

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Designation:	Volunteer Lawyers
Duration:	Ongoing
Hours of Work:	Evening advice shifts Monday, Tuesday or Thursday from 6:00pm until late as available
Reporting to:	Evening Coordinator
Salary Details:	Volunteer position
Funding Stream:	NIL
Date of Review:	October 2011

Caxton Legal Centre opens the doors of justice by unlocking the law.

Caxton Legal Centre aims to:

- ***Build a just and inclusive society in which diversity, civic responsibility and human rights are valued and promoted;***
 - ***Advocate for the development of the law;***
 - ***Assist and empower people who would otherwise be denied access to justice; and***
 - ***Educate the community about legal issues.***
-

Purpose of Position:

The role of the Volunteer Lawyers is to provide a legal advice, information and referral to clients from disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds who attend the evening advice sessions. The Volunteer is responsible for providing legal advice in their area of speciality and skill. The Volunteer (Solicitor or Barrister) must have a current practising certificate and they are covered by the Centre's professional indemnity insurance when providing advice to Caxton Legal Centre clients.

The Volunteer Lawyer is expected to have high level of interpersonal skills and understanding of the socio-economic-political-legal context that affects the lives of marginalised and disadvantaged clients and communities who may access Caxton Legal Centres services.

Essential Skills, Abilities & Qualities:

- Advanced interpersonal communication skills and a strong client service focus;
- Commitment to understanding the legal and social issues that impact on access to justice;
- The ability to work collaboratively with fellow volunteers in a multi-disciplinary environment to ensure all services are delivered in a consistent and holistic manner.

Duties

Evening Advice Sessions

- Advise clients in order of arrival and only within areas of knowledge and/or expertise;
- Participate in Caxton Legal Centre advice sessions by providing confidential, free legal advice and relevant information and materials (referrals, self-help kits etc.) to clients attending the session, and give clients a copy of the advice;
- Check and complete adequate file notes outlining client instructions, advice given, referrals and legal information provided, all applicable limitation dates and further legal action to be taken if any;
- Wherever possible, endeavour to convey legal advice and information to clients in a way that is "user friendly" and clear;
- Use the list of solicitors provided to the client for referral purposes and not refer clients to yourself or your firm;
- Accommodate student and graduate volunteers as observers when giving advice if the client permits;
- Refrain from offering pro bono assistance outside of the evening session to clients before checking with the evening coordinator, and consult with the coordinator on matters requiring clarification relating to the service;
- Share the client load with fellow volunteers and ensure all clients will be advised before leaving for the night;
- Attend volunteer shifts as rostered, and inform the Publications & Volunteer Coordinator ahead of time if unable to attend a shift;
- Abide by the *Advice and Casework Policy and Procedures* and the *Volunteer Policy and Procedures* of the Centre in relation to the provision of ongoing casework and risk Management Guide of the Centre;
- Disclose potential conflicts of interest when they occur and refrain from advising clients to whom potential conflicts apply;
- Keep track of the number of observation sessions completed and inform the evening coordinator of whether observing or advising;
- Arrange a Volunteer Practicing Certificate or amendment to the annexure of current Practicing Certificate where needed, and supply a copy of Practicing Certificate to the Centre;

- Stay and lock up with the evening coordinator if the last person advising at an evening session.

Organisational Duties

- Be aware of and comply with the Centre's Risk Management Guide, and the Centre's policies and procedures;
- Attend volunteer induction and meetings;
- Be aware of self-care principals and participate in professional clinical supervision;
- Undertake other duties as directed from time to time by the Evening Coordinator.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Volunteer Lawyer

Essential

1. Hold a current Practising Certificate or be eligible to apply for a Volunteer Practising Certificate through the Queensland Law Society.
2. Experience working two out of the last three years as a legal practitioner in Australia.
3. Willingness to work effectively in close partnership with other legal volunteers, social workers and various other staff in the delivery of free legal advice and information to clients attending evening advice sessions.
4. Demonstrated high level skills in interpersonal and written communications including the ability to convey complex legal information in a manner appropriate to the client group.
5. Commitment to attend rostered shifts.