



SOUTH-EAST MONASH LEGAL SERVICE INC.

ADVOCACY COMMUNITY EMPATHY

POSITION DESCRIPTION: Justice Q Lawyer

Title:	Justice Q Lawyer
Status:	0.8 FTE
Reports to:	Director of Legal Practice
Classification:	Social Community Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award
Salary:	SCHCADS Award Level 5 to 6 based on skills and experience plus superannuation and generous salary packaging and grace days over the Christmas/New Year break.

About SMLS

Established in 1973, South-East Monash Legal Service (SMLS) is a community legal centre that provides free legal assistance to people in Southeast Melbourne. SMLS provides legal information, advice and case work including representation for people experiencing disadvantage on a range of legal matters, such as family law and family violence, employment law, debt and fines, civil litigation, wills, power of attorney, and tenancy.

SMLS aims to empower and support members of the community to understand and make use of the law and the legal system to protect their rights and to increase their awareness of their legal responsibilities. SMLS is a strong advocate of and committed to the use of integrated service models to address multifaceted challenges facing our community members.

SMLS is committed to advocacy and social change. SMLS is a leader in the provision of community and clinical legal education; advocacy through policy submissions and lobbying; outreach services; and targeted referral programs.

Our Vision

A fair and inclusive community where people can access the resources, networks and support they need to resolve legal issues and overcome barriers to social, cultural and economic inclusion and participation

Our Purpose

To help resolve people's legal and interconnected issues and ensure that laws and legal processes are fair.

Our Values

Our core values are Respect, Community, Excellence and Courage.

POSITION PURPOSE

This is an exciting new role that will help shape SMLS' Justice Q program. Justice Q is SMLS' specialist LGBTIQ+ legal service for people in south-east Melbourne. This new and exciting program will utilise SMLS' integrated service model with a multidisciplinary team of lawyers, community development and peer workers. The program will also have an internal referral system, where clients are able to access services across SMLS practice areas. The program will be implemented across sites in the south-east metro of Melbourne.

The Justice Q Lawyer will provide specialist legal assistance, strategic litigation, and help develop legal education materials. This is a generalist position, assisting with legal issues from various practice areas. The role will be supported by an internal community of practice.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The role supports the SMLS' strategic objectives: practitioners of the future, empowered communities, integrated person-centred services, organisation of choice, and fairer laws and better legal processes.

The role should be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of these objectives and be able to implement them through their duties. For more information about our strategic objectives, read SMLS' Strategic Plan 2021-2025 [here](#).

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide high quality legal advice (both written and oral) and representation in a range of matters.
- Run litigation matters – including developing legal strategies, briefing barristers, initiating proceedings, preparing evidence, file management, correspondence and instructing in court.
- Conduct detailed legal research regarding legal issues facing LGBTIQ+ clients, undertake literature reviews, develop a LGBTIQ+ legal needs analysis for a south-east metro context
- Draft reports, legislative directories, guides, case law summaries and legal analysis for publication
- Work closely with the community development team to develop and deliver community legal education regarding legal issues the LGBTIQ+ community faces.
- Contribute to advocacy initiatives
- Collaborate with family violence, family, civil lawyers, and social work teams to ensure holistic and positive outcomes for clients across various legal domains.
- Perform all necessary administrative work necessary to manage a busy file load, including accurate record-keeping in accordance with SMLS policies and procedures.
- Participate in strategic litigation and projects as directed by the Leadership team to address systemic legal disadvantage experienced by priority clients in our region.
- Apply SMLS casework guidelines governing eligibility for on-going assistance, and the extent of that assistance.

- Other duties as directed

Organisational Participation

- Participate in organisational strategic planning initiatives and projects
- Contribute to a healthy, productive organisational culture where work practices, decision making, and behaviour reflect SMLS philosophy and values
- Develop and strengthen networks, engaging the support and involvement of a range of individuals and organisations
- Perform other duties as directed and necessary for the proper performance of the role

Values and Behaviour

- Promote and role model appropriate behaviour to support SMLS culture, performance and profile
- Actively support SMLS commitment to the principles of diversity, inclusion, social justice and Equal Employment Opportunity.
- Actively demonstrate organisational values.
- Demonstrate commitment to continuous personal development, with a strong willingness to develop new skills and knowledge

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- Act in a safe manner at all times, including complying with all safety instructions and training.
- Participate in, and contribute to, health and safety awareness and improvements.
- Report all incidents, injuries and potential hazards in a timely manner.
- Ensure that the work is carried out in ways which safeguard the health and safety of workers, or others in their charge, including contractors whom they engage.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS

Essential Selection Criteria

- Eligibility to hold an unrestricted Victorian legal practicing certificate with 3+ years post admission experience
- Strong, demonstrated commitment and/or connection to the LGBTIQ+ community, including knowledge of legal issues
- Experience working on complex litigation or complex legal campaigning in an area of either public, human rights or administrative law
- Experience briefing barristers and experts in litigation matters.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including demonstrated ability to communicate legal concepts in clear language and prepare written legal advice.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a collaborative team environment

- Strong interpersonal skills including the ability to communicate sensitively and build mutually beneficial relationships with internal and external stakeholders

Desirable Selection Criteria

- Experience working in the community legal sector, legal aid or other settings that support communities who are experiencing disadvantage and/or injustice
- Experience and/or interest in tribunal or court representation

Personal Attributes

- The ability to work within tight deadlines, independently and minimal supervision
- Flexible, adaptive and able to work effectively in a small team or independently
- Solutions and outcomes focused, with a steady line of sight to the impact of our actions for clients
- Openness to change, receptiveness to new ideas and exercise initiative
- Capacity to reflect on own work performance
- Demonstrated commitment to social justice and awareness of the legal needs of disadvantaged and marginalised people
- Commitment to SMLS values
- Committed to contributing to a positive work environment

Location and work outside office hours

The position will be based between the SMLS offices in Springvale and Narre Warren, with work also conducted at outreach and court locations in Melbourne's south-east. Occasional work outside normal office hours may be required, such as to attend meetings and after-hours events.