

## Financial Counsellor Position Description

Justice, safety, empowerment  
for women and their children

### 1. Our service

Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV) is a not for profit organisation that has been providing free legal services to women for over 30 years. We specialise in issues arising from relationship breakdown and violence against women. WLSV provides free and confidential legal information, advice, referral and representation to women in Victoria.

Through our associated service, Family Law Legal Service, WLSV operates a daily duty lawyer service at the Family Law Courts and provides legal advice and representation to participants in VLA Roundtable Dispute Management and clients of the Melbourne Family Relationship Centre.

We initiate and participate in law reform activities, ensuring that clients' experiences are taken into account when legal policy is being developed or when changes are being made to the law.

We deliver legal education, training and professional development to a range of organisations and professional groups.

We also coordinate a volunteer program with over 70 volunteers.

We are funded by the Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division, Attorney General's Department, Canberra and Victoria Legal Aid.

### 2. Our mission

Women's Legal Service Victoria works to improve access to justice and outcomes for women who have experienced relationship breakdown or violence. WLSV does this by:

- providing quality legal services that are responsive to women's needs and to the needs of children in their care
- providing women, and people who work with women, with knowledge and skills to better navigate the legal system
- advocating for law and policy reform

### 3. Our values

- Progressive
- Respectful
- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- Empowering

#### **4. Stepping Stones - Economic Well-Being Project ('the project')**

WLSV will be delivering a project that promotes the economic well-being of women experiencing family violence and relationship breakdown. The project has two main components:

- a. to develop and implement an inter-disciplinary model to deliver financial counselling services and legal services to WLSV clients and
- b. to research and draft a report on the complex legal and financial issues that arise for women experiencing family violence and relationship breakdown.

The project is generously funded by the Legal Services Board of Victoria and will be implemented over 2 years (2014-2015).

#### **5. Purpose of the Financial Counsellor role**

The Financial Counsellor, in conjunction with the Project Research Coordinator, will contribute to the development of a new model at WLSV to deliver legal and financial counselling services to WLSV clients. She will also be delivering financial counselling services to WLSV clients and working collaboratively with WLSV's lawyers.

#### **6. Gender specific role**

This position is for a female. WLSV has exemption #A439 from provision of the *Equal Opportunity Act* 1995.

#### **7. Accountability**

The Financial Counsellor will report to the Policy & Campaigns Manager.

#### **8. Hours of work**

The position is a three day a week position for 18 months (beginning in January 2014). There is some flexibility for the position to be spread over four days.

#### **9. Salary**

\$60,500 pro rata, plus superannuation (depending on skills and experience). Attractive employment benefits available including salary packaging.

#### **10. Location**

Level 3, 43 Hardware Lane, Melbourne

#### **11. Key responsibilities**

##### ***New legal and financial counselling model***

- Assist the Project Research Coordinator to look into best practice for delivering services in an inter-disciplinary setting.
- Work with WLSV lawyers and the Project Research Coordinator to develop a best practice model to provide legal and financial counselling services at WLSV.
- Assist in documenting procedures and policies to deliver legal and financial counselling services at WLSV.

### ***Financial counselling***

- Together with WLSV lawyers undertake intake and apply criteria to assess whether a client requires financial counselling assistance.
- Work collaboratively with WLSV lawyers to identify financial issues of WLSV clients and determine the financial counselling assistance to be provided.
- Provide financial counselling advice and assistance as and when necessary.
- Assist with data collection and support the Project Research Coordinator's ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the new model.
- Identify legal and policy issues that arise from the financial counselling work and contribute these to the research component of the project.

### ***Other duties***

- Attend project meetings. Participate in staff meetings, professional development and other meetings (internal and external) as required.
- Other duties as required by the Policy & Campaigns Manager.

