family law, and where appropriate make referrals to other legal services.

Networking, building good working relationships and working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders will be an integral part of the role. The position will work closely with all practitioners working in the family violence space and will be required to attend relevant stakeholder meetings to continually improve experiences for those attending court for family violence matters with the aim to achieve better outcomes for their families.

As a member of the GVCLC legal team, the Community Lawyer will be supported in the role by GVCLC colleagues, a strong referral network and a range of training opportunities.

GVCLC lawyers work across teams and the position will be required to occasionally support the generalist and family violence services of GVCLC, including by travelling to outlying courts and undertaking other duties reasonably required.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

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| Legal service delivery and advocacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specialist family violence legal assistance (information, referral, advice, duty lawyer and casework) with a focus on intervention order support and family law; in all service modes (e.g. by telephone, face-to-face and video conferencing). • Provide support and assistance to the generalist legal service at the day service, evening advice service and outreach locations. • Participate in legal team meetings and debriefing sessions with colleagues. |
| Networks and community partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop good working relationships with relevant stakeholders and work collaboratively to achieve better outcomes for families experiencing family violence. • Participate in stakeholder meetings with the Senior Coordinating Lawyer as required. |
| Community Development, Legal Education and Law Reform | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor casework to identify systemic issues and feed this information into the organisation's strategic plan and work plans. • Develop and deliver legal education to community members and service providers in accordance with a work plan. • Involvement in relevant community networks, including meetings of members of the Federation of Community Legal Centre's and other working groups. • Raise the CLC public profile and promote awareness of legal rights and responsibilities through participation in public forums and community presentations. • Monitor opportunities for and participate and collaborate in policy and law reform activities. |
| Reporting and evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the CLC team on appropriate project management activities and ensure all reporting and funding requirements are met. |
| Ways of Working | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support colleagues and the team environment– we value stepping outside of our day to day work and helping each-other. • We encourage active contribution in meetings and quarterly staff days – we value your input and feedback helps us improve. • Maintain organisational values and behaviours. • Support the achievement of the ARC Justice Strategic Plan, through team planning and work plans. |
| Other duties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with policy and procedures and maintain currency through training that relate to legal and regulatory requirements and our ways of working. • Seek out training opportunities to further enhance professional development in accordance with duties as required within this position after consultation with your manager. • Contribute to monitoring and evaluation activities and reports as required. • Participate in regular supervision and meet agreed performance indicators and work plan activities. • Undertake any reasonable additional tasks as directed by management. |

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential (Skills, knowledge, experience)

1. At least 3 years post-admission experience in family law and one of the following areas: family violence, child protection, criminal law or other civil law jurisdictions.
2. Demonstrated experience in court advocacy and managing high volume casework.
3. Demonstrated knowledge, understanding and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other marginalised communities and cultures. This includes an understanding of the issues impacting these communities and contributing factors, including family violence, family law and issues impacting child safety.
4. Exceptional interpersonal and stakeholder engagement skills, including a demonstrated ability to work collaboratively, recognising the relationship between legal practice work and community development activities.
5. A commitment to our organisation's principles and working towards our vision of an inclusive community built on a foundation of human rights and equality.

Desirable (Skills, knowledge, experience, qualification and/or training)

1. Understanding of the social and economic issues that impact on community legal and housing services.
2. Experience in legal aid matters and eligible for Victoria Legal Aid s29 Panel membership.

Prerequisites

1. Eligible for a Practicing Certificate in Victoria: ARC Justice will pay for the cost of applying for or renewing a practicing certificate and the employee must continue to meet the requirements for holding a practicing certificate.
2. Unrestricted Victorian driver's license. This is at the employees' own expense.
3. Clear Police record check (concerning offences of dishonesty and personal safety) and obtaining a Working with Children Card (if applicable). ARC Justice will cover the costs involved.
4. As a child safe organization ARC Justice requires disclosure of any formal disciplinary action taken by any current or former employer including any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Any changes to these prerequisites after employment commences must be communicated to the employer immediately by the employee.

Signature of Employee: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Employer: _____

Date: _____

Mim Dineen, Corporate Services Manager