

<b>POSITION TITLE:</b>	Clerk, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clerkship Program		
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Clerkship program coordinator		
<b>PROGRAM AREA:</b>	Corporate Affairs	<b>LOCATION:</b>	Various
<b>CLASSIFICATION:</b>	VLA2	<b>POSITION TYPE:</b>	Maximum term

## POSITION SUMMARY

This clerkship will suit law students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, who are interested in a career with Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) or other legal organisations within the community sector. Our clerkships provide practical on the ground learning and mentoring. Your placement will may include shadowing VLA lawyers in the duty lawyer list, watching lawyers appear in courts and tribunals, undertaking legal research and tasks, and sitting in on advice sessions with clients. It is expected that clerks will be self-motivated, prepared to work on research tasks on their own, as well as participate in team activities.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide support and assistance to lawyers in delivering duty lawyer services in various courts and tribunals.
2. Actively develop own legal and advocacy skills through on- the- job learning and taking initiative to seek out learning and development opportunities.
3. Assist lawyers in the administration, conduct and management of cases for clients.
4. Shadow VLA lawyers in the duty lawyer lists and observe lawyers advocating for VLA clients in various courts and tribunals.
5. Provide information and referrals to the general public, legal practitioners and community agencies about VLA and external services.
6. Provide feedback to People and Culture and designated hosts regarding the Clerkship Program to ensure continuous improvement of the program.
7. Develop and maintain collaborative relationships with VLA staff, court staff, community legal centres and other social justice organisations to deliver quality legal aid services and ensure cooperative and proactive approaches to improving access to justice.

## KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. General knowledge of, and interest in, the law, the legal system and legal procedures.
2. Good analytical skills combined with an understanding of legal principles and ability to apply them to specific facts.
3. Sound time management, problem-solving and decision-making skills to assist clients in receiving efficient and effective delivery of VLA services.
4. Sound interpersonal skills and the capacity to communicate with clients who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

### KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

5. A developed understanding of social disadvantage through lived, professional or voluntary experiences, and a commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable people in our community.
6. Proven ability and commitment to working collaboratively in a team environment, ability to take initiative and be self-motivated.
7. Knowledge of the work of VLA, a commitment to our vision and values and an interest in developing a career in the legal aid or community sector.

### QUALIFICATIONS/ EXPERIENCE

- Currently undertaking studies towards a law degree (mandatory).

### OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

- To be eligible to apply for this position you must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen, permanent resident or hold a valid work permit or visa.
- You may be required to undergo or hold a current Working with Children Check.
- From time to time you will be required to travel between various office locations to deliver quality services to our clients or for professional development.
- This position may require you to independently travel to outreach services, courts and tribunals.
- This position is open to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. VLA considers that being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person is a genuine occupational requirement for this position under subsection 26(3) or section 28 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic).
- Occupational health and safety responsibilities at Victoria Legal Aid:

All staff at VLA are expected to champion proactive and positive health and safety practices in the workplace by raising health, safety and wellbeing issues or concerns with managers and colleagues. Staff are required to observe all safe work procedures, rules and instructions, and take all reasonable care for their own safety and for the safety of work colleagues by always operating in a safe and appropriate manner.

### ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

VLA provides legal aid services to the Victorian community through our in-house legal practice and through contracted private lawyers as well as by funding community legal centres. Our services include legal information, community legal education, legal advice, the provision of duty lawyers at courts and legal representation on individual cases. In addition to Melbourne city offices, VLA has 14 regional offices. Six are situated in metropolitan Melbourne (Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Frankston, Ringwood and Sunshine) and eight in regional Victoria (Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Morwell, Shepparton and Warrnambool).

VLA operates a matrix management structure to deliver four principal programs throughout Victoria (Access and Equity, Civil Justice, Criminal Law and Family, Youth and Children's Law). A number of sub-programs supports each program. For example, the Criminal Law program operates four sub-programs, being summary crime, youth crime, indictable crime and appellate crime. There are nineteen sub-programs in total. Each sub-program operates a variety of services of varying

## ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

intensity from simple information to more particularised legal advice, duty lawyer services at courts, and ongoing legal representation for court cases under a grants of aid.

Each year, VLA grants over 38,000 grants of aid and services over 85,000 unique clients through our staff practice and the 420 private law firms contracted to VLA.

In addition, VLA runs a Legal Help call centre which takes over 130,000 calls annually in 20 languages. Support and funding is provided to 38 community legal centres to assist clients and their communities of interest consistent with their own approved service plans. Program delivery occurs through all of VLA's office locations and at over 50 court and tribunal locations scattered throughout the State. Program delivery also occurs in hospital and other outreach settings in the community.

## OUR VISION & VALUES

### Our vision

A fair and just society where rights and responsibilities are upheld.

### Our purpose

To make a difference in the lives of our clients and for the community by:

- resolving and preventing legal problems.
- encouraging a fair and transparent justice system.

### Our values

#### *Fairness*

We stand up for what is fair.

We aim to be fair when making choices about who and how we help people.

#### *Care*

We care about our clients and the community in which we live.

We look out for and take care of each other.

#### *Courage*

We act with courage backed by evidence about what is best for clients and the community.

We act with courage to be the best we can be.

***VLA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce. We encourage people from culturally diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to apply for positions within our organisation. We will make reasonable adjustment where possible for people with disabilities.***

*Position Description authorised by Strategic Resourcing & Remuneration Manager.*

*Signed:*



*Date: 8 August 2019*