POSITION DESCRIPTION

**PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR**

**NORTH AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL FAMILY VIOLENCE  
 LEGAL SERVICE – ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

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| Position Title | Principal Legal Officer  (Eligible for unrestricted practicing certificate in the Northern Territory) |
| Location | Darwin |
| Salary | Negotiable - NT SACS Award  Salary packaging is offered with up to 30% of gross wages paid as a tax free fringe benefit |
| Contact Officer | Natalie Maher |
| Responsible to | Chief Executive Officer |
| Closing Date | 30 September 2014 |

Submitting your application

Your application must be received no later than 4pm on the advertised closing date. Late applications will not be accepted unless you have an agreement with the Contact Officer to submit your application after the closing date. Applications must include a copy of your resume or curriculum vitae and a document addressing both the Position Specific and the Generic Selection Criteria.

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| **E-mail Address** | [nmaher@naafvls.com.au](mailto:nmaher@naafvls.com.au) |
| **Postal Address** | PO Box 43104  Casuarina NT 0811 |
| **Hand Delivery**  **Address** | 32 Dripstone Road  Casuarina NT 0810 |
| **Facsimile** | 08 8927 5942 |

**North Australian Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service**

**(NAAFVLS)**

North Australian Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service (NAAFVLS) is an independent Family Violence Prevention Legal Service (FVPLS) funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General’s Department, Indigenous Law and Justice Branch, Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division.

NAAFVLS is a community controlled justice, advisory and referral centre for victims of family violence, including sexual abuse. It provides practical assistance and emotional support to people seeking to deal with the effect of family violence and sexual assault relating to family violence.

NAAFVLS is based in Darwin and Katherine providing an outreach visiting service to Wadeye, Kunbarllanjnja, Angurugu, Nhulunbuy, Nguiu, Pirlangimpi, Milikapati, Ski Beach, Yirrkala, Borroloola, Timber Creek, Ngukurr, Barunga and Beswick remote Aboriginal Communities.

The primary focus of NAAFVLS is to provide a culturally appropriate assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and children who are victims of family violence, including sexual abuse. NAAFVLS works in accordance to the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services “Operational Framework”. Services available to clients are as follows:

1. Legal advice and casework assistance
2. Counselling to victims of family violence and sexual assault
3. Assistance and support to victims of family violence and sexual assault
4. Child protection and support
5. Information, support and referral services
6. Community awareness and prevention initiatives
7. Referral to mediation services, and
8. Referral to perpetrator programs

NAAFVLS is seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated person to join a challenging work environment. You will deal with a wide range of stakeholders across the public and private sectors and draw upon strong communication and people skills to achieve desired objectives.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

NAAFVLS is seeking an enthusiastic and self-motivated person to join a multi-disciplinary, multi-functional team in a challenging work environment. You will deal with a wide range of stakeholders across the public and private sectors and draw upon strong communication and people skills to achieve desired objectives.

1. Provide quality legal advice, representation and referral to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander clients on legal matters consistent with the operational framework.
2. Manage the legal practice sector of NAAFVLS including supervision of other Solicitors working within the unit.
3. Establish and participate in a schedule of regular and ad-hoc visits to remote communities, as approved/directed by the Board/CEO.
4. Consult and support Community initiatives to reduce the incidence of family violence in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community.
5. Ensure that NAAFVLS is covered by professional indemnity insurance as appropriate and coordinate NAAFVLS involvement in the National Association of Community Legal Centres National Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme.
6. In conjunction with the CEO and other staff develop and provide educational programs regarding family violence and related issues, to be delivered at schools, community and special interest groups, including workshops, informal talks, publications and pamphlets.
7. Increase knowledge and awareness of the role and functions of the FVPLS and appropriate agencies available to assist Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander victims and their families.
8. Responsible for operation of the trust account for legal practice and professional client file maintenance.
9. In conjunction with the CEO, undertake law reform: cooperate with other Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, community legal centres and legal and community agencies in research and lobbying. Initiate research and test cases based on NAAFVLS work, research and write submissions and research papers on issues, participate in campaigns on issues (including media work).
10. Deal with complaints and grievances in relation to the legal practice of NAAFVLS in accordance with policy, in conjunction with the CEO.
11. Provide advice to the Board in relation to the legal practice of NAAFVLS and ensure that Board decisions in relation to the legal practice are implemented.
12. Manage the reporting and collection of legal practice data for NAAFVLS.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES – Detailed

