

Position Description



Queensland Advocacy Incorporated

Advocacy for people with disability.

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Position Title	Human Rights Solicitor
Location	Queensland Advocacy Incorporated 2nd Floor, South Central, 43 Peel Street South Brisbane, Meanjin Qld 4101
Industrial Instrument	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHDS Award)
Classification	Level 4 or 5, commensurate with experience
Full time / part time	Negotiable
Position Reports to	Principal Solicitor, Human Rights Advocacy Practice

1. Queensland Advocacy Incorporated Values

The appointee to this position 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.

2. Organisational Context

Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) is an independent, community-based advocacy organisation for people with disability. QAI's mission is to advocate for the protection and advancement of the needs, rights and lives of 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
- focussing on fundamental needs, welfare and interests
- doing advocacy with vigour and a sense of urgency
- 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
- should not be segregated, congregated, or isolated on the basis of disability.

3. Role Description

Under the supervision and direction of the Principal Solicitors and other Senior QAI Solicitors as required, the Solicitor's role will include providing legal advice, representation and referrals for clients of QAI and contributing to the systemic advocacy work and community legal education of QAI within the Human Rights Advocacy Practice.

4. Key Position Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Legal advice and representation:

- Providing legal advice to clients of QAI's Human Rights Advocacy Practice (HRAP) for matters arising under the *Disability Services Act 2006* (Qld), the *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld), the *Forensic Disability Act 2011* (Qld), the *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000* (Qld), the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld), the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth), the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) and related legislation.
- Performing legal representation on behalf of HRAP clients with matters before the Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT), the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) and the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) and other courts and tribunals as required.
- Conduct strategic test cases from a human-rights perspective to achieve or promote systemic reform of laws and services impacting on people with disability.
- Provide information and referrals to other legal, welfare and community services, including the provision of community legal education events and material.
- Performing various tasks including maintaining client databases (CLASS), QAI's electronic filing systems, Microsoft 365 and its integrated apps and perform work including drafting legal correspondence, advice letters and preparing legal documents.
- Identify issues requiring systemic reform (including law reform) in relation to the rights of people with disability.
- Work under the general supervision of the Principal Solicitors and to collaborate with other individual advocate staff members of QAI.

General

- Comply with the code of conduct and ethics and confidentiality requirements of QAI and with the National Disability Service Standards.
- Demonstrate commitment to QAI's values and beliefs and the principles and elements of social advocacy.
- Keep informed of current government and community attitudes and policies and their effects on the lives of people with disability.
- Ensure that client files and records are kept and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the National Association of Community Legal Centre's Risk Management Guide and QAI's policies and procedures, including appropriately utilising CLASS and Microsoft 365;
- Assist with the preparation of submissions, brochures, discussion papers, reports, self-help kits, newsletter contributions and other publications within the expertise and responsibilities of the position;
- Participate in staff meetings, planning workshops and other meetings in connection with the operation of client services and QAI;
- General office teamwork and assistance;
- Undertake own word processing and administrative tasks;

- Assist with reporting;
- Carry out any additional duties within the scope of the position as directed by the Principal Solicitor.

5. Requirements of the Position:

Values, skills, knowledge:

- Exceptional listening and communication skills – particularly the ability to ask the questions that will both encourage and support individuals and assist with planning strategic advocacy;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills to a wide variety of audiences, including to people with mental illness, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment;
- Collaboration with external stakeholders;
- Excellent written skills, including ability to convey information in simple, plain English;
- Ability to plan, implement and evaluate strategic pieces of work.

Relationships:

- Ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a team to achieve positive outcomes;
- Ability to work with supervision and within organisational policy;
- Ability to exercise initiative and judgment within the sphere of work to plan, coordinate, implement and evaluate work in a strategic way;
- Driven by integrity, responsibility, accountability, attention to detail and pride in work.

Essential:

- An experienced solicitor with a current Queensland Practising Certificate or eligibility for one;
- Strong commitment to human rights, social justice and diversity;
- Good knowledge of people with disability and understanding of what makes people vulnerable;
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, specifically the ability to converse with people at grass roots, as well as those in positions of authority to affect change in the lives of young people with disability;
- Well developed organisational and time management skills, including the ability to plan, implement and evaluate strategic pieces of work;
- Criminal history screening clearance; and
- Current Queensland drivers' licence and ability to travel.

Desirable:

- Previous experience at a Community Legal Centre and/or with the Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS), would be advantageous; and
- Current unrestricted Queensland Practising Certificate or eligibility to obtain one.