

## Position Description

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Lawyer – Child Protection</b>
<b>Position Status</b>	Full-time or part-time (minimum 0.8 FTE)
<b>MEA Classification</b>	Victorian Community Legal Centres Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027 Social and Community Services Employee, Level 5
<b>Position Reports to</b>	Managing Lawyer – Child Protection
<b>Position Supervises</b>	Nil
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	January 2025

### About Women’s Legal Service Victoria

Women’s Legal Service Victoria (Women’s Legal) is a specialised and state-wide organisation that has been providing legal services and support to women since 1982. Informed by our feminist practice, we improve the legal system for victim-survivors of family and sexual violence through our integrated legal service, capacity building, advocacy and law reform. Our vision is for women and non-binary people to live free from violence and discrimination in a gender equitable society.

Women’s Legal is an employer of choice, providing an inclusive, flexible, and supportive environment for our staff to thrive. We welcome women across all career stages, and we recognise the many roles played by women in their families and communities. We are committed to supporting women’s participation in employment through building skills and knowledge for those looking for a change, and valuing the diverse expertise brought into our organisation.

### About our Legal Team

Our team of over 40 lawyers, and paralegals provide legal advice and ongoing representation to thousands of women each year in the areas of family law, family violence, migration, child protection, criminal law, and victims of crime assistance. They work closely with our integrated practice team consisting of social workers and financial counsellors, who provide non-legal support to clients. The team supports family violence workers, lawyers and other professionals working with women experiencing family violence with secondary consults. Alongside the direct service delivery, the Legal Team works closely with

the rest of the organisation, sharing experience and informing our cross-jurisdictional policy, law reform, education, and capacity building work.

## Position Overview

The Lawyer will provide high quality legal advice and representation in complex child protection matters for women experiencing family violence and disadvantage including litigation and court advocacy. Due to the complexity of the legal issues faced by our clients, the Lawyer will be expected to work within an integrated model of service, with all practice areas.

This role will contribute to the organisation's strategic advocacy priorities and outcomes.

## Key Responsibilities

### Legal

- Maintain a high caseload of legal matters in family violence. In your practice areas, you will also maintain a high and complex caseload spanning child protection;
- Provide high level legal advice and representation through Women's Legal's other service delivery programs, including our Health Justice Partnership at Monash Hospital;
- Provide child protection duty lawyer services at Melbourne Children's Court, as rostered;
- Work collaboratively with policy staff to address systemic issues in law and policy, including through strategic casework;
- Work constructively with administration and paralegal staff to progress legal work; and
- Contribute to the development and monitoring of Women's Legal priorities and outcomes.

### Organisation

- Work cooperatively with all staff members to advance Women's Legal and strengthen its integrated service delivery model;

- Develop and strengthen external relationships and networks under the direction and supervision of the Managing Lawyer; and
- Participate effectively in organisational strategic planning initiatives and projects.

### **General**

- Contribute to a healthy, productive group culture where work practices, decision making, and behaviour reflect Women's Legal's intersectional feminist philosophy and values; and
- Perform other duties as directed and necessary for the proper performance of the role.

## **Key Selection Criteria**

### **1. Skills, Knowledge, and Behaviour**

- Skilled in court advocacy and in the preparation of cases involving child protection and family violence matters;
- Excellent time management skills;
- High level ability to maintain consistent standards of quality service while working independently and efficiently;
- Ability to foster cooperation and assistance in working relationships with other staff;
- High level oral and written communication skills, with demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with staff, clients, and external stakeholders;
- Demonstrated ability to be flexible, particularly whilst working in an environment of change; and
- Advanced ability to sensitively communicate with a diverse range of people whilst having understanding and empathy for their complex needs.

### **2. Qualifications and Experience**

- Eligible for admission to the legal profession as an Australian Legal Practitioner;
- A minimum of two years post admission experience in child protection; and
- A valid Working with Children Check is required to be held for the duration of your employment.

## Values and Behaviours

Everyone who works at Women's Legal plays an important role in upholding our ethics outlined in the Code of Conduct and living our values. Together, we are:

**Authentic:** We are reliable, trustworthy, and transparent about how we work. We reflect on our work and take responsibility for our actions.

**Collaborative:** We are stronger when we work together. By sharing power and privilege with diverse voices, we achieve better outcomes. We respond to requests for help with generosity.

**Courageous:** We are brave, resilient and face challenges with integrity. We unapologetically advocate for our goals and back one another to take considered risks to increase our impact.

**Inclusive:** We believe respect, equality and opportunity must be afforded equitably and to everyone. We understand this will require critical reflection on where power lies and how it functions, and active effort to disrupt it.

**Purposeful:** Our services respond to the community, laws, and people we work with. We value curiosity and relish opportunities to improve our work.

## Workplace Health and Safety Obligations

All staff have a responsibility to always display and promote safe actions in the workplace including:

- Participating in the development of a safe and healthy workplace;
- Complying with instructions given for their own safety and health and that of others, in adhering to safe work procedures;
- Cooperating with management in its fulfilment of its legislative obligations. Taking reasonable care to ensure their own safety and health and that of others, and to abide by their duty of care provided for in the legislation;
- To report any injury, hazard or illness immediately, where practical to their supervisor;
- Not place others at risk by any act or omission; and
- Not wilfully or recklessly interfere with safety equipment.

## National Criminal History Check

All successful candidates will be required to produce a national criminal history check prior to the commencement of their employment.

Please note, non-lawyers employed by Women's Legal Service Victoria are required to comply with Section 121 of the Legal Profession Uniform Law.

## Equal Opportunity Employer

We recognise our work benefits greatly from the unique knowledge, skills, and expertise of individuals with diverse experiences, including those with lived experience of family violence, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women with disability and women from migrant, refugee, or non-English speaking backgrounds. If this is you, we strongly encourage you to apply.

Women's Legal relies on an exception under the *Equal Opportunity Act* to employ women only.