



Peninsula Community  
Legal Centre Inc

## POSITION DESCRIPTION COMMUNITY LAWYER

### Organisational Overview

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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.

### Key Areas of Responsibility

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#### Advice and Casework

1. Provide legal information, advice, advocacy and referral services to clients in accordance with the *Advice and Casework Guidelines*. This work may be done in person or by telephone.
2. Conduct ongoing casework in accordance with the *Advice and Casework Guidelines* and within the caseload/file limit directed from time to time.
3. Maintain an appropriate case management system, including undertaking regular file reviews.
4. Maintain accurate and up to date records, including file notes and casework statistics.
5. Develop and maintain up to date knowledge of relevant legislation, procedures and practices relevant to the position.
6. Develop and maintain up to date knowledge of relevant information, resources and referral options for clients.
7. Participate in regular supervision and caseworkers meetings.
8. Ensure that all work is conducted within the requirements of the *Legal Profession Act 2004* and Rules, the Centre's professional indemnity insurance and the Centre's policy and procedures.

#### Court Representation

9. As directed and in accordance with the *Advice and Casework Guidelines*, provide support and legal representation to clients in courts and other legal forums. This will be primarily as part of the Centre's Family Violence Court Support Program and Family Law Duty Lawyer Schemes.

### **Networking & Community Liaison**

10. Liaise with relevant organisations and workers.
11. Represent Peninsula Community Legal Centre at relevant community, government and other forums.

### **Community Legal Education**

12. Participate in community legal education activities as directed.

### **Systemic Advocacy & Policy Development**

13. Identify trends and issues arising from legal advice and casework practice.
14. Participate in activities which seek to ensure greater legislative and practical protection for PCLC clients, such as submission writing and participation in campaigns.

### **Reporting & Accountability**

15. Liaise with and report to the Principal Lawyer on a regular basis.
16. Assist with collection of data and preparation of reports and other accountability documentation as required.

### **General**

17. Participate in training and professional development as appropriate.
18. Attend bi-monthly staff meetings.
19. To deal with community member/client enquiries in person upon attending the Centre, or via telephone. This includes; making appointments, referring to other appropriate agencies/organisations; taking messages; directing person/caller to appropriate worker, upkeep of client files – opening/closing and directing to appropriate worker; recording incoming correspondence and directing to appropriate worker; recording outgoing mail, preparing outgoing mail for dispatch and other reception/administrative tasks (in conjunction with other staff participating in telephone/reception roster where operational).
20. Other duties as directed.

### **Accountability**

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Reports directly to the Principal Lawyer.

Position is accountable to the Chief Executive Officer and the Management Committee through the Principal Lawyer.

No positions report to this position.

### **Organisational Relationships**

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Internal Liaisons: PCLC community lawyers and caseworkers  
PCLC management and staff

External Liaisons: Range of liaisons undertaken relevant to provision of services to clients and other activities.

### **Extent of Authority**

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All work and conduct is to be performed in accordance with PCLC Policy and Procedures, PCLC Work Plan and PCLC Advice and Casework Guidelines.

Professional judgement is exercised in the performance of routine tasks and clients services.

Direction is sought prior to engaging in non-routine tasks and client services.

### **Qualifications**

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#### **Mandatory**

1. Holds or eligible to hold a current Victorian lawyers Practising Certificate
2. Must hold a current Victorian Driver's Licence.

#### **Preferred**

1. Tertiary qualifications in a relevant field such as community services, community development, social work or further legal studies.

### **Key Selection Criteria**

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#### **Essential**

1. Holds, or is eligible to hold, a current practicing certificate.
2. Demonstrated knowledge of law and legal system, relevant legislation and procedures and relevant current issues.
3. Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
4. Excellent interpersonal skills.
5. Experience in, or demonstrated capacity to undertake, direct legal service delivery, including provision of information, advice and referral services, negotiation and advocacy on behalf of clients, representation of clients in courts and other legal settings.
6. Well developed organisational skills and ability to work with minimal supervision.
7. Competency in using word processing and electronic communication programs.
8. Holds a current Victorian Driver's Licence and has access to a reliable and comprehensively insured vehicle.

#### **Preferred**

1. Experience in a similar role
2. Experience in the community sector and a commitment to the philosophy and principles of community legal centres.
3. Experience in undertaking systemic advocacy and community legal education work.

4. Competency in using publishing, database and spread sheet programs.
5. Some court appearance work preferred

## **Remuneration and Conditions of Employment**

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An individual contract of employment will be negotiated.

The *Federal Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Industry Award 2010* provides the basis for employment of PCLC staff. Individually negotiated terms and conditions of employment, over award conditions and agreed variations in work practices may be in place and these will be reflected in the contract of employment.

Salary packaging is available.

## **Special Conditions**

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- The Community Lawyer must hold a current Victorian Driver's Licence and have access to a reliable, comprehensively insured vehicle.
- The position will be primarily based at the Frankston Head office, however travel to and work from other offices, outreach locations and other venues may be required.
- Some out of hours work may be required. Time in lieu is offered as appropriate.
- Three month contract of employment, with possibility of further contract.
- All staff are required to take responsibility for a safe and healthy work environment and have a commitment to equal employment opportunity and a work place free from discrimination and harassment.
- All staff are expected to comply with the *Staff Code of Conduct, PCLC Policy and Procedures* and related instruments.
- Employees to sign the *Worker's Privacy and Confidentiality Undertaking*.
- PCLC operates a smoke-free work environment.

**Date prepared or last updated: December 2015**