

Position Title:	Community Lawyer – Family Law
Terms of Employment:	Fixed term to June 2025.
Hours	Full time, however applications for part-time will be considered.
Reporting to:	Practice Manager – Family Violence / Family Law Team
Location:	<p>Level 1, 63 Thomson Street Belmont. Work is also carried out at outreach locations around Geelong and in Colac, with flexibility to work remotely.</p> <p>This position will also require travel to Warrnambool during Federal Circuit and Family Law Court sitting weeks, up to four times per year, once the circuit court returns to in-person.</p> <p>Travel may also be required to Melbourne for appearances at the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia.</p>
Employment Conditions	In accordance with the Community Legal Centres Multi Business Agreement, Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHADS), and applicable legislation
Probationary Period	A three-month probationary period applies, which may be extended by an additional three months. Employment is subject to a satisfactory Police Check.
Salary	Social and Community Services Employee - Level 5 – 6 dependent on experience. Base salary range \$88,761 - \$101,250 per annum plus superannuation, annual leave loading and non-profit salary packaging benefits.

About Barwon Community Legal Service

BCLS is an independent not-for-profit community-based organisation, serving the local government areas of City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff, Surfcoast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and some regions of Golden Plains Shire since 1986. The service is an incorporated association governed by an independent Board of Directors and receives funding from a number of sources to deliver services across a range of program areas.

Services currently offered include legal information, referral, advice, casework, social work and education for members of the local community. Our model of service provision ensures that work undertaken is reviewed for emerging patterns and trends, and that issues requiring structural change or political intervention are identified and addressed through advocacy, community education and social policy initiatives.

Vision

A just society in which all people have equal access to, and status under, the law; and a legal system which is humane, fair and equitable.

Mission

To challenge systemic disadvantage and enable our priority communities to access the support they need to understand their legal rights and overcome their legal problems.

Position Context

The Family Law Community Lawyer will work as part of an integrated multi-function team working across a number of different practice areas. Assisting in the delivery of a holistic legal service to clients who have experienced family violence, and the community, the legal practice team undertakes a range of activities including community legal education, law reform and legal policy work as well as community development activities.

The Family Advocacy and Support Service (FASS) operates out of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA), providing legal and non-legal supports, including linking clients with housing services, financial counselling and drug and alcohol services, to those impacted by family violence. BCLS has recently been appointed to provide dedicated legal services to these clients for the first time in Geelong and Warrnambool.

This position will be working in various areas of the legal practice, but will be focused in the area of family law in the context of family violence. As well as appearances at the FCFCOA and Magistrates Court in relation to family law matters, duties will include working as duty lawyer in the Family Violence jurisdiction of the Geelong or Colac Magistrates Courts.

Collaborates With

BCLS management, employees and volunteers. Centre clients and members of the community.

Decision Making Authority

Decision making authority regarding own day to day work flow. Decisions related to work processes and program planning to be made in consultation with your manager.

Key Responsibilities**Legal Service Delivery**

- Undertake Family Law and related casework for eligible clients in the context of family violence, and within organisational capacities, arising from client meetings and referred from other areas within service, to include appearing in court when necessary
- Appear in the Magistrates Court as the duty lawyer in the Family Violence jurisdiction on a regular basis, mainly at the Geelong Magistrates court and occasionally at Colac Magistrates court
- Provide legal information, advice and referral during client drop-in and appointment sessions
- Participate, as needed, in the provision of other legal services which may include advice and program development at outreach locations
- Contributing to work to improve services for people experiencing disadvantage by offering holistic services and improving connections to other community groups
- Work closely with the social worker to provide holistic support to the clients
- Comply with all requirements of professional legal practice, including practice certificate, continuing professional development and professional indemnity insurance (PII) requirements
- Participate in the development and implementation of new / improved service delivery initiatives and service extension
- Participate in regular legal team meetings and supervision meetings
- Ensure appropriate file management and information systems are complied with, including the data collection, entry and report generation

- Work with students and volunteers whilst providing legal advice
- Depending on experience and qualifications, supervise Practical Legal Trainees as required.

Community Legal Education, Community Development and Law Reform

- Work collaboratively with Community Legal Education team to develop educational material and the delivery of legal education presentations
- Work to raise BCLS's public profile through participation in public forums and community presentations
- Network with appropriate local, state and national organisations to further the profile and work of BCLS
- Monitor casework to identify potential systemic issues and use this information to inform BCLS's community development planning
- Collaborate with the Principal Lawyer to identify law reform and policy issues, input to law reform, written policy submissions and inquiries, meeting and consultation attendance, planning and conduct of strategic litigation.
- In collaboration with the principal lawyer manage relationships and partnerships with other key stakeholders as required.

General Responsibilities

- Attend internal staff and planning meetings
- Prepare material for BCLS Annual Report
- Attend BCLS Annual General Meeting
- Attend other events as required
- Attend conferences as required
- Participate in professional development through appropriate training
- Participate in the development of relevant submissions and tenders
- Assist with program evaluations
- Share general office duties as required
- Other duties as required

Key Selection Criteria (Qualifications, Knowledge & Skills, Personal Attributes)

Qualifications

- Admitted to practice (or eligible for admission) as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria and to hold (or be eligible to hold) a current practicing certificate under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria) Act.
- Hold a current driver's licence.

Knowledge, Skills and Attributes

- Commitment to social justice and to meeting the legal needs of disadvantaged groups
- At least 4 years post admission experience
- At least 2 years' experience in running Family Law matters including court appearances and property matters
- Experience in acting for clients for Family Violence matters
- Understanding of trauma informed practice

- Knowledge of a broad range of legal matters
- Willingness to maintain records and seek out, gather and analyse existing information on issues relevant to the position
- An understanding of community legal practices and services
- Ability to contribute to a positive working environment
- Ability to work under pressure and handle difficult conversations
- Compassionate and empathetic
- Developed interpersonal and communication skills
- Highly motivated and diligent

Application Process

Applications close January 6, 2023.

Applications including cover letter (max two pages) addressing the selection criteria and resume should be addressed to the Geordie Stapleton, Principal Lawyer and forwarded to employment@barwoncommunitylegal.org.au.

The recruitment process is expected to comprise three stages for short-listed applicants:

- An initial brief Zoom or Teams interview with the Principal Lawyer or Practice Manager
- A face-to-face interview with the selection panel;
- A second interview with our CEO, and
- Up to three professional reference checks.

The selection panel may conduct additional interviews or assessments at its discretion.

Further Information: www.barwoncommunitylegal.org.au

Enquiries: Please contact Geordie Stapleton, Principal Lawyer on 1300 430 599.