## **12. Selection criteria**

### ***Essential***

Project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to assist with research and analysis of service delivery models.</li><li>• Skills in developing policies and procedures for the delivery of services to clients.</li></ul>
Financial Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrated ability to work within a financial counselling framework and deliver financial counselling services.</li><li>• Sound ability to recognise the ways in which legal issues may interact with personal financial issues.</li><li>• Good knowledge of law as it relates to financial counselling assistance.</li></ul>
Communication & collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excellent written and verbal communication skills.</li><li>• Ability to work collaboratively with internal staff and external stakeholders.</li><li>• Ability to communicate with and support clients from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds.</li></ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highly organised and self-motivated.</li><li>• A passion for improving the lives of women through financial counselling and social justice.</li></ul>

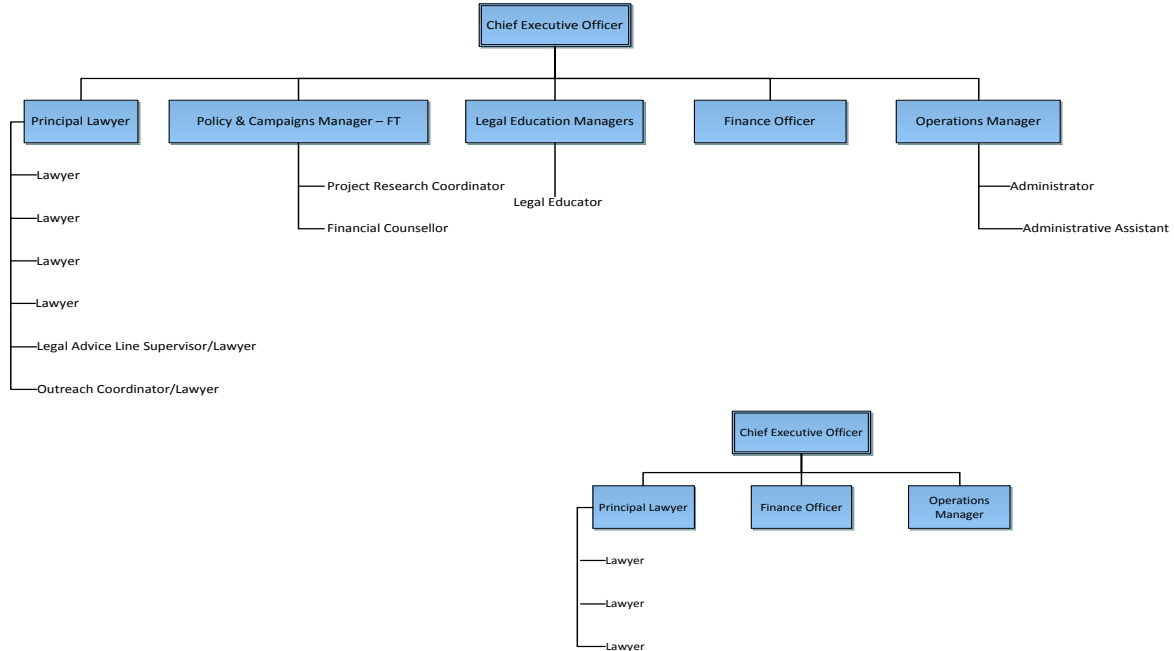
### ***Desirable***

- Knowledge of family violence law and / or family law.
- Experience working with women clients in a community organization.
- A good understanding of the issues that affect women experiencing family violence and relationship breakdown.

**Qualifications & membership**

- Must be a member of the Financial and Consumer Rights Council.
- Must hold a Diploma of Community Services (Financial Counselling).

**13. Organisational chart**



**14. How to Apply**

Applicants are required to forward a resume and statement responding briefly to the selection criteria.

**Reference Checks**

Three referees are required. Each referee must be in a position to comment knowledgeably about the applicant’s recent work performance. Personal referees are not appropriate.

**Additional Information**

If additional information is required contact Pasanna Mutha, Policy & Campaigns Manager on 03 9642 0877

**Applications**

Applications are due by **5pm, Friday 25 October 2013**. Applications to be forwarded either by:

**Post / hand delivery**

Pasanna Mutha  
 Women’s Legal Service Victoria  
 Level 3, 43 Hardware Lane  
 Melbourne Vic 3000

**Email**

pasanna@womenslegal.org.au