

## POSITION DESCRIPTION – PD012

### Legal Practitioner (Family and Civil Law)

*Full Time, Fixed Term*

#### A. CONTEXT, PURPOSE OF THE ROLE AND OPPORTUNITY

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##### About us

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld) Limited (ATSILS) is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation that delivers innovative, professional, criminal, civil and family law services and early intervention projects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients throughout Queensland.

Established in 1972, ATSILS has grown to 25 offices with approximately 280 staff strategically located across Queensland. We also operate specialist Through Care, Community Legal Education, Law Reform and Coronial Enquiries programmes to supplement our primary legal services across many of our regions.

**Our Vision** is to lead in the delivery of innovative and professional legal services.

**Our Mission** is to deliver quality legal assistance services, community legal education, and early intervention and prevention initiatives which uphold and advance the legal and human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

##### Purpose of the role

Provide high quality legal representation to clients in a busy team environment, in the Family and Civil Law jurisdictions. This role allows a qualified and organised legal professional to provide enthusiastic and diligent service with administrative support staff. The majority of our client demand provides excellent opportunity in all jurisdictions, including Child Protection and Domestic Violence matters.

##### Opportunity

You will have frequent opportunity to provide expert casework assistance and information directly to clients, and to external stakeholders about client matters. You can rely on the resources of the Principal Legal Officer and the Directors of Law (Family and Civil) and your immediate legal team. The development of culturally safe legal services is inherent in this role, so you will likely achieve a degree of confidence in this area. Formal specialisation (e.g. Independent Children's Lawyer) is possible after the qualifying period. A corporate services team based in Brisbane provides administrative, human resources and public relations support; locally, administration support with regional management ensures a knowledgeable office system.

Our Regional Offices provide a rewarding social justice environment for service delivery which is achieved through one-to-one in person, direct community visiting, at our offices and by phone and internet.

#### B. REPORTING STRUCTURE

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Duties are performed under the guidance and direction of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Principal Legal Officer (PLO) and the Directors of Law (Family, Civil and Criminal), with local reporting to the Regional Manager (also a Legal Practitioner).

## C. SELECTION CRITERIA

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### ESSENTIAL CRITERIA (7)

1. **Values:** alignment to the values and vision of ATSILS and an appreciation of, and sensitivity to the challenges our clients have faced, and continue to face, in their fight for and their right to justice and equity.
2. **Qualifications:** admission as a Legal Practitioner within the State of Queensland or holder of (or eligibility for immediate acquisition of) a current Practising Certificate and be admitted as a Legal Practitioner or Barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland (or be capable of immediate admission), and the Australian High Court.
3. **Client representation and data management:** sound interpersonal and communication skills including a demonstrated ability to compassionately convey sound information or advice to clients, and to present casework documents, relevant statistical reports and applications in concise, plain language using computer technology is important.
4. **Core legal duties:** experience (or an in-depth understanding) of both high-level client services in Family and Civil Law proceedings (including casework relating to Child Protection and Domestic Violence applications; plus, casework relating to Civil Litigation generally, such as Anti-discrimination matters, Estates, and Consumer Protection type matters) is required.
5. **Experience (or proven advocacy capacity) in Criminal Law:** with both adult and youth jurisdictions and a demonstrated knowledge of diversionary alternatives available to Police/Magistrates/Judges is essential. Your capacity to provide both high-level client services in Criminal Law proceedings (including making applications for bail; pleas in mitigation; appearing at call-overs, committal hearings and summary hearings) while ensuring exemplary case management standards is essential.
6. **Confidence in and knowledge of legislation:** an in-depth working knowledge of key legislation, practices, and procedures in Family Law (Family, Child Protection, Domestic Violence), and for Civil Law, a range of legislation e.g. *Succession Act*, with a commitment to keeping up to date on law and procedure is required.
7. **Access, teamwork, and communication:** preparedness to work after hours if necessary.

### DESIRABLE CRITERIA (3)

1. **Ability to use Microsoft Office in a Windows networked environment:** ideally in current Windows with Microsoft Word, Outlook and (either) Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome internet browser(s), and an ability to use legal databases and shared internet-based calendars is highly regarded.
2. **Mobility, access, and safety:**
  - ⊗ a **current Queensland Driver Licence** and ability to drive in all reasonable conditions may be required for the role, dependent upon the location;
  - ⊗ a willingness to undergo a **Criminal Record Check to achieve a National Police Certificate** (Australia-wide Disclosable Criminal History).

