

POSITION DESCRIPTION – PD020

Field Officer – Regional and Remote

Full Time or Part Time, Fixed Term

A. CONTEXT, PURPOSE OF THE ROLE AND OPPORTUNITY

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 24 offices with around 300 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 Strait Islander people.

Purpose of the role

1. Interact with clients in a manner which provides them with a knowledge and understanding of the Criminal Justice System and their rights within it;
2. Assist legal staff in providing a service that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of clients.

This role encourages a personable, enthusiastic, and organised social justice networker to provide support, information, and encouragement at a time when clients are often at their most vulnerable. The majority of our client-demand provides excellent opportunity to work on the ground within the justice system – for example, at court, visiting watch-houses and correctional facilities so as to ensure that clients' legal rights are protected.

Opportunity

You will have frequent opportunity to provide information directly to clients, and work with our staff team and external stakeholders. You can rely on the State-wide resources of the Principal Legal Officer and ATSILS' Directors of Law (Criminal, Civil and Family), outside of Brisbane with the Regional Manager, and the local legal team with whom you will work.

A corporate services team based in Brisbane provides administrative, human resources and public relations support; locally, administration support with management ensures a strong back-up is in place.

B. REPORTING STRUCTURE

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

C. SELECTION CRITERIA

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA (6)

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. **Identified position*:** be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person who both identifies and is recognised as such within the community from which he or she originates or currently resides.

ATSILS claims exemption under the *Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act*, Section 25 (Genuine Occupational Requirement) 104 (Welfare) in the identification of this role for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. (Indigenous candidates on non-Australian cultures are not eligible for interview or appointment.)
3. **Core knowledge:** demonstrated knowledge of the Criminal Justice System, e.g. diversionary alternatives available, client rights upon detention or arrest.
4. **Client service and data management:** post-court file management paperwork responsibilities mean that sound administrative and computer-literacy abilities are essential (e.g. Microsoft Office via a Windows network and use of the Internet). Demonstrated ability to professionally maintain a central diary of commitments, use keyboard skills (typing) and keep files/administrative records in order – plus strong oral and written skills are essential.
5. **Confidence in providing timely assistance to clients:** to those held in custody; to those attending court; and to those seeking information over the phone, internet or by those visiting offices. Further, a preparedness to work varying shifts of duty including after hours (and on-call).
6. **Mobility, access, and safety:**
 - 📍 a **current Queensland Driver Licence** and ability to drive in all reasonable conditions;
 - 📍 a willingness to undergo a **Criminal Record Check to achieve a National Police Certificate** (Australia-wide Disclosable Criminal History).

Entry to correctional/detention facilities and watch-houses is an essential component of discharging a Field Officer's duties. Candidates may be required to disclose conduct (criminal convictions, prosecution investigations etc.,) that may result in access to the above facilities being denied. To this end, a preferred candidate must be prepared to consent to a **Criminal History Check** being conducted (if requested).

Note: A criminal history does not automatically preclude selection for interview, and a preliminary check can be discussed with the Human Resources Manager after a candidate has been shortlisted for interview.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA (4)

1. Current First Aid Certificate, Workplace Health and Safety Representative training or Emergency Services qualifications.
2. Database entry and reporting skills highly regarded.
3. Qualifications in Legal Studies, Law, Social Sciences, Justice, Advocacy, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community Development, or current enrolment in any of these tertiary courses.
4. Experience in working in an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander-owned community organisation.

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

D. CORE DUTIES

1. **Attend Courts** as directed (including appearing before Courts upon remands etc.).
2. **Obtain detailed instructions**, both oral and written from clients for legal staff members' information.
3. **Attend correctional facilities**, Police Stations, watch-houses and other establishments as required to assist clients in ensuring their legal rights are protected.
4. **Attend to post-court file management duties** in support of legal staff to enable them to focus on delivering legal services.
5. **Participate in any circuit court, Saturday court, Public Holiday court and after-hours on-call duties as required.**
6. **Provide preliminary telephone assistance to clients** ("information" not "advice"), including ATSILS service information and referral to other agencies, in a prompt and culturally safe manner and document these services in prescribed ways in our Database.
7. **Act as a liaison between non-Indigenous staff** and clients so as to establish an atmosphere of trust and understanding in accordance with the *ATSILS Code of Conduct*.
8. **Represent (as directed) ATSILS within the community** by attending (and if required, presenting at) meetings, functions etc., in a manner consistent with ATSILS' role, objectives and relevant policy, e.g. *Code of Conduct*.
9. **Develop an approved networking system** within the local community and enhance that networking through the development of professional relationships with key personnel within the Criminal Justice System; provide feedback to management regarding local community issues.
10. **Ensure a central diary of commitments** (and associated correspondence) is maintained accurately and promptly in support of efficient and effective teamwork and operations.
11. **Be prepared to transfer to another of our offices** (on either a temporary or long-term basis) if required. Such is done in consultation with the staff member.
12. **Assume other duties** which might be reasonably determined by management.

E. TEAM, COMMUNICATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DUTIES

1. **Undertake study or training** which might be determined by the CEO and contribute to the professional development of other team-members as required.
2. **Take part in workplace health and safety** compliance; support other team members to do the same and ensure compliance to outreach and community safety procedures.
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 as a Field Officer will be evaluated on many facets, including:

- ✿ Ability to communicate effectively in a culturally safe manner with clients and their families, providing clear information and education consistent with ATSILS' charter;
- ✿ Data and file management, and office paperwork is organised, reported in a timely manner, complete, and accessible (including compliance to file management protocols and data reporting);
- ✿ Quality of instructions in writing is precise;
- ✿ Development of supportive, positive, and consistent relationships with your team members, embracing diversity and suggesting viable improvements;
- ✿ Ability to reliably juggle competing schedules, inside and outside the office environment reflecting your strong organisational skill, initiative, reliability, resilience, and flexibility;
- ✿ Development of an ability to handle yourself calmly in difficult situations, building trust and confidence within the work network.

G. ATSILS Qld CONTRACT AND LOCATION

- ✿ This position falls under the umbrella of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award with a remuneration package and conditions as per the ATSILS Contract. The starting gross salary range with qualifications and experience is from \$71,000 (plus superannuation and leave loading) dependent upon experience and legal qualifications, and location.
- ✿ This role is currently funded to 30 June 2025.
- ✿ 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: Cunnamulla, Goondiwindi, Palm Island, Roma, and St George (Queensland).

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:

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