POSITION DESCRIPTION – Criminal Lawyer

ABOUT FITZROY LEGAL SERVICE
The Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) opened its doors in December 1972. FLS is a community-based organisation, independent of government, assisting members of the community whose access to legal resources is limited.

Our services include:
- a legal advice service that operates five nights a week, staffed primarily by volunteer lawyers;
- an outreach service and four specialist legal advice clinics (specialising in family law, animal law and LGBTQ-related legal issues);
- a self-funding day practice that offers criminal and family law casework and court representation;
- a Drug Outreach Lawyer program that provides community legal education, referral, advice, advocacy and ongoing casework services to drug users on an outreach basis through health justice partnerships;
- assistance with family law and family violence on an outreach basis through health justice partnerships in the City of Yarra;
- two duty lawyers providing advice, casework and support services at the Neighbourhood Justice Centre;
- community development and community legal education activities, public interest litigation, law reform and the development of legal research and policy; and
- Publication of The Law Handbook (hard copy, eBook and online) as well as other websites and resources.

APPLICATION INFORMATION
Applicants are asked to address both the essential and desirable Key Selection Criteria in the position description. Applicants who do not address all the selection criteria will not be offered an interview.

Candidates are requested to email Fitzroy Legal Service the following as one PDF document:
- A covering letter, no longer than one page;
- A document which addresses the key selection criteria and
- A resume which includes your contact details, education, previous work and volunteer experience.

Applications should be addressed to Claudia Fatone, Executive Officer and emailed by 5pm, Wednesday 26th July 2017, to cfatone@fitzroy-legal.org.au. Interviews will be conducted the week beginning Monday 31st July 2017.
POSITION OBJECTIVE

The Fitzroy Legal Service Practice (‘the practice’) specialises in criminal law, infringements, intervention orders, and family law. The objective of the practice is to assist vulnerable individuals with low incomes and/or complex needs, as part of a holistic response.

The practice is funded through grants of legal aid and private client fees with fee structures designed to assist clients ineligible for legal aid. Each member of the practice has monthly billing targets.

Like all Fitzroy Legal Service employees, the Criminal Lawyer is also expected to support and promote organisational values and objectives.

RESPONSIBLE TO

The Criminal Lawyer reports directly to the Senior Criminal Lawyer.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Advocacy and Casework

• Provide casework and advocacy services with an emphasis on criminal law but also infringements matters:
  o appear in court on behalf of clients in summary and indictable criminal matters in the Magistrates’ Court and Children’s Court;
  o appear in court representing applicants and defendants in applications for Crimes Family Violence and/or Personal Safety Intervention Orders;
  o undertake appearances in the County Court including appeals, pleas and directions hearings; and
  o brief Barristers to represent clients at court as required.

Legal Information and Advice

• Provide procedural, and where appropriate, substantive legal advice via telephone to individuals in police custody in respect of criminal offences, on a rotational basis for the 24 hour telephone line;
• Assist in the review of night service advice files as appropriate.

Financial

• Generate income as per individual target set in the annual practice budget;
• Apply for grants of Legal Aid and ensure compliance with VLA guidelines; and
• Assist in the administration of the Fitzroy Legal Service Trust Account for privately funded matters.

Volunteers

• Support, assist and supervise on the job training of legal and non legal volunteers.

Reporting & accountability

• Assist with collection of data and preparation of reports and other accountability documentation as required; and
• Ensure compliance with relevant professional and ethical standards relating to legal practice, including the Legal Profession Act 2004 and the National Risk Management Guide of the National Association of Community Legal Centres.

General

• Support the achievement of the FLS Strategic Plan;
• Participate in internal staff and planning meetings, supervision and performance review processes;
• Undertake professional development, meet CPD responsibilities and attend local networks and conferences as required;
• Participate in community legal education projects, law reform and other projects as required;
• Involvement in fundraising and other events as required;
Must adhere to organizational policies and procedures and support the agreed FLS Values and Behaviours;
• Share general office duties, including administration, as required; and
• Undertake other duties as reasonably required by the FLS Senior Criminal Lawyer and Principal Solicitor.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA:

Prerequisites
To be admitted, or eligible for admission, to practise as an Australian Legal Practitioner.

Essential (Skills, knowledge, experience, qualification and/or training)
• Strong commitment to social justice and the philosophy of FLS;
• Demonstrated experience in advocacy/ appearance work in the Magistrates’ Court;
• Capacity to use initiative, set priorities, organise and manage workloads;
• Commitment to rights based service delivery for clients from diverse backgrounds, including clients presenting with AOD dependence, mental health, cognitive impairment concerns;
• Highly developed interpersonal, oral and written communication skills including cross-cultural communication skills;
• Commitment to maintaining best practice service delivery within a holistic, cross sector framework;
• Demonstrated capacity to work in a small team and support a cohesive team environment; and
• Good self-care and stress management skills.

Desirable (Skills, knowledge, experience, qualification and/or training)
• Experience in carriage of indictable matters;
• Experience in meeting financial billing targets; and
• Knowledge of and experience with community organisations and an understanding of the community legal / legal aid sector.

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.

LOCATION, TRAVEL, AND WORK OUTSIDE BUSINESS HOURS
The position will be based at the FLS office on Level 4 of the Fitzroy Town Hall. Some travel may be required (eg: to attend meetings, court). Reasonable travel expenses are reimbursed. This position is available as a full time (38 hours per week) ongoing position. A less than full-time employment arrangement would also be considered.

Normal hours of work are between 8.00am – 6.00pm (7.6 hours per day). The position may also be required to attend occasional week-end events. Flextime work arrangements are available. Overtime is not payable but time in lieu is available within FLS policy guidelines.

CLASSIFICATION
Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHCADS) Industry Award, Level 5.

SALARY & CONDITIONS
Terms and conditions of employment are based on the Community Legal Centres Multi-Business Agreement with remuneration to be negotiated with the successful applicant. FLS’s tax exempt status allows generous additional tax benefits through salary packaging. Four weeks annual leave plus paid leave between Christmas and New Year.