



Senior Solicitor/Caseworker Position Description

The Refugee Advice Casework Service (RACS) seeks a dedicated person to join its team of committed human rights lawyers as a Senior Solicitor/Caseworker. You must be a solicitor and a registered migration agent (or be eligible to become a migration agent). The position is primarily responsible for the delivery of the Justice for Refugees @ RACS, Judicial Review Referral Service, as well as participation in our general advice and assistance services.

The position is permanent full-time (35 hours per week). Flexible working arrangements may also be considered. Remuneration for the position is \$83,000 to \$87,000 per annum, (commensurate with qualifications and experience), plus superannuation contribution and salary packaging.

RACS is committed to working together to achieve a more inclusive community. Our workplace strives to be one that embraces and celebrates diversity and the wide range of skills, expertise and experience we can all bring to strengthen our dynamic, collaborative and responsive environment. RACS encourages people from all different backgrounds to apply, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people that identify as LGBTIQ+ and people with disabilities.

Application Procedure:

To apply, send the cover letter addressing the criteria and a CV to Kerrith Sowden at admin@racs.org.au. Applications close on 9am, Monday 19 August 2019.

About RACS

Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS) is one of Australia's oldest and most successful dedicated community legal centres with a vision of justice and dignity for refugees and a world where those who seek Australia's protection are able to live their lives with dignity, security, family unity and freedom.

RACS provides free, specialist legal services for asylum seekers and refugees. Through individual advice sessions, community education and public advocacy, RACS strives to ensure that individuals and families, at risk of persecution or other forms of significant harm, gain access to equal and fair representation before the law, and are granted protection by Australia, and opportunities to seek family unity, in accordance with Australia's international obligations.

Our work is premised on a commitment to fundamental human rights, human dignity and international protection. RACS demonstrates this commitment through its independent, impartial and professional advice; the integrity of its staff and volunteers; its belief in continuous learning, including through partnerships with other organisations; and the fair and flexible conditions it provides for staff and volunteers.

Justice for Refugees @ RACS, Judicial Review Referral Service Solicitor Role

People seeking asylum who came by boat are now subject to the "Fast Track refugee assessment process", with no access to the AAT for review, the departmental decision on their claims may only be re-examined by the Immigration Assessment Authority. This new project, Justice for Refugees @ RACS, aims to connect fast track applicants who need legal help with a judicial review matter, with members of the legal community willing to act on a pro bono or no-win-no-fee basis. The primary focus of the position is to facilitate smooth referrals for high numbers of fast track

applicants with their judicial review matters. Other general casework and advice services will also be provided as guided by RACS.

The position reports to a RACS Supervising Senior Solicitor. The Justice for Refugees Solicitor will carry out their duties in accordance with RACS policy and funding guidelines. The successful applicant will be working at RACS' main office, but will be expected to travel to our outreach locations, to external meetings, detention centres and other locations as reasonably required.

The RACS working environment can be high volume and the successful applicant must be skilled in managing time and priorities.

In regards to Justice for Refugees, the position will involve the following duties:

- Assessing requests for assistance with Judicial Review from fast track applicant asylum seekers;
- Assessing whether applicants meet the project's casework guidelines in terms of means and merits testing;
- Liaising with caseworkers and clients in terms of collating all documents necessary for an effective referral to firms and counsel;
- Having an appreciation of the legal issues concerned on judicial review matters and an understanding of the kinds of matters likely to have reasonable prospects of success or likely to represent a new or emerging legal issue;
- Taking referrals to the Judicial Review service and contacting firms and barristers willing to accept referrals.
- Managing a large number of referrals and monitoring their progress.
- Managing a large volume of client data and documentation in line with legal requirements.
- Communicating with a wide range of stakeholders in a confident and a respectful manner
- Working together with volunteers and with RACS's Practical Legal Training students.
- Maintaining a good relationship with our pro bono partners and stakeholders.

A RACS caseworker is also expected to:

- Provide casework assistance, limited assistance and advice as required in accordance with RACS Casework Guidelines to people seeking asylum and refugees. Including at Departmental, IAA and Administrative Appeals Tribunal and Judicial Review level.
- Identifying and appropriately responding to the cultural needs or particular vulnerabilities of RACS clients.
- Manage a large volume of client data and documentation in line with legal requirements. Which includes maintaining files effectively and in accordance with RACS' file management policies and in accordance with the Migration Agents Registration Authority's Code of Conduct.
- Communicate with a wide range of stakeholders in a confident and a respectful manner.
- Be a contributing and supporting member of the RACS team, acting in accordance with RACS values in all conduct.
- Meet the reporting requirements of the Leadership Team.
- Attend external supervision and/or debriefing as arranged.
- Be alert to the danger of burnout, monitor your workload and be pro-active in self-care.
- Participate in RACS training and education programs as required to maintain appropriate skills that will enable provision of high quality and professional migration assistance. Which includes completing and maintaining records of MCLE/ CPD points completed
- Consult with a RACS Supervising Solicitor if at any time you are unsure about an aspect of best practice on a client's case.
- Work together with volunteers and with RACS Practical Legal Training students in the provision of services, which includes overseeing and supervising external (solicitor and

migration agent) volunteers in performing these tasks as directed by and under the oversight of a RACS Supervising Senior Solicitor.

- Undertake administrative tasks as required in a small team.
- Perform other duties as reasonably required

SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Holds or eligible to hold a NSW legal practicing certificate with more than 4 years PQE and/or at least 3 years refugee or other relevant experience. No longer subject to condition 2 on their practicing certificate or eligible to have this condition removed.
- Demonstrated experience as a legal practitioner with knowledge of Australian immigration law and practice, particularly refugee law.
- Previously had or currently engaged in the direct supervision of volunteers, practical legal trainees or Paralegals.
- Experience working with clients from torture & trauma backgrounds and or/ culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- High level communication and interpersonal skills, including an ability to communicate with a wide range of stakeholders in a confident and a respectful manner.
- Ability to work under pressure, manage time and priorities effectively and meet strict deadlines.
- Ability to work independently and in a team.
- A commitment to refugee and human rights issues.

Desirable

- Ability to work with limited resources in a community legal centre environment.
- Demonstrate experience in advocacy before a court or tribunal
- Demonstrated knowledge of Australian immigration law and practice, particularly refugee law affecting the "fast track" client group.
- Demonstrated language skills other than English will be considered favourably