

Role Description

Legal Officer



Planning,
Industry &
Environment

Cluster	Planning, Industry & Environment
Agency	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Division/Branch/Unit	Governance & Legal
Location	Sydney
Classification/Grade/Band	Planning Officer (Professional) 1B
Role Number	Generic
ANZSCO Code	271299
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	July 2020
Agency Website	www.dpie.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

Our vision is to create thriving environments, communities and economies for the people of New South Wales. We focus on some of the biggest issues facing our state. We deliver sustainable water resource and environment management, secure our energy supply, oversee our planning system, maximise community benefit from government land and property, and create the conditions for a prosperous state. We strive to be a high-performing, world-class public service organisation that celebrates and reflects the full diversity of the community we serve and seeks to embed Aboriginal cultural awareness and knowledge throughout the department.

Primary purpose of the role

The Legal Officer works as a member of a team providing legal services and advice in areas including environment, energy, local government, native title, planning, biodiversity, water, land management, housing, development assessment, provision of infrastructure, property, transactions, environmental protection and compliance to assist in the conduct of efficient and effective legal services to meet the Department's corporate goals. The legal team works across the cluster supporting robust decision making, policy development and implementation, as well as operational functions.

Key accountabilities

- Provide assistance, under supervision, in the delivery of client focused legal services to staff of the Department to meet priority legal service needs.
- Undertake legal research, provide clear legal analysis and draft accurate, timely and consistent legal advice in the areas of administrative, environment, planning, commercial and/or property law to support decision making and assist with the effective resolution of identified legal issues arising from the operation of the planning system.
- Draft and review statutory instruments, agreements, briefing notes, delegations and orders to enable the Department effectively carry out its functions.

- Complete assigned legal tasks associated with legislative reform projects, to enable delivery of legislative projects in line with Government objectives and timeframes.
- Assist in the conduct of information, training and briefing sessions and develop training materials for clients and staff to contribute to the work of the Department.

Key challenges

- Providing advisory and legislative services to assist in the management of legal risks and achieve outcomes for a diverse range of complex and sensitive projects that meet the Department's statutory and legal obligations.
- Managing a workload in an environment of competing priorities and interests, challenging demands and tight timeframes to respond to priority matters.
- Maintaining up to date legal knowledge to provide legal advice and convey legal concepts and information accurately and clearly in plain English.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Director Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive instructions, guidance and feedback for assigned work
Legal Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive instructions, guidance and feedback • Provide legal services support and advice on work program issues • Inform of and refer all major, complex, contentious or emerging issues • Provide regular updates on status of legal matters and priorities • Assist with team and Division work program planning
Senior Executives and business units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain effective working relationships • Liaise with to ensure broad understanding of legal aspects and issues impacting the planning system and current planning initiatives • Liaise with to inform of status of legal matters, share expertise and information and provide advice • Liaise to obtain responses to questions and requests for advice • Assist with training and briefing sessions and training support material
Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share knowledge, expertise and information • Contribute to achievement of team work outcomes • Collaborate to implement ideas and innovative approaches • Attend team meetings and contribute to development of effective team systems and procedures
External	
Parliamentary Counsel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with to assist in preparing of instructions for drafting legislation and environmental planning instruments
State and Local Government agencies, external stakeholders, legal representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop effective working relationships • Assist in client engagement activities and legislative process consultations • Provide advice regarding legal practice and procedural issues

Role dimensions

Decision making

The Legal Officer:

- receives advice and guidance from and provides legal assistance to clients as requested by the Legal Manager or the Director
- prioritises and completes work under the supervision of the Legal Manager
- is required to complete all legal work within the required timeframes, legislative framework, and in accordance with any applicable Departmental policies and legal professional standards
- may be required to work closely with and receive guidance from Principal Legal Officers to support specific projects

Reporting line

The Legal Officer reports to the relevant legal team Manager.

The Legal Officer works within a team of Principal Legal Officers and Senior Legal Officers.

Direct reports

Nil

Budget/Expenditure

Nil

Key knowledge and experience

Experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Administrative law;
- Environmental law;
- Planning law;
- Energy law;
- Commercial law;
- Property law;
- Natural Resources law and/or
- experience in policy making and legislative process.

Essential requirements

Admitted or qualified for admission as a Solicitor or Barrister in the Supreme Court of NSW and hold, or be eligible to hold, a NSW Practising Certificate.

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities



Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

FOCUS CAPABILITIES

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way • Support a culture of integrity and professionalism • Understand and help others to recognise their obligations to comply with legislation, policies, guidelines and codes of conduct • Recognise and report misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour • Report and manage apparent conflicts of interest and encourage others to do so 	Intermediate
	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor communication to diverse audiences • Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups • Create opportunities for others to be heard, listen attentively and encourage them to express their views • Share information across teams and units to enable informed decision making • Write fluently in plain English and in a range of styles and formats • Use contemporary communication channels to share information, engage and interact with diverse audiences 	Adept
	Commit to Customer Service Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the importance of customer service and understanding customer needs • Help customers understand the services that are available • Take responsibility for delivering services that meet customer requirements • Keep customers informed of progress and seek feedback to ensure their needs are met • Show respect, courtesy and fairness when interacting with customers • Recognise that customer service involves both external and internal customers 	Foundational
	Influence and Negotiate Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use facts, knowledge and experience to support recommendations • Work towards positive and mutually satisfactory outcomes • Identify and resolve issues in discussion with other staff and stakeholders • Identify others' concerns and expectations • Respond constructively to conflict and disagreements and be open to compromise • Keep discussions focused on the key issues 	Intermediate

FOCUS CAPABILITIES





Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
	Deliver Results Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek and apply specialist advice when required • Complete work tasks within set budgets, timeframes and standards • Take the initiative to progress and deliver own work and that of the team or unit • Contribute to allocating responsibilities and resources to ensure the team or unit achieves goals • Identify any barriers to achieving results and resolve these where possible • Proactively change or adjust plans when needed 	Intermediate
	Think and Solve Problems Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the facts and type of data needed to understand a problem or explore an opportunity • Research and analyse information to make recommendations based on relevant evidence • Identify issues that may hinder the completion of tasks and find appropriate solutions • Be willing to seek input from others and share own ideas to achieve best outcomes • Generate ideas and identify ways to improve systems and processes to meet user needs 	Intermediate
	Project Management Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand project goals, steps to be undertaken and expected outcomes • Plan and deliver tasks in line with agreed project milestones and timeframes • Check progress against agreed milestones and timeframes, and seek help to overcome barriers • Participate in planning and provide feedback on progress and potential improvements to project processes 	Foundational

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

COMPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	Intermediate
	Manage Self	Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning	Adept
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Intermediate
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Foundational
	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Foundational
	Technology	Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Foundational