

Senior Solicitor – Care & Protection practice

Contract type	Full time, Permanent
Salary range	\$4.1 – \$4.3 \$101,178 - \$107,011 (dependent on experience), <i>plus superannuation</i>
Location	Newcastle (Care & Protection/ Family Law)
Submit applications to	Ann Pitkeathly, Recruitment Manager E: ann.pitkeathly@alsnswact.org.au
Applications close	<i>Extended to</i> Friday 30 June 2023
Recruitment notes	<p>All ALS employees are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 due to workplace safety obligations.</p> <p><i>Due to the nature of our work many of our positions require Employee's to obtain and maintain a satisfactory Working with Children Check (NSW), National Police Check and a Criminal History Police Check.</i></p> <p>The position offered to the Employee will be subject to the Employee's acceptable Police Checks and the ability to obtain a Working with Children Check.</p> <p>The successful applicant will need to have a willingness and ability to travel to regional and metropolitan locations, conferences (local and interstate) and events. This may include overnight stays.</p>
Employee benefits Salary packaging	<p>At the time of advertising, the ALS is deemed to be a Public Benevolent Institution. As a result, the ALS currently offers the option of salary packaging a portion of an employee's salary.</p> <p>Salary packaging allows employees to elect an amount, up to the annual Australian Taxation Office limit (currently \$15,900 per FBT year), to be deducted from their before tax salary.</p> <p>Salary packaging benefit is dependent on the employee's personal circumstances, the ALS cannot provide financial advice.</p>
Application sections and checklist	<p>Please make sure you have completed all the requirements of the application.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed ALS Application Form (<i>page 2</i>) 2. Cover Letter stating how you meet the selection criteria (<i>page 5</i>) 3. Your up-to-date Resume 4. A copy of your current driver's license 5. A copy of your Working with Children's Check 6. A copy of your Covid-19 Vaccination Certificate(s) <p>Incomplete applications will not be accepted.</p>
Position Description	The Position Description can be found at the end of this document.



ALS

Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) Limited



ALS Employment Application Form

This form must be completed by all applicants.

By submitting this application, you are acknowledging that the information provided on this form and in the attached documents is true and correct.

First name	
Last name	
Preferred name	
Phone number	
Email address	
Residential address <i>(optional)</i>	
Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?	Yes <i>Aboriginal</i> No <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Torres Strait Islander</i> <i>Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander</i>
Have you attached a copy of your current drivers' licence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Due to the nature of our work many of our positions require Employee's to obtain and maintain a satisfactory Working with Children or Vulnerable Persons Check, National Police Check and a Criminal Police Check.</i>	
Do you consent to undertaking a Police Check? <i>Please note that not all items which appear on a Police Check will prevent a person from obtaining employment.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you consent to obtaining a Working with Children Check (NSW) or a Vulnerable Persons Check (ACT)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <i>If held: WWCE</i> <i>Expiry date:</i>
How did you hear about this position? <i>For example: ALS Website, Facebook, ALS Employee, Ethical Jobs, Koori Mail, Community Notice Board etc</i>	

POSITION DESCRIPTION

SOLICITOR GRADE 4 (SENIOR) – CARE & PROTECTION

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the position is to deliver culturally appropriate legal advice, and representation to clients in accordance with the ALS policies, procedures and guidelines in Care & Protection/Family Law including early intervention and outreach services, community legal education and referrals.

The position holder will work autonomously, seeking the advice and support of the Principal Solicitor, Care & Protection or their delegate as required and consulting with senior colleagues before determining applications for merit in complex matters.

The position requires commitment and dedication; a very high level of professionalism and legal acumen; a prodigious aptitude for attention to detail; and a capacity and willingness to function as both a supervisor/mentor to junior solicitors and advocate simultaneously, whilst serving Aboriginal clients.

This is an important position within the ALS and is guided in its decision-making by relevant legislation and professional obligations, ALS policies, practices and guidelines.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

Duties are performed under the ultimate guidance and direction of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The position reports to Principal Solicitor, Care and Protection/Family Law Practice.

The position is a senior staff member of one of the ALS Office teams and as such will contribute to maintaining a collaborative team environment.

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) provides culturally appropriate information and referral, legal advice and representation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including children in NSW and the ACT. It is committed to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities. The ALS does this by ensuring it remains committed to being community focused, being fearless in its advocacy, accountable, and ethical and aiming to make a difference to create better futures, while also acknowledging and respecting Aboriginal values and cultural practices.

