



Position Description

Position:	Senior Paralegal
Reports To:	Associate Solicitor
Award Pay Level:	Level 4.3 under the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award
Employment Type	0.6 FTE Tuesdays, Wednesday & Thursdays
Location:	Footscray VIC (Flexible work arrangements available, travel to other ASRC sites required)

Organisational context

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) is a leading advocacy organisation for people seeking asylum in Australia. We are a values-driven organisation that strives to be part of a movement that helps people seeking asylum by providing direct services such as assistance with accommodation, food, casework, employment, education and legal services. We campaign and lobby with our sector to drive law reform and policy change.

At the heart of the ASRC strategy is the people we serve, and our commitment to ensuring that their voices of lived experience are embedded in all that we do. The ASRC exists for refugees and asylum seekers, and we are in the service of this community of people. It's important that our work and focus is led by what this community needs, expects and wants from us.

About the team

The Human Rights Law Program (HRLP) is an accredited Community Legal Centre auspiced by the ASRC, committed to technical excellence, centering client dignity, and trauma-informed practice. It offers a unique and specialist service prioritising legal assistance for refugees and people seeking asylum who face the greatest barriers to accessing their human rights, including people fleeing persecution on the basis of their gender and sexuality and people in detention. The HRLP offers a range of services including referral, one-off advice, clinic assistance and full representation across all stages of the refugee status determination process, including merits and judicial review.

The HRLP works alongside the Humanitarian Operations and Resilience Department, which delivers the services that stabilise the circumstances of at-risk people seeking asylum, so they can continue to engage constructively with their visa determination process and ensure their best possible chance of a pathway to successful settlement. The Department prioritises those who face the greatest barriers to accessing their human rights during this process. The HRLP also works closely with the Systemic Change team which are responsible for law and policy reform.

Position Purpose

The role of the Senior Paralegal is to assist the Associate Solicitor/s in coordinating the Legal Triage Program. They conduct appointments and work directly with supervising lawyers to support process improvement and management of the triage space whilst supervising paid and volunteer support paralegals. They are responsible for making the initial contact with new clients seeking legal assistance from the HRLP obtaining information, and triaging their matter appropriately, to support client dignity and empowerment, and to minimise delay.

Key Accountabilities

The Senior Paralegal will undertake the following duties:

- Contributing to leadership of the triage space by adopting a human rights-based approach
- Obtaining initial client instructions, including relevant legal documentation
- Undertaking preliminary triaging of requests for legal assistance, including escalation to lawyers as required
- Undertaking client appointments, including preparing and lodging Freedom of Information requests, drafting basic migration forms and under the supervision of the supervising lawyer providing legal advice to clients on their migration matters
- Supporting innovative and efficient file management practices and data recording
- Developing and maintaining strong working relationships within the ASRC and with

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stakeholders external to the ASRC

- Supervise legal volunteers and assist in the daily supervision of paralegal support staff
- Undertaking administrative tasks as required
- Reporting to the Principal Solicitor, Triage Senior and Associate lawyers, and the wider HRLP team noted trends in new legal presentations
- Supporting the co-design, implementation and review of the intake model

All ASRC People Will:

- Actively contribute to and uphold occupational health and safety standards to ensure the ASRC workforce feel safe and supported at work
- Centre the rights of people seeking asylum and actively working toward bringing the ASRC vision and purpose to life
- Demonstrate the ASRC values through behaviours that contribute to a culturally safe, inclusive and respectful workplace.

Role Requirements

Essential Skills, Experience & Qualifications

- Paralegal qualification or minimum 2 years experience as a paralegal in a legal practice in Australia
- Excellent organisational skills and ability to adapt in a continually changing, high-volume environment
- Knowledge of legal professional and ethical responsibilities relating to client confidentiality and conflicts of interest
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to engage with vulnerable individuals
- Strong written skills in English
- Ability to communicate legal processes in plain English
- Ability to support, coach and mentor volunteers
- Resourceful, collaborative and innovative approach to work
- Ability to adapt and contribute to growing and developing work environments
- Self-motivated and able to work independently, with a passion for the goals and values of the ASRC
- Knowledge of the policy context of practice with asylum seekers' visa categories/conditions, and the barriers faced by people seeking asylum in Australia

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- Excellent computer skills including familiarity with MS applications; word, outlook, excel and databases

Desirable:

- Lived experience of seeking asylum

Policy and screening requirements

All ASRC staff and volunteers are required to adhere to policies and procedures that aim to further culturally safe, inclusive and respectful work practices. All offers of employment are subject to a satisfactory Criminal History Check and provision of a valid Working with Children Check prior to commencement.

I have read and understood and agree to perform the responsibilities outlined in this position description.
Name:
Date: