

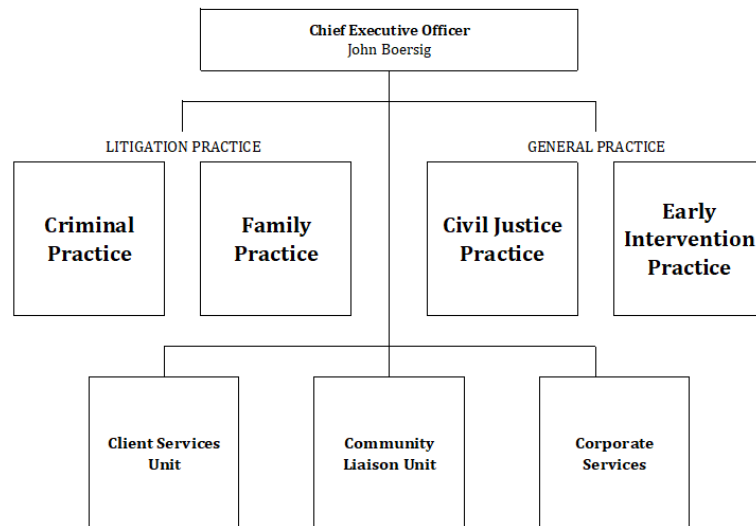
<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Graduate Lawyer</b>
<b>Classification</b>	ASO2 to Legal 1
<b>Responsible to</b>	Senior Lawyer
<b>Number of direct reports</b>	Nil
<b>Number of indirect reports</b>	Nil

**The Legal Aid Commission (ACT) (Legal Aid)**

Legal Aid was established under the *Legal Aid Act 1977*. Its mission is to promote a just society in the Australian Capital Territory by:

- ensuring that vulnerable and disadvantaged people receive the legal services they need to protect their rights and interests
- developing an improved community understanding of the law, and
- seeking reform of laws that adversely affect those we assist.

Further information about Legal Aid can be found at <http://www.legalaidact.org.au>.



**Cross-Sector Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Law Graduate Program**

This Cross-Sector Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Law Graduate Program (Program) is being trialed, with the support of the ACT Government, to support an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander law graduate in their early career. This is an identified role – the successful applicant must identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The program will consist of four 6-month placements over two years: the first placement will be at Legal Aid ACT, with the following three placements at participating community legal organisations across Canberra including the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT), Care Financial, Canberra Community Law, the Women’s Legal Centre ACT, the Environmental Defenders Office and the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The organisations the graduate will complete placements in will be determined by the graduate in consultation with Legal Aid and other participating organisations.

**Program Progression, Dimension and Relationships**

The graduate will complete their first placement working as a Legal Support Officer at Legal Aid whilst completing their PLT. They will be assigned a practice area considering Legal Aid's operational requirements and the graduate's preference. The graduate will then undertake subsequent placements working as either a Legal Support Officer or Graduate Lawyer subject to admission to practice.

The graduate will be expected to complete their PLT and be admitted to practice by the end of the first placement (June 2025). Once the graduate has been admitted to practice, they will be appointed to Legal 1 Increment 1 Graduate Lawyer. At the end of the first year of the program, the graduate will progress to Legal 1 increment 2 Graduate Lawyer. The graduate will remain a Legal Aid employee throughout the duration of the program, and will be offered an ongoing position at Legal Aid upon the successful completion of the program at Legal 2 Lawyer.

Throughout the program, the graduate will receive support and guidance from a Legal Aid mentor practicing as a lawyer in one of the graduate's areas of interest. They will additionally be supported by mentors from each individual organisation during their placements. Where possible, these mentors will identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and work in the practice the graduate will be fulfilling their placement in.

The graduate will also receive additional training from each host organisation where appropriate, and will be expected to comply with Legal Aid policies regarding conflicts of interests and confidential information when moving between placements.