Candidates may be required to disclose misconduct (criminal convictions, prosecution investigations etc.,) that prevent an ATSILS Security clearance in relation to any conviction for fraud or other dishonesty related criminal offences. **Note:** A criminal history does not automatically preclude selection for interview, and a preliminary check can be discussed with the HR Manager after a candidate has been shortlisted for interview. Consent will be sought in writing for any checks.

3. **Minimum two (2) years post admission experience:** is ideal. Graduates with a significant comprehension of the application of relevant legislation and employment experience may be afforded an interview.

**Please apply at <http://www.atsils.org.au/job-vacancies>, writing up to 150 words for each criterion.**

## D. CORE DUTIES

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1. Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are provided with conscientious, culturally safe, ethical, and enthusiastic representation within the Family and Civil Law and Child Protection Systems.
2. Undertake specialist **Family Law casework** in various Courts including preparation and appearances in appropriate jurisdictions (including Child Protection and Domestic Violence matters); ensure procedures (such as file maintenance) are compliant with required professional standards and document these services in prescribed ways in our Database.
3. Provide expert legal advice and minor assistances in the fields of **Civil Law** (including Child Protection and Domestic Violence matters) and document these services in prescribed ways in our Database.
4. Contribute to the Family and Civil Law Sections' development through various initiatives to quality standards clarification, as might be directed.
5. Maintain a high level of knowledge and understanding of Family and Civil Law justice, human rights and anti-discrimination issues impacting upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through continuing education.
6. Undertake circuit work and/or participate in after-hours rosters (including public holidays) if required.
7. Perform other duties, including producing word-processed documents and any other duties relevant to the role as reasonably required by your supervisor(s), including Criminal Law services.

## E. TEAM, COMMUNICATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DUTIES

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1. **Undertake study or training** which might, from time to time be determined by the Executive, and contribute to the professional development of other team-members (including Field Officers) as required. You may request, after a qualifying period to specialise in an area of law relevant to the role.
2. **Take part in workplace health and safety** compliance initiatives and support other team members to do the same.
3. **Contribute to a supportive team environment**, through various workplace activities.
4. **Be prepared to work professionally in a variety of locations**, including any approved home office or secure public facility and as approved by your supervisors.
5. **Participate in annual appraisal of own work**; and attend and document regular supervision sessions with the staff to whom you report, achieving a satisfactory work performance and conduct in accordance with the ATSILS Code of Conduct.

## F. CORE COMPETENCIES

Your performance will be evaluated on a variety of facets, including:

- ability and application of your knowledge of law and procedure in the three jurisdictions as well as your commitment to improvement in this area;
- extent to which your communication is relevant, articulate, and concise (both oral and written) including developing an ability to present effectively to external stakeholders;
- degree to which your service is friendly, culturally safe, and flexible for our clients, staff and visitors;
- capacity to develop and demonstrate supportive, positive, and consistent relationships with your team members while embracing diversity;
- ability to juggle competing schedules, inside and outside the office environment reflecting strong organisational skill (including compliance to file management protocols and data reporting); and
- development in assisting clients with complex needs in a timely, calm manner demonstrating consistent contribution in a well-balanced, stress-managed working environment.

## G. ATSILS Qld CONTRACT AND LOCATION

- This position attracts a remuneration package and conditions as per the ATSILS Contract. The starting gross salary range with qualifications and experience is from \$71,000 to \$131,000 (plus superannuation and leave loading) dependent upon experience and legal qualifications, and location.
- Fixed Term Employment Contract to 30 June 2025, is funded.
- As a Public Benevolent Institution, our staff may opt to salary sacrifice a portion of their pre-tax salary up to a threshold set by legislation, reducing their taxable income in a given year.
- At ATSILS we offer structured professional development in conjunction with performance management, and study leave for approved work-related courses after a qualifying period.
- ATSILS adheres to the tenets of Equal Opportunity Employment.

**Location:** ATSILS offices where this role is offered: Beenleigh, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Charleville, Ipswich, Maroochydore, Murgon, Mackay, Mount Isa, Rockhampton, Southport, Strathpine, and Toowoomba.

### Our values at ATSILS:

- We **Care** for the human and legal rights, safety and psychological well-being of our staff, clients, and communities.
- We **Share** a common understanding of our clients' challenges and needs and strive to deliver quality and accessible legal services.
- We **Respect** the cultural diversity, values and beliefs of our clients and maintain their confidentiality in the delivery of legal services.

#### For further information please contact:

Human Resources Manager

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