1. Assess applications for legal assistance and provide legal advice and representation to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people in matters of law regarding family violence, sexual assault and related matters including:

* interview clients, take instructions and prepare any necessary documentation;
* research and prepare the client’s case ensuring client is kept informed;
* conduct negotiations and seek out any alternative dispute resolution;
* appear on behalf of clients in relevant courts including but limited to the Supreme Court, Magistrates Court, Children’s Court and the Local Court;
* maintain a written record of client counsel, instruction and actions taken; and
* undertake any necessary travel to remote courts and remote communities to provide legal advice and representation.

1. Maintain professional knowledge of the law to enable provision of high quality advice, referral, guidance and advocacy to client/s, including participation in all relevant meetings, training and programs.
2. Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the FVPLS Operational Framework, and operate in accordance with the framework. Particularly operating within service standards required for the provision of legal services.
3. Undertake required Continuing Professional Development (CDP).

Non Legal:

1. Participate in the development and delivery of educational programs about family violence, sexual assault and related issues.
2. Consult and support community initiatives to reduce the incidence of family violence in the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community. Participate in Community meetings and develop the profile of NAAFVLS in its service delivery areas.
3. Liaise with relevant Government Departments, private and community sector bodies and experts. Prepare submissions, articles and reports for presentation at conferences and public forums.
4. Act in a professional manner with integrity according to the legal code of ethics, upholding the philosophies and policies of NAAFVLS.
5. Excellent written, oral communication and interpersonal skills including negotiation and conflict resolution skills and maintenance of confidentiality provisions.
6. Proven organisational ability to manage workload, maintain a large number of files and meet deadlines. A demonstrated ability to work independently and meet organisational and team goals.
7. Ability to adhere to OHS and other organisational policies, follow direction as required and maintain punctuality. Other duties as delegated by the Chief Executive Officer.
8. Undertake other duties related to the running of the organization including administrative tasks such as filing, answering telephone and providing general information about the organisation.
9. Participate in staff meetings and other planning activities.
10. Contribute to the Strategic Plan and Operational Plans.
11. Undertake cultural awareness and other training as directed
12. Other duties as directed.

The position is responsible to the Chief Executive Officer

SELECTION CRITERIA

Position Specific Selection Criteria

1. Eligible for an unrestricted practising certificate in the Northern Territory.
2. Ability to provide legal advice on legal issues relating to family violence.
3. A strong understanding of all types of litigation processes, including applications for restraining orders, child protection matters and criminal injuries compensation as they relate to family violence and sexual assault.
4. Demonstrate capacity to provide an accessible and culturally sensitive legal service. Including an understanding of legal and social issues particularly in relation to women and children.
5. Demonstrated capacity to manage a team of solicitors.
6. Demonstrated capacity to manage a legal practice office.
7. A strong understanding of management issues regarding human resource management, project management and budgeting.
8. Capacity to understand the needs of culturally diverse clients, in particular Aboriginal people in a remote community setting.
9. Capacity to work in a multi disciplinary team.
10. Commitment to promoting the interests of women.
11. Capacity to develop effective working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and in particular Aboriginal women living in remote communities.
12. Understanding, or capacity to gain understanding, of issues relevant to the legal needs of Aboriginal people and in particular Aboriginal women in communities.

And must

* Obtain a Police Clearance;
* Have a current driver’s licence (C Class Unrestricted);
* Be computer literate and competent; and
* Undertake travel (up to 4 days at a time, at least once a month) to remote communities.

Generic Selection Criteria

1. Ability to think and act strategically
2. Ability to achieve results
3. Ability to lead others and develop productive working relationships
4. Demonstrated personal drive and integrity
5. Ability to communicate effectively
6. Capacity to undertake and/or delegate own administrative tasks
7. Demonstrates representation and facilitation skills of a high order.