

Position Description: Tenant Advocate

Salary Range: SCHADS Level 6 (1 – 3), plus the benefits of tax-effective salary packaging. EECLC offers an above award enterprise agreement, including an additional 2 weeks paid ex gratia leave inclusive of public holidays between Christmas and New Year's Day. Employer funded superannuation is paid in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992, and is in addition to the gross salary offered.

Position Status: Permanent part-time of 14 hours per week

Position Reports to: Managing Principal Solicitor

Primary Responsibilities: Provision of free tenancy advice, advocacy, casework and community legal education services.

Role and context of position

Position Overview

Blue Mountains Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (BMTAAS) is a specialist service of the Elizabeth Evatt Community Legal Centre. The service is part of a network of tenancy services in NSW that aim to assist and resource tenants to resolve their disputes. It has a particular focus on tenants who are disadvantaged by their social and economic circumstances.

Level of Responsibility

Tenant advocates will be supervised at a level appropriate to their experience. All advocates undertake a period of orientation at the commencement of their employment depending on their level of experience, as considered appropriate by the Managing Principal Solicitor.

Tenancy work includes:

- Providing tenancy advice by telephone, in person or at outreach locations;
- Representing clients at court/ tribunal;
- Having carriage of client files in a range of tenancy matters of varying complexity depending on the advocate's experience;
- Preparing for and conducting community legal education and attending community development events;
- Undertaking tenancy law reform work and projects.

Supervision

As per EECLC Legal Centre Policy.

Documented supervision meetings to monitor and provide support with a focus on Support, Accountability, Education and Workplace Health and Safety. External supervision is also offered.

Organisation Expectations

1. Governance and Accountability

All employees will:

- a. Adhere to EECLC Constitution, philosophy, policies and procedures including state and federal legislation, funding body service agreements, the National Association of Community Legal Centre's Risk Management Guide and industry standards;
- b. Document work in line with required standards;
- c. Ensure the complete and accurate collection of client data and entry onto CDS client database;
- d. Perform all reasonable duties requested by the Managing Principal Solicitor;
- e. Attend internal supervision sessions.

2. Teamwork

All employees will:

- a. Attend staff, team and casework meetings when required and contribute to decision making;
- b. Contribute to EECLC planning relevant to own work, including implementation of the Strategic Plan;
- c. Contribute to a positive and cooperative work environment;
- d. Follow through on commitments;
- e. Contribute to housekeeping tasks;
- f. Notice and discuss areas for process improvement;
- g. Act to support volunteers, management and other staff members.

3. Development

All employees will participate in required training and ongoing professional education

4. Workplace Health & Safety

All employees will understand the WH&S Policy, and how they can participate and support the implementation of the WH&S Policy.

Position Expectations

1. Tenancy Information and Advice

All advocates will:

- a. Provide high quality legal information, advice, assistance and referrals for clients;
- b. Provide factsheets, templates and other material to assist tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities;
- c. Liaise with other service providers to meet tenant needs for community supports.

2. Duty Advocacy and Representation

All advocates will:

- a. Provide duty advocacy to tenants appearing at NCAT to resolve their tenancy issues;

- b. Support tenants to prepare their cases prior to appearing at NCAT;
- c. Represent tenants appearing at NCAT in negotiations and formal hearings
- d. Undertake legal casework in accordance with EECLC casework policy, or as directed by the Managing Principal Solicitor.

3. Community Legal Education and Liaison

All advocates will:

- a. Provide tenancy education and training;
- b. Contribute to tenancy education publications for community members, and community workers assisting socially and economically disadvantaged people;
- c. Liaise with community organisations, court staff and other stakeholders as appropriate, which may include working on weekends or out of usual hours to attend community events.

4. Law Reform

All advocates will:

- a. Advocate for law and policy reform in the tenancy arena with other community organisations;
- b. Participate in law reform activities of Tenants Union NSW, where appropriate.

5. Supervision of Volunteers

All advocates will:

- a. Provide supervision, mentoring and support to a broad range of volunteers, including but not limited to:
 - i. Law students;
 - ii. Graduates completing their practical legal training work experience.

Selection Criteria

These are tasks/education/experience specific requirements, which the candidate must have in order to carry out the position:

Essential

1. Demonstrated experience and skills in casework and advocacy
2. Demonstrated understanding and commitment to tenant rights
3. Demonstrated understanding of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010, tenancy law and The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)
4. Demonstrated understanding and commitment to the philosophy of community legal centres, the promotion of human rights, social justice and meeting the legal and non legal needs of socially and economically disadvantaged people and groups.
5. Demonstrated ability to take initiative, accept responsibility, and work as part of a multi-disciplinary team, including the supervision of a broad range of volunteers
6. Demonstrated ability to communicate and negotiate effectively with clients, other parties, government and community organisations

7. Excellent oral and written communication skills
8. Demonstrated time management skills with an ability to exercise initiative, prioritise work and meet deadlines
9. Completion of Aboriginal specific cultural safety training or be willing to undertake cultural safety training
10. Computer literacy
11. Hold a current NSW driver's licence and have access to a roadworthy car

Desirable

1. Experience working in a community legal centre or knowledge of the sector
2. Experience in community legal education and law reform
3. A willingness to undertake other training as identified or required.
4. Experience with Apple Macintosh computers.