

Position Title	Principal Solicitor Human Rights Advocacy Practice
Location	Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion 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 8
Full Time/Part Time	Full time or Part Time

1. Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion Values

The appointee to this position will have a commitment to Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (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, whose vision is to see inclusive communities where all people are equally valued and enjoy human rights. QAI's purpose 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. QAI 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 Principal Solicitor plays a key leadership role in supervising and managing the staff and operations of QAI's Human Rights Advocacy Practice (HRAP). Under the National Association of Community Legal Centres' (NACLC) Risk Management Guide, the Principal Solicitor has responsibility for ensuring compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements, and for maintaining the standards and accountability outlined in the Guide.

The Principal Solicitor will lead the provision of expert legal advice and casework support in line with the scope of QAI's legal services, encompassing critical areas impacting vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, including *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*, *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)*, *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000 (Qld)*, *Mental Health Act 2016 (Qld)*, *Forensic Disability Act 2011 (Qld)*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*.

The Principal Solicitor plays a critical role in identifying and pursuing strategic litigation opportunities that advance the rights of people with disability and those affected by discrimination or injustice. Through both direct legal service delivery and broader advocacy efforts, the Principal Solicitor will work to achieve systemic change in line with QAI's purpose to promote and protect human rights in Queensland.

4. Key Position Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

- Responsibly manage HRAP in line with the NALCLC Risk Management Guide and the Australian Solicitor Conduct Rules, ensuring compliance and accountability across the team.
- Supervise and conduct performance appraisals for individual advocates, fostering professional growth and skill development.
- Provide expert oversight and advice on legal issues arising from case files, database entries, limitation dates, and client information management.
- Collaborate with the CEO and other managers to provide strategic direction and planning for the practice, seeking new opportunities and maintaining service excellence.
- Strive to meet funding obligations while identifying and pursuing new funding opportunities to support the practice.
- Provide and manage tailored legal information, referrals, advice, and discrete task assistance to clients and other services through various communication channels.
- Represent and manage clients before the Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT), Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC), Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and other courts and tribunals as required.
- Promote best practices in service delivery by developing resources, leading team discussions, and collaborating with external stakeholders.
- Conduct strategic test cases from a human rights perspective to drive systemic reform in laws and services impacting people with disabilities.
- Identify and address issues requiring systemic reform or law reform in relation to the rights of people with disabilities.
- Prepare submissions, brochures, discussion papers, reports, self-help kits, newsletters and community legal education initiatives relevant to the position's expertise and responsibilities.
- Prepare and present reports on service activities, administration, staffing, budgeting, strategic plan implementation, and other key matters.
- Monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure the Human Rights Advocacy Practice meets service delivery targets and continues to deliver high-quality outcomes.

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.
- Undertake duties and required training for the program in keeping with QAI's procedures, guidelines and statutory requirements.
- Keep informed of current government and community attitudes and policies and their effects on the lives of people with disability.
- Participate in staff meetings, planning workshops and other meetings in connection with the operation of HRAP and QAI.
- Carry out any additional duties within the scope of the position as directed by the CEO.

5. Requirements of the Position:

Values, Skills, Knowledge:

- highly developed legal casework, advocacy and negotiation skills
- excellent written and oral communication skills to a wide variety of audiences, including to people with mental illness, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment
- highly developed organisational skills to identify priorities, manage workload, and maintain records within a resource-poor community-based service
- good knowledge of the welfare and/or disability sector/s with understanding of the vulnerabilities experienced by people with disability

Relationships

- ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a team to achieve positive outcomes
- ability to collaborate with external stakeholders and build long lasting partnerships
- ability to work non-confrontationally, yet reason and argue assertively on important issues on behalf of people with disability

- 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

- experienced, unrestricted lawyer with at least five years' experience in legal practice in Queensland, or extensive management experience
- experience in a supervisory role in legal practice and the ability to manage effectively
- strong commitment to human rights, social justice and diversity
- demonstrated ability to establish and develop projects
- excellent interpersonal & verbal communication skills including the ability to communicate sensitively with staff, clients and other people from diverse backgrounds

Desirable

- previous experience at a Community Legal Centre, Legal Aid or Aboriginal Torres strait Islander Legal Service would be advantageous.