



Peninsula Community
Legal Centre Inc

POSITION DESCRIPTION TRAINEE LAWYER Trainee Lawyer Placement Program

Organisational Overview

Peninsula Community Legal Centre Inc (PCLC) works to empower and support disadvantaged community members of the South Eastern Melbourne and Westernport regions to use the law and the legal system to protect and advance their rights and broaden their awareness of their responsibilities. The Centre offers general legal advice and casework services, specialist family, tenancy, consumer and child support programs, and is active in community legal education and law reform work.

The main office is located in Frankston. Services are also offered from offices in Bentleigh East, Frankston North, Cranbourne, Rosebud and from a number of outreach locations. Services are provided by paid staff and volunteers. A community based management committee is responsible for strategic governance. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the day to day management of the Centre.

Trainee Lawyer Placement Program (Pilot)

The Program will provide law graduates who are undertaking a practical legal training course with the opportunity to undertake a placement at the Centre. The placement will assist the graduates to meet mandated practical legal training requirements.

Trainee lawyers will be partnered with an experienced employee lawyer/s. Tasks will be supervised and will vary depending upon the particular placement but are likely to include sitting in on client interviews, taking client details and instructions, writing file notes, drafting documents, making referrals, undertaking legal research, attendance at court and participation in a community legal education or law reform activity.

Key Areas of Responsibility

PCLC Responsibilities

PCLC will provide trainee lawyers with:

- a safe and healthy workplace and system of work;
- coverage under its professional indemnity, public liability and voluntary workers insurances;
- appropriate orientation, work activities, supervision and support;
- resources required to undertake work activities;
- avenues for raising concerns;
- access to in-house (and possibly external) professional development opportunities which arise during the placement period;

- completed documentation required by the PLT course provider.

Trainee Lawyer Responsibilities

PCLC expects that trainee lawyers will:

- be reliable and accountable;
- comply with the organisation's policies, procedures and risk management requirements;
- complete and comply with PCLC's *Worker Privacy and Confidentiality Undertaking*;
- ensure that formal work experience placement requirements are clear and are able to be met, prior to the commencement of the placement;
- undertake agreed tasks diligently, in good faith and within agreed processes and timelines;
- conduct themselves professionally in their dealings with their mentor lawyer, co-workers and clients;
- be respectful of the work demands experienced by mentors and co-workers;
- seek clarification and guidance in the conduct of work activities as required;
- be open to receiving, applying and providing constructive feedback;
- be proactive about seeking work and looking for ways to add value to advice and casework, such as writing case studies or contributing ideas for research or legal education activities;
- participate in regular supervision meetings and discuss any concerns with the Designated Senior Lawyer;
- keep records of activities and learning consistent with PLT provider requirements;
- contribute to the review and evaluation of the placement/program;
- attend the work experience placement for the period of time agreed at the commencement of the placement.

Accountability

Trainee Lawyers are formally supervised by the Designated Senior Lawyer, under the broader direction of the Principal Lawyer.

Qualifications

Mandatory

1. Completed a law degree and currently undertaking a Professional Legal Training course.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Agreement to commit to at least 40 working days placement, even if this exceeds course requirements.
2. Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
3. Well developed organisational and time management skills.
4. Ability to take direction and work in a team environment.
5. Commitment to the philosophy and principles of community legal centres.
6. Ability to articulate personal objectives and course requirements in undertaking the placement.
7. Ability to demonstrate interest and enthusiasm for opportunity offered by the placement.
8. Competency in using word processing and electronic communication programs.

Remuneration and Conditions of Placement

The trainee lawyer placements are unpaid positions.

The trainee lawyer must provide a current and satisfactory Police Records Check prior to commencement of the placement. The trainee is responsible for associated costs.

Reimbursement may be provided for expenses incurred in the conduct of duties on behalf of PCLC.

The trainee lawyer will be primarily located at a designated PCLC office, however travel to and work from other offices, outreach locations and other venues may be required.

All PCLC workers, whether paid or unpaid, are

- required to take responsibility for a safe and healthy work environment and have a commitment to equal employment opportunity and a workplace free from discrimination and harassment
- expected to comply with the *Staff Code of Conduct, PCLC Policy and Procedures* and related instruments.
- required to sign the *Worker's Privacy and Confidentiality Undertaking*.

PCLC operates a smoke-free work environment.

Both the trainee lawyer and PCLC retain the right to seek to vary or cease the work experience placement at any time.

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