The ALS is an Aboriginal owned and an Aboriginal community controlled organisation (ACCO) which is incorporated, limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

KEY COMMUNICATIONS

This is an important senior legal position with the ALS. This position requires a hands-on, practical and flexible approach to problem solving, and excellent communication, negotiation, facilitation and organisational skills and the ability to act autonomously and within a team environment.

Internal: The position holder will liaise closely with the Principal Solicitor, Care and Protection/Family Law Practice and Intermediate Solicitors. They will also mentor and oversee junior solicitors (as required) and regularly interact with their legal colleagues, community engagement officers and administrative staff.

External: Externally the position holder will be required to establish and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders. The position holder will liaise with external stakeholders to ensure the efficient and professional conduct of legal matters. They may also be responsible for developing and maintaining interagency stakeholder relationships.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Perform responsibilities to a high standard within agreed timelines and in line with ALS vision, mission and values.

Key responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing high quality and culturally appropriate legal advice and representation to Aboriginal clients and assisting them in resolving their legal problems and undertaking Court responsibilities
- Providing considered, independent, balanced and professional legal advice
- Demonstrating continuing respect and support for Aboriginal cultural practices in dealing with clients, their families, communities and staff; as an employee of the ALS, continue to learn about the customs and history of local Aboriginal people
- Working with the supervising solicitor to provide leadership to the team, this may include assisting with management duties
- As required, providing reports and assisting in the preparation submissions for legal reform
- Supporting and mentoring other solicitors by acting as a source of specialist advice
- Researching, preparing, and providing representation for Aboriginal clients in complex legal matters and prepare briefs for counsel and attend to instructing counsel
- Maintaining an up to date knowledge of a diverse range of emerging relevant area of law, case law and court procedures
- Maintaining and enhancing professional competence, keeping abreast of legal developments, changes in ALS policies, systems, guidelines, practices and community needs
- Communicating with, taking instructions from, and effectively representing Aboriginal clients who may present as distressed, when the legal concepts involved are complex and difficult for the client to understand
- Effectively balancing the requirements of managing and allocating a busy caseload
- Maintaining all files in an orderly and professional manner, including the recording of all data for statistical purposes
- Effectively utilising systems and technology which have a significant impact on the legal practice; including adapting to new, and enhancing the use of current, systems and technology
- Ensuring good time management skills, updating diaries and schedules as required; coordinating diary and court schedules in order to maintain an efficient and effective legal practice

- Working as a collaborative team member with staff across all teams to achieve effective coordination in your office, guiding and supporting team members (including legal and non-legal staff)
- Assisting with the development of submissions on law reform and represent the ALS at meetings, conference and seminars as requested
- Providing and recording referrals for clients to assist them in resolving their legal matters
- Liaising with external stakeholders, developing and maintaining interagency relationships covering legal and law enforcement related jurisdictions
- Developing and maintaining productive, professional and collaborative intraoffice working relationships between all staff members
- Ensuring the lawful achievement of ALS core business objectives to the highest standards of probity and efficiency, and with due reference to the interests of all stakeholders
- Ensuring all duties and activities are carried out in an ethical manner, complying with ALS policies, procedures and any other applicable guidelines or legislation
- Travelling to regional and interstate locations for work purposes (*An inherent requirement of the job is the ability to independently travel to regional locations by car for work purposes, therefore a current driver's licence is required*)

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Essential Criteria

To be successful in this position you will need to demonstrate:

- Knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and social needs of Aboriginal communities combined with continuing respect and support for Aboriginal cultural practices when considering service delivery and other support for clients, their families, communities and staff
- Appropriate legal qualifications and a current NSW Practising Certificate
- A minimum of 5 years' experience representing clients in Care & Protection areas of law
- Demonstrated sound commitment to the principles of social justice
- In-depth knowledge, understanding and of Care & Protection legal area, including current/contemporary practice and procedure
- Excellent written and oral communication skills combined with strong time management, legal research and problem-solving skills
- Ability to mentor and supervise solicitors
- Ability to work autonomously and in a team environment, applying sound judgement, meeting conflicting deadlines and managing a demanding workload
- Ability to display sound judgment and proven capacity to provide high quality legal representation and advice to Aboriginal clients
- Ability to meet deadlines, work without supervision and manage a diverse workload, together with high level conceptual, analytical and research skills
- Highly developed interpersonal and influencing skills and excellent oral and written communication skills
- A willingness and ability to travel to regional, metropolitan and interstate locations for work purposes