

Position Title:	Community Lawyer
Terms of Employment:	1 x Fixed Term Contract to January 31, 2021 1 x Fixed Term Contract to December 18, 2020
Hours	Negotiable – 22.8 to 38 hours per week
Reporting to:	Principal Lawyer
Location:	Level 1, 63 Thomson Street Belmont. Work is also carried out at outreach offices around Geelong and in Colac.
Employment Conditions	In accordance with the Community Legal Centres Multi Business Agreement, Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHCADS), and applicable legislation
Classification and Pay Rate:	Community Development Worker Level 4 or 5 Class IIb, dependant on experience.
Salary packaging	The benefits of tax-effective salary packaging are be available (including access to Accommodation and Meal Entertainment packaging)

Barwon Community Legal Service

BCLS Vision

A just society in which all people have equal access to, and status under, the law; and a legal system which is humane, fair and equitable.

BCLS Mission

To promote, protect and enhance the rights and interests of individuals, groups and organisations within the BCLS catchment region who are disadvantaged in their access to justice; and contribute to reform of laws and structural inequities to achieve humane, fair and equitable outcomes.

About BCLS

BCLS is an independent not-for-profit community-based organisation, serving the local government areas of City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff, Surfcoast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and some regions of Golden Plains Shire since 1986. The service is an incorporated association governed by an independent Board of Directors and receives funding from a number of sources to deliver services across a range of program areas.

Services currently offered include legal information, referral, advice, casework, social work and education for members of the local community. Our model of service provision ensures that work undertaken is reviewed for emerging patterns and trends, and that issues requiring structural change or political intervention are identified and addressed through advocacy, community education and social policy initiatives.

Position Purpose

To positively impact the lives of people living in the BCLS catchment area through the provision of high quality legal advice and casework, family violence duty lawyer services and community legal education.

Position Context

The Community Lawyer will work as part of an integrated multi-function team working across a number of different practice areas. Assisting in the delivery of a holistic legal service to clients and the community, the legal practice team undertakes a range of activities including community legal education, community development activities as well as law reform and legal policy work.

Two positions are available:

1. This position will deliver the university lawyer program and contribute to various areas of the legal practice, including working as duty lawyer in the Family Violence jurisdiction of the Geelong Magistrates Courts, criminal clinic, divorce clinic, and family law projects at the Family Relationship Centre as well as backing up other programs such as school lawyer, The Orange Door and SAFVC Centre partnerships.
2. This position will be working in various areas of the legal practice including working as duty lawyer in the Family Violence jurisdiction of the Geelong Magistrates Courts, criminal clinic, divorce clinic and family law projects at the Family Relationship Centre as well as backing up other programs such as school lawyer, university student lawyer, The Orange Door and SAFVC Centre.

Collaborates With

BCLS legal team and management, volunteers and Practice Legal Trainees. Centre clients and members of the community.

Decision Making Authority

Decision making authority regarding own day to day work flow. Decisions related to work processes and program planning to be made in consultation with your manager.

Key Responsibilities

Legal Service Delivery

- Provide legal information, advice, advocacy and referral at client-drop in and appointment sessions
- Participate, as needed, in the provision of legal services which include advice and program development at outreach locations (currently including Corio, Norlane, Colac, The Orange Door, Western Heights College and Deakin University Geelong campuses)
- Undertake casework for eligible clients, and within organisational capacities, arising from client meetings and referrals from other areas within the service

- Contribute to work to improve service delivery and access to services for people experiencing disadvantage by improving connections to other community groups
- Comply with all requirements of professional legal practice, including practice certificate, continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance (PII) requirements
- Participate in the development and implementation of alternative service delivery initiatives and service extension
- Ensure appropriate file management and information systems are complied with, including the data collection, entry and report generation
- Work with students and volunteers whilst providing legal advice
- Depending on experience and qualifications, supervise Practice Legal Trainees as rostered

Community Legal Education, Community Development and Law Reform

Work collaboratively with Community Education and Development Worker to assist with the development of educational material and the delivery of legal education presentations

- Work to raise BCLS's public profile through participation in public forums and community presentations
- Network with appropriate local, state and national organisations to further the profile and work of BCLS
- Monitor casework to identify potential systemic issues and use this information to inform BCLS's community development planning
- Collaborate with the Principal Lawyer to identify law reform and policy issues, input to law reform, written policy submissions and inquiries, meeting and consultation attendance, planning and conduct of strategic litigation.
- In collaboration with the principal lawyer manage relationships and partnerships with other key stakeholders as required.

General Responsibilities

- Attend internal staff and planning meetings
- Prepare material for BCLS Annual Report
- Attend BCLS Annual General Meeting
- Attend other events as required
- Attend conferences as required
- Participate in professional development through appropriate training
- Share general office duties
- Other duties as required

Key Selection Criteria (Qualifications, Knowledge & Skills, Personal Attributes)

Mandatory Qualifications

- Admitted to practice (or eligible for admission) as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria and to hold (or be eligible to hold) a current practicing certificate under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria) Act.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

- Experience in a broad range of legal matters

- Commitment to the principles of equity, access and social justice and to meeting the legal needs of disadvantaged groups
- Experience in a broad range of legal areas
- Commitment to delivery of client services of high professional and ethical standards
- Commitment to the delivery of quality legal education and community development
- Willingness to maintain records and seek out, gather and analyse existing information on issues relevant to the position
- Effective written and verbal communication skills – the ability to explain complex processes in plain language

Desirable Knowledge and Skills

- Understanding of the principles and practice of the community sector
- Experience working with people from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds
- An understanding of the principles of trauma informed practice

Personal Attributes

- Ability to contribute to a positive working environment
- Capacity to work with minimal supervision, use initiative, set priorities, organise and manage workloads
- Team orientation
- Ability to work under pressure and handle difficult conversations
- Discrete and professional
- Compassionate and empathetic