

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Principal Lawyer

1. POSITION DETAILS

POSITION TITLE	Principal Lawyer
REPORTING TO	Director SSRV
DIRECT REPORTS TO THIS POSITION	Volunteer Lawyers, Clinical Legal Education Program Students
HOURS PER WEEK	30.4 (0.8 FTE)
CLASSIFICATION	Community Legal Centres Multi Business Agreement SCHCADS Industry Award (Community Development Worker, Level 7)

2. CONTEXT

Social Security Rights Victoria (SSRV) is an independent, state-wide community legal centre that specialises in social security and related law, policy and procedure. Our vision is for a fair and just society in which all people are able to receive a guaranteed adequate income in order to enjoy a decent standard of living. SSRV's contribution to this vision is the provision of legal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians, and those who support them, which assist them to secure and protect their right to equitable social security entitlements.

3. POSITION OBJECTIVES

- Manage SSRV's legal practice
- Ensure that SSRV provides high quality and accessible legal assistance to SSRV's clients and professionals who assist them in accordance with the SSRV Legal Practice Guidelines
- Assist in co-ordination of volunteer programs
- Coordinate the Clinical Legal Education Program and supervise students
- Support the Director
- Contribute to SSRV's community legal education programs, community engagement work, and policy and law reform activities; and
- Contribute to the operational objectives of SSRV;
- Other duties as directed.

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Area	Responsibilities
Lead and manage SSRV's legal practice	<p>Lead and manage the SSRV legal practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure compliance with the applicable legal, ethical, insurance and risk management requirements; • maintain current internal priorities, legal practice guidelines, policies and procedures, and propose changes as relevant; • maintain a caseload; • supervise the advice and casework undertaken by other staff, volunteers and students, including advice provided via the Telephone Information Line; • manage client intake and file loads in accordance with SSRV Casework Priorities and Legal Practice Guidelines; • contribute to co-ordination of volunteer programs; • ensure a high standard of legal assistance (including information, advice,

	<p>casework, advocacy and representation work) is provided to SSRV clients;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all casework files are maintained to high standards including appropriate levels of client contact, communication, professional documentation, record keeping and storage of files; • offer secondary consultation and support to workers from other agencies who are assisting their clients with social security matters; • identify trends and issues arising through advice and casework services and proposing relevant responses; • identify themes and changes in laws and practices relevant to the areas of work conducted by SSRV, undertake relevant professional development and ensure that others within SSRV are kept up to date with these matters; • contribute to and approve legal content of community legal education, law reform and media activities.
Coordinate and supervise Clinical Legal Education Program	<p>Co-ordinate the Clinical Legal Education Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaise with university and other stakeholders; • undertake program planning, management and evaluation of all aspects of Clinical Program including induction, supervision, feedback and student evaluation; • be responsible for Clinical Program students including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. orientation, training and supervision of students; b. supervision of all legal advice and file work undertaken including advice only matters and ongoing matters; c. review and assessment of each student including casework and projects; d. preparation and presentation of seminars to students as part of the Clinical Program if necessary.
Community legal education and law reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the planning, development and delivery of community legal education programs in consultation with other SSRV staff; • Contribute to identifying legal policy and law reform issues and responses, and assist in law reform activities.
Community Engagement and Partnership Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in identifying gaps in legal assistance provision and/or opportunities to advance SSRV's objectives and in formulating initiatives to respond to those; • Assist in identifying and building relationships with external organisations and individuals (eg. pro-bono service providers, funding organisations, community organisations and supporters) in order to advance SSRV's objectives and strengthen organisational capacity.
General duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General administrative duties including maintenance of client information database; • Actively participate in staff meetings, annual planning and strategic development. • Undertake appropriate professional development activities to maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills required to fulfil key responsibilities of the position, and participate in regular supervision and performance reviews; • Contribute to preparation of reports and other accountability requirements. • Undertake other duties as required

5. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications and Experience:

- Qualified Lawyer holding (or eligible to hold) a Principal Practising Certificate;
- At least three years post-admission experience in conducting legal advice and casework, including providing court or tribunal representation.

Skills and Knowledge:

- Understanding of and current/or capacity to develop expertise in relevant areas of law and practice.
- Strong legal casework and advocacy skills, including experience in providing representation in courts/tribunals.
- Strong organisational and time management skills, including ability to manage competing demands, prioritise tasks and solve problems.
- Self-motivated and managing, able to work independently and proactively.
- Able to take direction and to work co-operatively as part of a small team.
- Experience in supervising the work of others, including volunteers and students.
- Well-developed verbal and written communications skills (experience in delivering training and submission and report writing preferred).
- Good computer and internet proficiency (MS Office, databases).
- Ability to identify broader and systemic issues arising from casework and to propose relevant responses.
- Demonstrated commitment to principles of social justice, understanding of the community/legal assistance sector, and of the objectives and values of SSRV.

6. TERMS & CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- This position is permanent and ongoing (subject to the availability of funding), following completion of a 6 month probation period.
- Salary packaging is available.
- Four weeks pro rata annual leave, and additional pro rata paid leave between Christmas Day and New Year's Day
- Position is currently based in Fitzroy, travel to other locations will be required at times.

Current May 2018