

Principal Lawyer

Organisation Overview

Circle Green Community Legal (**Circle Green**) is a community legal centre providing humanitarian, tenancy, workplace, and family and domestic violence legal advice, further assistance, representation, advocacy, community legal education, referrals, outreach and support.

Circle Green provides accessible justice and seeks to create system, place and space to ensure a safety net of best practice legal advice, education, and advocacy. Services aim to assist people who are otherwise disadvantaged in their access to legal services.

Specialist services also support other providers of community legal services to develop local service capacity and to build strong referral pathways.

Values



Fairness

We are fair by embracing inclusion and diversity while working towards equitable access to justice for all.



Excellence

We strive for excellence through continuous improvement and reflection, sector leadership, and aiming to be the best in our fields.



Compassion

We care through empathy, support and understanding for everyone.



Courage

We champion advocacy, curiosity, and innovation by respectfully challenging norms, speaking up for others, and leading with integrity.



Collaboration

Our shared purpose thrives on teamwork, trust and open communication.

Role Contribution

This role provides external and internal leadership for Circle Green as well as the specialist area of law.

The Principal Lawyer is part of the Circle Green Leadership Team and is also responsible for providing leadership, management, and oversight of a specific legal practice area and is guided by the three strategic focus areas, being best practice service, visible social impact and regenerative growth.

Working to improve community impact, this role is a champion of collaboration and will develop and manage relationships with key stakeholders including other community legal centres, Legal Aid, Law Access, private law firms, funders, peak bodies and national networks.

The Principal Lawyer will also identify and support opportunities for internal collaboration with a focus on client outcomes and holistic service delivery. This may include community legal education, law reform, funding opportunities and staff development opportunities.

Key relationships

- Reporting to Director of Services
- Working with other Principal Lawyers, the Director of Business Operations and the CEO as part of the Leadership Team.
- Working with other Western Australia community legal centres, peak bodies, national networks and funders.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership

- Participation and contribution to the Leadership Group, including participation in strategic planning, risk management and reporting to Board and funders.
- Support the strategic focus areas through development and implementation of operational plans.
- Provide strategic direction and support to the team to support achievement of operational plan.
- Support, guide and cultivate an environment of continuous improvement, best practice, and innovation.
- Develop and manage key external stakeholder relationships including representing Circle Green at external meetings and events.
- Focus on sustainability of funding, identification of gaps in service delivery and growth of community impact.

Legal Practice

- Undertake the role of 'Responsible Person' as defined in the 'Risk Management and CLC Practice' guide published by Community Legal Centres Australia and ensure that legal services operate within the Circle Green guidelines and in accordance with professional legal practice, including government and professional indemnity insurance requirements.
- Ensure that information, advice, and casework services provided are appropriate, efficient, and effective.
- Provide oversight, support, resource assessment and allocation to achieve legal practice deliverables, improve community impact and meet reporting requirements.
- Review service delivery models and recommend changes to meet client needs in conjunction with the Leadership Team.
- Ensure compliance against funding contracts.

Strategic Legal Review and Advocacy

- Monitor legislative changes and develop strategies to respond to those changes.
- Develop strategies to participate in and respond to law reform and policy change with a focus on leading collaboration both with other service providers and across Circle Green.
- Through analysis of internal data and research, identify and provide strategic advice on emerging issues and opportunities that support Circle Green's plans and objectives.

- Develop advocacy plans and deliver targeted advocacy as agreed with the Director of Services including media engagement.
- Engage in appropriate networks to represent the best interests of Circle Green and its clients including, but not limited to, community legal centres and other organisations providing complementary services.

Community Legal Education

- Oversee the development and promotion of Circle Green specialised community legal education resources in the relevant legal practice area, ensuring they are legally accurate (pursuant to the Risk Management Guidelines), effective and highly accessible.
- Develop and deliver state-wide opportunities for community members.
- Develop relationships and support the sector to improve localised service delivery and referrals to the specialist service including collaborative service delivery.
- Encourage and foster collaboration within Circle Green and with other holistic service providers.
- Identify and respond to community legal education trends relevant to Circle Green.

Team Responsibilities

- Oversee the recruitment, induction and training of legal staff and volunteers.
- Manage staff development and performance.
- Encourage strong multi-disciplinary and cross-program collaboration internally and externally.
- Implement Circle Green's policies and procedures and act in accordance with the organisation's purpose and values.
- Support, guide and cultivate an environment of continuous improvement, best practice, and innovation.
- Carry out other duties, consistent with the role, as directed by the Director of Services.

Selection Criteria

Credentials

- Admitted to practice law in Western Australia and eligible to hold an unrestricted practicing certificate.
- More than 5 years post admission experience

Experience

- Experience in leading a diverse team and delivering client outcomes in a complex service delivery environment.
- Delivering to a strategic agenda.
- Experience in law reform activities.
- Experience managing pro bono and key stakeholder relationships.
- Understanding of and sensitivity to people from diverse cultural, socio economic and linguistic backgrounds.
- A demonstrated commitment to human rights and social justice issues.

Knowledge and Skills

- Ability to lead a legal practice, including awareness of relevant professional practice requirements.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

- Ability to work innovatively in a dynamic environment.

Desirable

- Demonstrated experience in the relevant legal practice area.