

Position Title	Solicitor (Human Rights Advocacy Practice)
Location	Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion Level 2, 43 Peel Street, South Brisbane, Meanjin Qld 4101
Industrial Instrument	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 201
Classification	Level 5
Full time / part time	Full Time / Part time
Position Reports to	Principal Solicitor, Human Rights Advocacy Practice

Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion Values

The appointee to this position will have a commitment to Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI) to promote and implement the values and philosophies of the organisation when conducting activities and actions related to their position.

Organisational

QAI is an independent, community-based advocacy organisation for people with disability. QAI's purpose is to advocate for the protection and advancement of the needs, rights and lives of people with disability in Queensland. The organisation does this by engaging in systemic advocacy through campaigns directed at attitudinal, law and policy change, and by supporting the development of a range of advocacy initiatives in this State.

As QAI is a social advocacy organisation, it works to uphold the principles of fundamental human rights, social justice and inclusion in community life by:

- taking positive, ethical action
- being on the side of people with disability
- being understanding of their position and vulnerability
- being independent with minimised conflicts of interest
- focussing on fundamental needs, welfare and interests
- doing advocacy with vigour and a sense of urgency
- remaining loyal and accountable over time.

People involved with QAI therefore believe that people with disability:

- are as valuable as any other human beings, regardless of what they can or cannot do
- need to live well and have the same opportunities in life as other people

- are part of the relationships and connections of ordinary life and can participate and contribute to the rich and diverse fabric of our communities
- should not be segregated, congregated, or isolated on the basis of disability.

Role Description

Under the supervision and direction of the Principal Solicitor and other Senior QAI Staff as required, the Solicitor will provide referrals, legal advice, casework and representation within the scope of QAI's Human Rights Advocacy Practice. The Solicitor's role will include representation before the Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) and Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and advice to clients on mental health, guardianship, administration, human rights law and discrimination matters. The Solicitor will contribute to the systemic advocacy work and community legal education of QAI within the Human Rights Advocacy Practice.

Key Position Responsibilities and Accountabilities

- Provide legal advice to clients of QAI's Human Rights Advocacy Practice (HRAP) for matters arising under the *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld), the *Forensic Disability Act 2011* (Qld), the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld), *Disability Services Act 2006* (Qld), the *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000* (Qld), the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld), the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) and related legislation and policies, via face to face, phone or video appointments.
- Perform legal representation on behalf of HRAP clients with matters before the MHRT, either in person or via video link as required and in accordance with the MHRT practice directions.
- Perform legal representation on behalf of HRAP clients with matters before QCAT, as well as the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) and the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and other courts and tribunals as required.
- Provide information and referrals to other legal, welfare and community services, including the provision of community legal education events and material.
- Perform various tasks including maintaining client databases (CLASS), QAI's electronic filing systems, Microsoft 365 and its integrated apps and perform work including drafting legal correspondence, advice letters and preparing legal documents.
- Identify issues requiring systemic reform (including law reform) in relation to the rights of people with disability, in collaboration with systems advocates.
- Conduct strategic test cases as directed from a human-rights perspective to achieve or promote systemic reform of laws and services impacting on people with disability.
- Keep informed of current government and community attitudes and policies and their effects on the lives of people with disability.
- Assist with the preparation of submissions, brochures, discussion papers, reports, self-help

kits, newsletter contributions and other publications within the expertise and responsibilities of the position.

General

- Work under the general supervision of the Principal Solicitor and to collaborate with other individual advocate staff members of QAI.
- Comply with the code of conduct and ethics and confidentiality requirements of QAI and with the National Disability Service Standards.
- Demonstrate commitment to QAI's values and beliefs and the principles and elements of social advocacy.
- Participate in staff meetings, planning workshops and other meetings in connection with the operation of client services and QAI.
- Ensure that client files and records are kept and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Qld), the National Association of Community Legal Centre's Risk Management Guide and QAI's policies and procedures, including appropriately utilising a client management system and Microsoft 365.
- Carry out any additional duties within the scope of the position as directed by the Principal Solicitor.

Requirements of the Position

Values, skills, knowledge

- exceptional listening and communication skills – particularly the ability to ask the questions that will both encourage and support individuals and assist with planning strategic advocacy
- excellent written and oral communication skills to a wide variety of audiences, including to people with mental illness, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment
- well-developed organisational and time management skills, including the ability to plan, implement and evaluate strategic pieces of work
- well-developed legal casework, advocacy and negotiation skills
- excellent written skills, including ability to convey information in simple, plain English
- ability to plan, implement and evaluate strategic pieces of work.

Relationships

- ability to work independently or collaboratively as part of a team to achieve positive outcomes
- ability to work with supervision and within organisational policy
- collaboration with external stakeholders
- ability to exercise initiative and judgment within the sphere of work to plan, coordinate,

implement and evaluate work in a strategic way

- driven by integrity, responsibility, accountability, attention to detail and pride in work.

Essential

- strong commitment to human rights, social justice and diversity
- experienced, unrestricted lawyer with at least two years' experience in legal practice in Queensland, or extensive management experience
- experience in Criminal Law or Mental Health Law and/or other relevant practice area with demonstrated experience in the disability, mental health or social services sectors, delivering advice and representation to vulnerable individuals
- highly developed interpersonal skills, specifically the ability to converse with people at grass roots, as well as those in positions of authority to affect change in the lives of people with disability
- criminal history screening clearance.

Desirable

- lived experience of disability
- previous experience at a Community Legal Centre and/or with the Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS), would be advantageous.