



**Queensland Advocacy
Incorporated**

Advocacy for people with disability.

Level 2, 43 Peel Street
PO Box 3384
South Brisbane QLD 4101

T (07) 3844 4200

F (07) 3844 4220

E qai@qai.org.au

ABN 97 527 905 201

Position Title	Paralegal
Location	Queensland Advocacy Inc. Level 2, 43 Peel Street, South Brisbane, Meanjin Qld 4101
Industrial Instrument	Social, Community, Home Care & Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHDS Award)
Classification	Level 4
Full Time/Part Time	Full time
Position Reports to	Principal Solicitors

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

QAI is an independent, community-based 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,
- 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. Position Statement

The Paralegal will provide support to QAI's Advocacy Practices and administration team, under the supervision of the Principal Solicitors. The Paralegal will provide a high standard of information, referral and assessment to clients and organisations contacting QAI and is responsible for undertaking a wide range of client and administrative support duties, in line with the changing strategic and operational requirements of the organisation to deliver quality services to our community.

Key Position Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

- Accept referrals from relevant stakeholders and take bookings for client advice appointments and/or for representation matters.
- Manage the QAI's solicitors' and advocates' calendars, including booking client advice appointments and representation matters.
- 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.
- Provide support to QAI's solicitors' and advocates for various matters including assisting with follow up with relevant stakeholders, tribunals, courts and clients as required.
- Assists manage QAI's pro bono volunteer solicitor matters as directed, including preparing briefs and liaising with clients and relevant stakeholders.
- Close client files, including liaising with the client post advice or representation and preparation of closing file letter and completing close file procedures to finalise client matters.
- Provision of information and referral in relation to enquiries for assistance.
- Answering telephones and emails and assisting with client intake across QAI's Advocacy Practices.
- Perform relevant aspects of legal and practical research as required.
- Preparation of submissions, court documents and legal correspondence under the supervision of the Principal Solicitors and QAI solicitors and/or advocates.
- At times, providing extended assistance to clients within the scope of QAI's Advocacy Practices.

General:

- 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, Queensland Government platforms and Microsoft 365.
- Participate in staff meetings, planning workshops and other meetings in connection with the operation of client services and QAI.
- Undertake training required to perform the above duties.
- General office teamwork and assistance.
- Undertake own word processing and administrative tasks.
- Carry out any additional duties within the scope of the position as directed by the Principal Solicitors.

4. Requirements of the Position:

Values, skills, knowledge:

- Strong commitment to human rights, social justice and diversity;
- Good knowledge of people with disability and understanding of what makes people vulnerable;
- 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;
- Ability to exercise initiative and judgment within the sphere of work to plan, coordinate, implement and evaluate work in a strategic way;
- Comply with the code of conduct and ethics and confidentiality requirements of QAI and with the National Disability Service Standards; and
- Driven by integrity, responsibility, accountability, attention to detail and pride in work.

Relationships:

- Ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a team to achieve positive outcomes;
- Ability to work non-confrontationally, yet reason and argue assertively on important issues on behalf of people with disability;
- Ability to work with supervision and within organisational policy; and
- Excellent written skills, including ability to convey information in simple English.

Essential:

- Experience as a paralegal, or experience in office administration in a legal environment;
- Strong computer competency and proficient in the use of Microsoft office including, word, excel and outlook;
- Attention to detail and highly developed organisational skills to identify priorities, manage workload, and maintain records within a resource-poor community legal service; and
- Excellent interpersonal & verbal communication skills including the ability to communicate sensitively with clients and other people from diverse backgrounds.

Desirable:

- Previous experience at a Community Legal Centre and/or with the Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS), would be advantageous;
- Experience working with people with mental health impairments or disability;
- Good knowledge of the welfare and/or disability sector/s with understanding of what makes people vulnerable;
- Knowledge of, or ability to acquire knowledge of the *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld), *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), the *Disability Services Act 2006* (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) and related legislation; and
- Current Queensland drivers' licence and ability to travel.