

Role Description

Senior Solicitor

Grade V

Cluster	Stronger Communities
Agency	Legal Aid NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Criminal Law
Classification/Grade/Band	Legal Officer Grade V
ANZCO Code	271311
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	8 January 2020 14 August 2023 January 2025
Agency Website	www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

Legal Aid NSW is the largest legal aid agency in Australia, comprising a Central Sydney office and 28 regional offices in metropolitan and regional centres across NSW including the two satellite offices located at Walgett and Bourke and a number of specialist services and advice clinics. It was established under the *Legal Aid Commission Act 1979* as an independent authority to assist economically and socially disadvantaged people to understand and protect their rights in the legal system. People with disabilities, from people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women and children, Indigenous people and people with mental illness are some of the groups who may experience difficulties when enforcing and defending their rights.

Working in partnership with private lawyers, Legal Aid NSW provides legal advice, information and minor assistance and legal representation to eligible people in many areas of law. Legal Aid NSW also provides alternative dispute resolution services, community legal education programs, and publications on legal issues.

Primary purpose of the role

Provide legal advice and representation to clients of Legal Aid NSW, including in more complex matters, in accordance with Legal Aid NSW policies and guidelines in order to contribute to the implementation of Legal Aid NSW's mission to deliver high quality legal services to our clients and to assist them to resolve their legal problems. Supervise and lead junior legal staff in achieving this aim.

Key accountabilities

- Provide an efficient and effective high-quality legal service to clients in accordance with legislation and Legal Aid NSW policy, guidelines and practice standards, including advice, assistance duty lawyer services; representation in dispute resolution processes and referrals to other agencies/services as required.
- Manage and support legal officers to ensure high quality, efficient and effective legal services within the Criminal Law Division in accordance with service delivery plans and strategic directions.
- Manage staff development.
- Maintain the wellbeing and mental health of solicitors in the team by closely managing work volume, vicarious trauma, psychological risks and viewing of disturbing material.
- Keep up to date with and apply relevant legislation, practice directions, delegations, policies and guidelines.

- Determine applications for Legal Aid under delegated authority and consistent with the Legal Aid Commission Act, policy and guidelines and/or submitting applications for Legal Aid to the Grants Division.
- Develop, implement and maintain stakeholder relationships both internal and external stakeholders.

Key challenges

- Being able to communicate with and take instructions from a wide range of people including those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people in crisis, people with a physical or intellectual disability or mental illness, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, or who have problem behaviours such as drug or alcohol addictions, in situations where the legal concepts involved are complex and difficult for the client to understand.
- Managing a high volume and/or complex practice of criminal law matters with autonomy, whilst mentoring and guiding other team members. Demonstrate leadership as a manager and/or peer.
- Developing and maintaining positive working relationships with various agencies and stakeholders.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Solicitor in Charge	Support and Guidance
Deputy Director or Associate Director	Resourcing Assistance
Solicitors	Providing direction and guidance, mentoring
External	
Solicitors and Barristers	Assigning legal aid work and instructing in trial matters
Clients	Representing clients
Members of the Judiciary	Appearing before the bench

Role dimensions

Decision making

The role operates with autonomy in respect of day-to-day priorities and the coordination of work and resources of the team to meet service levels. Provides advice and decision making to solicitors reporting to the position.

Reporting line

Associate Director

Solicitor in Charge

Direct reports

Legal Officers IV

Legal Officers I-III

Budget/Expenditure

n/a

Essential requirements

Legal Qualifications

Practising Certificate (unrestricted)

Certain roles within Criminal Law (mainly in the regional areas) require a valid Driver Licence and the ability to travel to circuit courts including overnight travel.

Working with Children Check (for regional offices and some specialist teams)

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.


