



North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency

Freecall 1800 898 251 ABN 63 118 017 842 Email mail@naaja.org.au

Duty Statement

POSITION: PRINCIPAL LEGAL OFFICER

LOCATION: DARWIN

POSITION OVERVIEW

The North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency Ltd (NAAJA) provides legal assistance and justice services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Northern Territory. We have offices in Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. We are recognised as a leading legal service and have received national and local human rights and crime prevention awards for our work.

NAAJA's legal practice is the largest in the Northern Territory, providing high quality, culturally proficient and accessible advice, casework and court advocacy in both criminal and civil law. NAAJA particularly seeks to achieve social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through strategic litigation, law reform and education.

The Principal Legal Officer (PLO) is a key executive leadership position with responsibility for leading the effective delivery of legal services across the Northern Territory and supporting the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in the strategic leadership and management of the organisation. The PLO, under the direction of the CEO, is responsible for ensuring that the legal practice meets all statutory, funding requirements whilst also aligning with the organisation's strategic and operational plans. The PLO has ultimate responsibility for the management of all criminal and civil lawyers.

The following positions report to the PLO:

- Manager, Criminal Law Darwin
- Manager, Civil Law, Darwin
- Manager, Criminal Law Katherine
- Regional Managing Solicitor, Alice Springs
- CNS Coordinator
- Executive Assistant to the PLO, Darwin
- Manager, Law & Justice Projects, Darwin
- Lawyer, Your Story Disability Legal Support Service
- Senior Policy Officer – Generational Strategy
- Data Analyst Officer

HEAD OFFICE: DARWIN

61 Smith Street
GPO Box 1064
DARWIN NT 0801
Tel: 08 8982 5100
Fax: 08 8982 5190

KATHERINE

10 Third Street
PO Box 1944
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ALICE SPRINGS

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TENNANT CREEK

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The work requires high levels of motivation, energy and a commitment to professional excellence.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Principal Legal Officer reports to the Chief Executive Officer.

DUTIES

1. Supports the CEO in meeting the strategic agenda for NAAJA as set by the Board of Directors.
2. Supports the CEO in developing and monitoring the organisational annual operational plan and ensures that all other core plans align with the organisation's Strategic Plan.
3. Provides strong leadership, direction and support to the Executive Management team and across the organisation.
4. Leads the development of funding proposals, submissions, and policy positions.
5. Lead the delivery of high quality, culturally proficient and accessible legal and support services.
6. Ensure the maintenance of high professional and ethical standards within the legal practice, including through the continuing professional development of staff and overseeing compliance with the Rules of Professional Conduct and Practice.
7. Provide direct management to section managers within the legal practice and support them to manage their teams.
8. Provide and oversee effective financial, records and resource management within the legal practice.
9. Operate NAAJA's trust account, professional indemnity insurance and other obligations in accordance with the *Legal Profession Act*.
10. Maintain a select case load, providing high level legal advice and representation to Aboriginal people and appearing in court, particularly in serious and complex matters.
11. Identify opportunities to achieve justice for Aboriginal people through strategic litigation.
12. Represent NAAJA in the media, at external meetings, on working groups and committees, in forums and other reform activities as required.
13. Ensure accurate reporting of the activities of the legal practice against funding and data requirements and contribute to the development of applications for additional funding of legal assistance services.
14. Other duties as reasonably directed.

SELECTION CRITERIA

ESSENTIAL:

1. Admission (or eligibility for admission) as a legal practitioner in the Northern Territory and the holder of (or eligibility for) an unrestricted practicing certificate.
2. Extensive experience in areas relevant to NAAJA's legal practice, including as an advocate in superior courts.
3. Demonstrated management skills, including performance management of staff, management of resources and superior time management.

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4. Ability to provide effective leadership to a diverse team of legal and non-legal staff, working constructively with them to deliver a high-quality service to clients.
5. An understanding of the barriers faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system and a demonstrated empathy and sensitivity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, history and culture.
6. Excellent communication skills, including the ability to:
 - Advance NAAJA's strategic goals with stakeholders;
 - Communicate effectively with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
 - Deliver a clear and effective message in the media.
7. Satisfactory criminal history check and no history of disqualification from employment by a legal practice.
8. Ability to obtain a Working with Children Clearance (OCHRE card).

DESIRABLE

1. Experience in the operation of a solicitor's trust account.

Please note: Applicants for this position must address the selection criteria in their written application, which should be sent to Recruitment@naaja.org.au

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Basic Employment Conditions

Position: PRINCIPAL LEGAL OFFICER

- 1) **Probationary Period:**
6 months
- 2) **Place of Employment:**
Darwin
- 3) **Hours of Work:**
37.5 hours per week, 8:00am - 4:30pm Monday to Friday
- 4) **Salary/Wages:**
Commensurate with experience
As a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) NAAJA is currently able to offer salary sacrificing benefits in line with current legislation (Conditions Apply)
- 5) **Allowances:**
Annual Airfare Entitlement payable per annum after 12 months qualifying service
Darwin \$1,150
- 6) **Superannuation:**
As per the Commonwealth Superannuation Guarantee [Administration] Act 1992.
- 7) **Annual Leave:**
6 weeks per annum. Leave loading of 17.5% will be payable on annual leave.
- 8) **Long Service Leave:**
As per the NT Long Service Leave Act with the exception that service with other Legal Aid services and agreed Aboriginal organisations is recognised as relevant service for the purpose of accessing Long Service Leave on a pro-rata non-financial basis.
- 9) **Personal / Carer's Leave:**
15 days per annum.
- 10) **Other:**
 - Where a Legal Practising Certificate is required, evidence of a current Australian Legal Practising Certificate or eligibility to obtain one
 - Satisfactory Working With Children Clearance Check on commencement
 - Where a driver's licence is required. Evidence of a current NT "C" Class driver's licence or equivalent

Disqualification and conviction of serious offences

Under the Legal Profession Act, NAAJA is not able to employ a person who has been convicted of a serious offence or disqualified from legal practice without permission from the Law Society. You must inform NAAJA if you are a disqualified person or have been convicted of a serious offence and it is an offence under the Legal Profession Act if you fail to do so.

For employees who do not hold a practising certificate, you will be required to undergo a police record check before commencing your employment.

It is an ongoing condition of your employment that you notify NAAJA immediately if you are subject to proceedings for disqualification from legal practice or charged with a serious criminal offence.

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