**Eligibility Criteria**

The successful graduate must:

- Have successfully completed an Australian qualification in law, with the qualification being no more than three (3) years old
- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Have or be willing to obtain a Working with Vulnerable People certification
- Be willing to undergo a National Police Check and
- Be willing to complete Practical Legal Training

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities**

Under supervision prior to admission, the graduate will:

- Conduct client interviews and obtaining client instructions face-to-face and by telephone
- Manage client files, including preparing new files, checking data, requesting documents, general up-keep of files, movement of files and finalization of files
- Provide operational, administrative, word processing and procedural support for lawyers
- Arrange duty and client appointments, conferences at barrister's chambers and at other locations, telephone conferences and re-listing of Court matters
- Conduct legal research utilizing relevant databases
- Prepare general correspondence, written legal advice and briefs, affidavits and routine court documents under direct supervision of a lawyer
- Develop familiarity with court procedures in the ACT

Under supervision after admission, the Graduate Lawyer will:

- Shadow a senior lawyer during each placement to gain experience and knowledge to act in the particular area of law
- Take on and act in matters under the general direction and supervision of a lawyer
- Attend Territory and Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals as an advocate or duty lawyer – providing advice and appearing in applications, pleas or hearings as appropriate
- Conduct client interviews and appointments to provide legal advice to clients under the general direction of a lawyer
- Complete relevant legal tasks including drafting legal documents and conducting legal research under the general direction of a senior lawyer
- Provide outreach services established by the office and provide legal advice and other services as required
- Brief counsel to appear, as appropriate, for clients in applications and hearings before courts and tribunals

Throughout the program, the graduate/Graduate Lawyer will:

- Represent Legal Aid in a professional manner by upholding the ACT Public Service Values whilst working in all organisations during their placements
- Comply with all Legal Aid policies, including those surrounding confidential information and conflicts of interest
- Be responsible for applying WHS to daily tasks performed in the workplace, report all matters beyond your authority and take all practical measures to ensure that your workplace is safe and without risk to health or property
- Assist in the provision of community legal education
- Perform other duties as directed, consistent with the classification level of the position and in line with competencies

**Key Capabilities****Essential:**

- Knowledge of the legal issues experienced by those who access assistance from community legal organisations
- Ability to work with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, people experiencing physical or mental illness, and people from disadvantaged or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Strong ability to assess priorities and manage competing deadlines both independently and as a member of a professional team
- Ability to prepare Court documents and acquire a working knowledge of Court procedures
- Knowledge of ACT and Commonwealth law and procedure including ability to research and interpret a variety of legislation
- Demonstrated interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills
- Strong organizational skills with a high degree of drive with a commitment to achieving positive, collaborative outcomes
- Demonstrated strong and efficient legal research and writing skills
- High level technical and digital literacy; familiarity, or the ability to quickly become familiar, with various computer software packages

**Desirable:**

- Experience working or volunteering within the legal assistance sector
- A strong academic record
- Advocacy skills

**For more information about the participating organisations, please visit:**

- Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT): <https://www.alsnswact.org.au/>
- Care Consumer Law: <https://www.carefcs.org/consumer-law-centre>
- Canberra Community Law: <https://canberracommunitylaw.org.au/>
- Women's Legal Centre: <https://wlc.org.au/>
- Environmental Defenders Office: <https://www.edo.org.au/>
- Director of Public Prosecutions: <https://www.dpp.act.gov.au/>

## What's in it for you?

### Compensation

Starting as Legal Support Officer \$65K

Progression to Legal 1 \$82K upon PLT completion

Appointment at Legal 2 Lawyer \$91K upon completion of the graduate program



### Benefits

15.4% super

Access to full NFP salary packaging, adding up to \$6K annually to your take home pay



### Career

PLT paid for while earning a salary

Senior lawyer mentorship

Exposure to a wide variety of legal practices and areas of law



### Experience

Gain skills in advocacy, and court appearance work, casework and advice clinics, negotiation and alternative dispute resolution, client communication, cross-cultural awareness, and safe and effective client interactions