The capabilities are separated into focus capabilities and complementary capabilities

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Focus capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
	Act with Integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represent the organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so• Act professionally and support a culture of integrity• Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow• Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate• Act to prevent and report misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour	Adept



Manage Self

Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning

- Keep up to date with relevant contemporary knowledge and practices
- Look for and take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills and develop strengths
- Show commitment to achieving challenging goals
- Examine and reflect on own performance
- Seek and respond positively to constructive feedback and guidance
- Demonstrate and maintain a high level of personal motivation

Adept



Communicate Effectively

Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect

- Present with credibility, engage diverse audiences and test levels of understanding
- Translate technical and complex information clearly and concisely for diverse audiences
- Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate
- Contribute to and promote information sharing across the organisation
- Manage complex communications that involve understanding and responding to multiple and divergent viewpoints
- Explore creative ways to engage diverse audiences and communicate information
- Adjust style and approach to optimise outcomes
- Write fluently and persuasively in plain English and in a range of styles and formats

Advanced



Plan and Prioritise

Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances

- Understand the links between the business unit, organisation and the whole-of-government agenda
- Ensure business plan goals are clear and appropriate and include contingency provisions
- Monitor the progress of initiatives and make necessary adjustments
- Anticipate and assess the impact of changes, including government policy and economic conditions, on business plans and initiatives and respond appropriately
- Consider the implications of a wide range of complex issues and shift business priorities when necessary
- Undertake planning to help the organisation transition through change initiatives, and evaluate progress and outcomes to inform future planning

Advanced



Think and Solve Problems

Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions

- Undertake objective, critical analysis to draw accurate conclusions that recognise and manage contextual issues
- Work through issues, weigh up alternatives and identify the most effective solutions in collaboration with others
- Take account of the wider business context when considering options to resolve issues
- Explore a range of possibilities and creative alternatives to contribute to system, process and business improvements
- Implement systems and processes that are underpinned by high-quality research and analysis
- Look for opportunities to design innovative solutions to meet user needs and service demands
- Evaluate the performance and effectiveness of services, policies and programs against clear criteria

Advanced

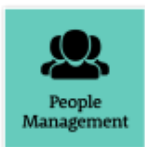


Technology

Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology relevant to the work unit, and identify and select the most appropriate technology for assigned tasks
- Use available technology to improve individual performance and effectiveness
- Make effective use of records, information and knowledge management functions and systems
- Support the implementation of systems improvement initiatives, and the introduction and roll-out of new technologies

Intermediate



Manage and Develop People

Engage and motivate staff, and develop capability and potential in others

- Refine roles and responsibilities over time to achieve better business outcomes
- Recognise talent, develop team capability and undertake succession planning
- Coach and mentor staff and encourage professional development and continuous learning
- Prioritise addressing and resolving team and individual performance issues and ensure that this approach is cascaded throughout the organisation
- Implement performance development frameworks to align workforce capability with the organisation's current and future priorities and objectives

Advanced



Inspire Direction and Purpose

Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements

- Promote a sense of purpose and enable others to understand the links between government policy, organisational goals and public value
- Build a shared sense of direction, clarify priorities and goals, and inspire others to achieve these
- Work with others to translate strategic direction into operational goals and build a shared understanding of the link between these and core business outcomes
- Create opportunities for recognising and celebrating high performance at the individual and team level
- Instil confidence, and cultivate an attitude of openness and curiosity in tackling future challenges

Advanced



Manage Reform and Change

Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change

- Support teams in developing new ways of working and generating innovative ideas to approach challenges
- Actively promote change processes to staff and participate in communicating change initiatives across the organisation
- Provide guidance, coaching and direction to others who are managing uncertainty and change
- Engage staff in change processes and provide clear guidance, coaching and support
- Identify cultural barriers to change and implement strategies to address these










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Complementary capabilities




Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Display Resilience and Courage	Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	Adept
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate

	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
	Work Collaboratively	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Advanced
	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Adept
	Deliver Results	Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes	Adept
	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Adept
	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Adept
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
	Project Management	Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods	Adept
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Adept

Occupational Specific Complimentary Capabilities

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
	Statutory Interpretation	Interpret legislation, subordinate legislation and instruments in accordance with legislation and accepted legal principles	Level 2
	Legal Research	Undertake legal research	Level 2
	Legal Advice	Provide quality independent legal advice and explanation of legal issues	Level 3



Legal drafting

Prepare legal documents to achieve client outcomes

Level 2



Litigation and Dispute Resolution

Litigate and resolve disputes effectively in relevant forums and jurisdictions

Level 3



Advocacy

Act as an effective and ethical advocate

Level 3