**Job Description**

**Criminal Solicitor**

**Location: Alice Springs/Katherine with Remote Travel**

**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 criminal law practice consists of criminal solicitors working in the areas of youth, summary, indictable and appellate crime, supported by administrative and client service staff who play a vital role in ensuring the provision of effective legal services to our clients.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.

**REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Criminal Solicitor will report to the Principal Legal Officer or the Regional Managing Criminal Solicitor, Alice Springs or Katherine

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Criminal Solicitor will conduct criminal duty matters and casework of pleas, hearings, and committals of the Local Court and indictable matters of the Supreme Court. The Criminal Solicitor will provide high professionalism and quality representation of NAAJA clients.

# KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To provide high quality legal advice and representation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people charged with criminal offences.
2. In conjunction with other staff, to undertake work aimed at overcoming the disadvantage suffered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**DUTIES**

1. To undertake work in the Local Court for criminal matters, including a duty lawyer service, bail applications, direction hearings, pleas, hearings, committals and instructing in criminal matters in the Supreme Court.
2. Provide high quality advice on criminal law issues to clients as required.
3. To undertake work at circuit (bush) courts, including travel and overnight stays in remote communities.
4. To develop and implement goals in accordance with NAAJA’s Strategic Plan.
5. To assist the managing and senior solicitors of the Criminal Section as required.
6. To assist in training, development and mentoring of support staff.
7. To identify issues that cause disadvantage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system and to assist NAAJA through the Principal Legal Officer to respond to those issues through, legal education, law reform and/or community development strategies.
8. To participate in all staff and team meetings as required.
9. Work co-operatively with secretarial and client service staff as required.
10. Other duties as directed.

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

# ESSENTIAL:

1. Admission (or eligibility for admission) as a legal practitioner in the Northern Territory.
2. An understanding of the issues affecting the disproportionate involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system. Including a demonstrated understanding and sensitivity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their history and culture.
3. Previous experience in dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is highly desirable.
4. Demonstrated ability to provide high quality oral and written advice on a range of legal issues.
5. Excellent communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
6. Good time management and organisational skills including demonstrated capacity to perform under pressure and ability to effectively handle high volume workloads within tight deadlines.
7. Ability and willingness to travel to and work in the regional areas serviced by NAAJA.
8. Ability to work constructively with a diverse team of legal and non-legal staff to achieve the goals of the position including a demonstrated willingness to seek advice from client service officers on cultural issues and/or supervision by senior solicitors when necessary.
9. Current Drivers Licence with manual driving experience.
10. Ability to obtain a “Working with Children Clearance” (Ochre Card) upon commencement.
11. Satisfactory criminal history check and no history of disqualification from employment by a legal practice.