

Redfern Legal Centre

Job Description

Principal Solicitor

Accountability	Chief Executive Officer
Status	Full time (35 hours per week) permanent
Client/target group(s)	Residents requiring legal advice and assistance living in South Sydney, Sydney, Botany & Leichhardt LGAs, and elsewhere in NSW, in accordance with the Centre's strategic workplan
Scope	This document provides the broad parameters of the position and should be read in conjunction with the Annual Work Plan

Preamble

Redfern Legal Centre promotes social justice through:

- providing free legal advice, legal services and education to vulnerable people in New South Wales, and to groups who advocate for them
- participating in activities which reduce inequalities and defects in laws, the legal system, and administrative and social practices that impact on vulnerable people.

Statement of Shared Philosophy and Values

To achieve its purpose, Redfern Legal Centre:

- is committed to reducing social inequities and systemic barriers to people enforcing their rights
- works with clients so they can assert their rights
- focuses on preventative measures
- seeks new and better ways of providing legal services to its clients
- is flexible in its service so that it remains responsive to changing community needs
- involves the community in its service operation and development
- strives to be non-discriminatory in its service delivery
- advocates for the public interest through issues which affect the wider community or significant sections of the community
- maintains its political independence
- uses its resources efficiently and effectively
- seeks excellence in its operation and accountability to its community and funders

Common staff responsibilities

RLC believes that all members of staff should contribute to the administration and development of the organisation. Along with all other staff, the worker may be required to:

(a) Supervise the front office, including the following:

- supervision of volunteers
- provision of emergency telephone advice (day) and general telephone advice (night)
- advice and assistance to Centre clients
- assessment of client intake
- review of files
- training of Centre volunteers in poverty law practice and the role and operation of RLC and other community services

(b) to work one evening per week;

(c) undertake the carriage and conduct of the work of other staff during periods of leave;

(d) provide regular reports to management and staff meetings;

(e) assist with the general day to day administration of the Centre as required;

(f) attend and participate in team and staff meetings, policy and staff days;

(g) assist in the preparation of submissions and reports to funding bodies, as required, including the maintenance of statistics;

(h) liaise and network with other professionals in the area;

(i) attend RLC hosted functions out of hours such as volunteer or fundraising events;

(j) carry out such other duties as may be reasonably required by the Management of Redfern Legal Centre.

Specific position duties

The primary role of this worker is to give direction, purpose and leadership to the Centre's legal casework, community legal education and law reform activities, and to supervise the work and performance of caseworkers.

The Principal Solicitor is solely responsible for the conduct of the casework practice and for the supervision and performance of the staff and volunteers participating in the legal work of the Centre.

The Principal Solicitor must comply with the management requirements of the CEO in all administration and policy matters.

The CEO retains overall authority for setting the strategic direction of the Centre (with direction from the Board) including in policy and law reform activities.

1. Legal Practice

- 1.1. Ensure the legal practice operates effectively within the Centre's policies, and is focussed on achieving the Centre's objectives with regard to target client groups and areas of strategic law reform and casework.
- 1.2. Develop and maintain legal practice policies which are consistent with the Centre's policies and objectives and the Community Legal Centres Funding Program Service Standards.
- 1.3. Develop and maintain an effective network of contacts, advice, referrals, and pro bono support for the legal practice.
- 1.4. Act as Principal Solicitor for the legal practice including 'solicitor on the record', professional supervision and support of all paid and volunteer legal and specialist non-legal staff, and maintenance of and compliance with the Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme.
- 1.5. Conduct file, advice and referral work including the preparation of applications and appearances in Courts and Tribunals.
- 1.6. Coordinate and participate in evening advice sessions, including supervision and checking of advice given by volunteer solicitors.
- 1.7. Provide input into the Centre's program of volunteer training and student clinics.
- 1.8. As necessary, operate and manage a Trust Account and financial records for casework files.
- 1.9. Develop and maintain effective structures for supervision and monitoring of casework in accordance with the Redfern Legal Centre Service Standard for Provision of Casework.

2. Community Liaison and Community Legal Education

- 2.1. Co-operate with the CEO in representing the Centre and/or the sector in consultation with the CEO.
- 2.2. Provide input into the program of community legal education consistent with the Centre's objectives.
- 2.3. Assist and encourage other legal staff to develop and deliver targeted community legal education programs.

- 2.4. Coordinate the Centre's involvement in outreach advice services and supervise the legal practice of those services, including Redlink and the Health Justice Partnership with SLHD.

3. Policy and Law Reform

- 3.1. Identify the policy and reform issues arising from the Centre's general casework and facilitate appropriate action to foster systemic changes, in consultation with the CEO and senior solicitors or team leaders.
- 3.2. Initiate, coordinate and develop public policy and law reform submissions and activities aimed at addressing systemic causes of social and legal disadvantage, in consultation with the CEO and senior solicitors or team leaders.

4. Participation in centre activities

- 4.1. Attend staff, community and management meetings as required.
- 4.2. Contribute to shared tasks from time to time including filing and office tidiness.
- 4.3. Support the Centre in all contact with the public, media, legal profession, funding bodies and other community sector organisations.
- 4.4. Participate in relevant community and legal sector forums as a representative of Redfern Legal Centre from time to time as required.

Review

Performance under this job description is subject to annual review. The job description will not be varied without first being discussed with the worker, who may request and shall be granted a review of their job description at any time.

Last reviewed May 2017