**SCHEDULE 1**

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| Position Title | Paralegal – **Mental Health Legal Service and Human Rights Legal Service (DJAG funded Services)** |
| Location | Queensland Advocacy Incorporated2nd Floor, South Central, 43 Peel Street (cnr Merivale Street) South Brisbane Qld 4101 |
| Industrial Instrument | Social, Community, Home Care & Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHADS) |
| Classification | Level 4, commensurate with experience |
| Full time / part time | Full time, 12 month contract  |
| Position Reports to | Principal Solicitors |
| Date | 20 April 2021 |

# Queensland Advocacy Incorporated Values

The Mental Health Legal Service and Human Rights Legal Service Paralegal (HRLS/MHLS Paralegal) will have a commitment to Queensland Advocacy Inc (QAI) to promote and implement the values and philosophies of the organisation when conducting activities and actions related to their position.

# Organisational Context

Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) is an independent, community-based systems and legal advocacy organisation for people with disability. QAI's mission is to promote, protect and defend, through advocacy, the fundamental needs, rights and lives of the most vulnerable people with disability in Queensland. The organisation does this by engaging in systemic advocacy through campaigns directed at attitudinal, law and policy change, and by supporting the development of a range of advocacy initiatives in this State.

As QAI is a social advocacy organisation, it works to uphold the principles of fundamental human rights, social justice and inclusion in community life by:

* + - taking positive, ethical action;
		- being on the side of people with disability;
		- being understanding of their position and vulnerability;
		- being independent with minimised conflicts of interest;
		- focusing on fundamental needs, welfare and interests;
		- doing advocacy with vigor and a sense of urgency; and
		- remaining loyal and accountable over time.

 People involved with QAI therefore believe that people with disability:

* are as valuable as any other human beings, regardless of what they can or cannot do;
* need to live well and have the same opportunities in life as other people;
* are part of the relationships and connections of ordinary life and can participate and contribute to the rich and diverse fabric of our communities; and
* should not be segregated, congregated or isolated on the basis of disability.

# Role Description

The MHLS/HRLS Paralegal will provide administrative support for QAI’s MHLS and HRLS. This will include scheduling and management of solicitors’ calendars for hearing and advice appointments, entry and maintenance of the client management database, preparation of physical and electronic files, drafting of correspondence and client contact to perform intake, take initial instructions, and provide information and referral. The role also requires communication with relevant stakeholders including the Mental Health Review Tribunal, various Queensland Authorised Mental Health Services, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) and the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC). The paralegal may also be required as directed to perform various tasks such as drafting client correspondence and assisting with the preparation of legal documents. The Paralegal will work under the supervision and guidance of the Principal Solicitors and other solicitors in the MHLS and HRLS, however is required to work independently and take initiative.

# Key Capabilities

Under supervision of the Principal Solicitors and QAI solicitors, the MHLS/HRLS paralegal will provide administrative support including:

1. Open client files, including performing intake and taking initial client instructions, entry into the client management database, preparation of hard copy and electronic files and opening file correspondence.
2. Manage the MHLS and HRLS solicitors’ calendars, including booking client advice appointments and court or tribunal matters.
3. Manage QAI’s probono volunteer solicitor matters, including preparing briefs and liaising with clients and relevant stakeholders.
4. Finalise and close client files, including liaising with the client and assistance with the preparation of final correspondence.
5. Provide information and referral in relation to enquiries for assistance.
6. Legal and practical research.
7. Prepare submissions, court documents and correspondence under the supervision of the Principal Solicitors and MHLS/HRLS solicitors.
8. At times, provide extended assistance to clients within the scope of QAI’s individual advocacy services.
9. Keep and maintain QAI databases, client files and records in accordance with requirements of the Legal Profession Act, the National Association of Community Legal Centre’s Risk Management Guide and QAI’s Policies and procedures and in accordance with KPI’s established for QAI’s MHLS/HRLS.
10. Participate in casework file reviews meetings.
11. Participate in staff meetings, planning workshops and other meetings in connection with the operation of individual advocacy services and QAI.
12. General office teamwork and assistance.
13. Undertake training required to perform the above duties.
14. Carry out any additional duties within the scope of the position as directed by the Principal Solicitors.

# Mandatory Requirements:

1. Strong commitment to human rights, social justice and diversity.
2. Experience as a paralegal, or experience in office administration in a legal environment.
3. Strong computer competency and proficient in the use of Microsoft office including, word, excel and outlook.
4. Attention to detail and highly developed organisational skills to identify priorities, manage workload, and maintain records within a resource-poor community legal service.
5. Excellent interpersonal & verbal communication skills including the ability to communicate sensitively with clients and other people from diverse backgrounds.
6. Excellent written skills, including ability to convey information in simple English.
7. Good knowledge of the welfare and/or disability sector/s with understanding of what makes people vulnerable.
8. Ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a small team to achieve positive outcomes.
9. Ability to work non-confrontationally, yet reason and argue assertively on important issues on behalf of people with disability.
10. Ability to work with supervision and within organisational policy.
11. Ability to exercise initiative and judgment within the sphere of work to plan, coordinate, implement and evaluate work in a strategic way.
12. **Desirable:**
13. Experience at a community legal centre in similar role and/or CLASS.
14. Experience of working with people with mental health impairments or disability.
15. Good knowledge of the welfare and/or disability sector/s with understanding of what makes people vulnerable.
16. Knowledge of the *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld), *Human Rights Act 2019* (QLD) *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000* (Qld), and related legislation.

## Support and Training

## Training and Professional Development will be provided and supported by QAI.

## Opportunities to participate in strategic planning and review processed will be provided as appropriate.

## QAI is an inclusive and flexible workplace and as such team building and rapport hold high importance.

## Performance Review

# A probationary period applies to this position. A probationary appraisal will be conducted to ensure adequate support, training, and experience for the role at three months. Annual performance reviews are conducted thereafter.

1. **How to Apply**

To apply for this position please submit the following documents:

1. A current resume detailing previous work, voluntary or relevant experience including two referees.
2. A Short (one page) introductory letter addressing the key capabilities and mandatory requirements outlined above.