

Position Description

Social Worker, Women's Homelessness

Ongoing position

Full time, 5 days per week

Sydney based

1. The Justice and Equity Centre

The Justice and Equity Centre (formerly the Public Interest Advocacy Centre) is a leading social justice law and policy centre. We build a fairer, stronger society by helping to change laws, policies and practices that cause injustice and inequality.

Our work combines:

- legal advice and representation, specialising in test cases and strategic casework;
- research, analysis and policy development; and
- advocacy for systems change and public interest outcomes through media, communications, submissions and engagement with decision-makers.

We work across 5 focus areas: First Nations justice; reducing homelessness; disability rights; energy and water justice; and civil rights.

2. Homeless Persons' Legal Service

The Homeless Persons' Legal Service (HPLS) protects the rights of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and helps people avoid or exit homelessness. We do this by providing free legal assistance, advice and representation to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and supporting advocates with lived experience to drive change and challenge systemic barriers that prevent people from having a safe, secure and healthy home.

HPLS focuses on building strong partnerships with services in the homelessness sector, fostering trust that encourages ongoing referrals to our service. HPLS conducts legal work internally and refers ongoing casework to pro bono volunteer lawyers from our partner firms, who work under the supervision of our in-house team.

The HPLS consumer advisory committee, StreetCare, empowers people with lived experience of homelessness to initiate, inform and influence positive change. The group also helps drive our policy priorities.

Informed by our casework and consumer feedback, HPLS addresses causes of homelessness through strategic engagement and policy advocacy with government and service providers.

3. HPLS Women's Service

Part of the Homeless Persons' Legal Service (HPLS), the HPLS Women's Service is a gendered service that provides specialist assistance to women, trans and gender diverse people who are at risk of being evicted, homeless, and/or facing other barriers to accessing and maintaining safe and stable housing.

We provide a wrap around service to clients advice and casework in the following areas of law:

- tenancy;
- victims compensation;
- fines;
- credit/debt;
- criminal defence advocacy; and
- Apprehended Violence Orders

The service is overseen and coordinated by a Managing Solicitor and includes a Civil Solicitor, a Criminal Solicitor, a Community Caseworker, a Legal and Client Support Officer, secondees and specially trained pro bono solicitors.

Through its casework and engagement with the community, the Women's Service also identifies opportunities to advocate for systemic responses to homelessness and domestic and family violence affecting women.

4. Position overview

Reporting to the Managing Solicitor, the Social Worker will work with HPLS Women's Service lawyers to support clients to achieve better outcomes through holistic service delivery. The Social Worker will provide personalised and planned case managed support and advocacy for clients of HPLS Women's Service. Through a client-centred approach, the Social Worker will support clients in areas such as housing, health, family violence, linking with culturally appropriate services, community integration, NDIS and financial issues. The position may include the provision of outreach support at some courts and in the community

5. Major accountabilities

- 5.1 Provide case management support to women who are clients of the HPLS Women's Service.
- 5.2 Work with HPLS solicitors to identify and address the support needs of clients.
- 5.3 Refer and support clients to obtain appropriate housing, drug and alcohol treatment, community services and other relevant supports in the community
- 5.4 Attend outreach clinics with HPLS Women's Service lawyers to provide assistance to the lawyers and social support to clients.
- 5.5 Provide information and support relating to material and financial aid, mental and physical health and wellbeing, education/employment/training opportunities and other relevant services and supports.
- 5.6 Advocate on behalf of women in relation to government services and departments.
- 5.7 Attend court in support of HPLS Women's Service clients, as required.
- 5.8 Participate in and contribute to research and advocacy to address the systemic issues women face in their interactions with the justice system.
- 5.9 Develop and maintain strong working relationships with key stakeholders, including justice services staff, and community-based support and health services.

- 5.10 Contribute to resource development, educational activities, advocacy and law reform activities.

Governance

- 5.11 Maintain accurate case files and related documents, collect and record data, and assist with reporting, including for external funders and governance requirements.
- 5.12 Support the successful implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan.

6. Knowledge, skills and experience

Essential

- 6.1 Demonstrated experience in the delivery of support services to women and or trans and gender diverse people .
- 6.2 A commitment to social justice principles.
- 6.3 Experience in trauma-informed service delivery and integrated practice principles.
- 6.4 Understanding of the impacts of domestic and family violence or sexual assault and/or with homelessness.
- 6.5 Demonstrated commitment to working in a collaborative and co-operative manner to achieve outcomes for clients, as well as the ability to work independently and take initiative as required.
- 6.6 Demonstrated ability to keep accurate records and maintain client confidentiality.
- 6.7 Excellent interpersonal communications skills, with the demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with staff, clients, external stakeholders and organisations.
- 6.8 Demonstrated ability to manage a busy caseload coupled with administrative tasks and prioritise effectively.
- 6.9 Demonstrated ability to build networks and partnerships.
- 6.10 Current Working with Children Check.

Desirable

- 6.11 An understanding of the legal system, in particular criminal proceedings, and how it affects women.

7. Conditions

We are an equal opportunity employer and are committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Annual salary range: \$107,189 to \$119,582 (pro rata where applicable) plus leave loading and superannuation. This is Level 5 on the JEC's salary scale.

We are a Public Benevolent Institution and are currently able to offer salary packaging options subject to our Salary Sacrifice Policy. Staff who take full advantage of salary packaging options can significantly increase their take-home pay.

Our Enterprise Agreement provides benefits including additional paid leave between Christmas and New Year and paid cultural and ceremonial leave. See further: [Justice and Equity Centre Enterprise Agreement](#).

This position is offered as an ongoing full-time role.

We are committed to flexible working arrangements and provides opportunities for professional development and mentoring. Our workplace culture is collaborative, dynamic and committed to cultural safety.

8. Applications

Your application should be no longer than 6 pages in total. An application should comprise a cover letter, resume, and a statement outlining your suitability for the role with reference to the selection criteria (see 'Knowledge, skills and experience').

Applications should be sent by email to jobs@jec.org.au.

Inquiries about the position should be addressed to:

Tempe McMinn

Managing Solicitor, HPLS Women's Service

jobs@jec.org.au

If you would like to discuss the recruitment process and any adjustments you may require, please contact jobs@jec.org.au.