

Role Description

Legal Officer

Cluster	Planning & Environment
Agency	Department of Planning and Environment
Division/Branch/Unit	General Counsel / Legal Services
Location	Bridge Street, Sydney
Classification/Grade/Band	Planning Officer (Professional) 1B
Role Number	Generic
ANZSCO Code	271299
PCAT Code	1118192
Date of Approval	April 2018
Agency Website	www.planning.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

The Department of Planning & Environment is the lead NSW Government agency in planning for a growing NSW. The Department is going through an exciting period of organisational and operational change.

The Department's vision – Planning for growing NSW: inspiring strong communities, protecting our environment – provides the benchmark for our partnership and leadership approach to engaging and working collaboratively with key State and Local Government, community and industry stakeholders to deliver better outcomes in the areas of planning, local government and the environment.

The Department is the lead agency for the Planning and Environment cluster, which includes the Office of Environment & Heritage, the Office of Local Government, Resources, Energy and the Arts and several other entities associated with the Department including the Environment Protection Authority, statutory trusts responsible for zoos, parks and gardens, independent assessment and planning bodies, and development corporations.

Website: www.planning.nsw.gov.au

Primary purpose of the role

The Legal Officer works as a member of a team providing legal services and advice in the areas of land use planning, development assessment, building regulation, provision of infrastructure, environmental protection and compliance to assist in the conduct of efficient and effective legal services to meet the Department's corporate goals.

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 and planning 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 environmental planning and other 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, including assistance to prepare and review Cabinet Minutes, second reading speeches and briefings, preparation of draft instructions for Parliamentary Counsel regarding the draft of legislation, and provision of advice regarding reform options 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.
- Complete other duties under direction.

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 Branch 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

Who	Why
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, proponents, 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 Legal Services
- 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.

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.

Experience in planning and administrative law including knowledge of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act.





Capabilities for the role

The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at www.psc.nsw.gov.au/capabilityframework

Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities listed in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Intermediate
	Act with Integrity	Intermediate
	Manage Self	Adept
	Value Diversity	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Adept
	Commit to Customer Service	Foundational
	Work Collaboratively	Intermediate
	Influence and Negotiate	Intermediate
 Results	Deliver Results	Intermediate
	Plan and Prioritise	Foundational
	Think and Solve Problems	Intermediate
	Demonstrate Accountability	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Finance	Foundational
	Technology	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Foundational
	Project Management	Foundational

Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Personal Attributes Act with Integrity	Intermediate	<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 follow legislation, rules, policies, guidelines and codes of conduct Help others to understand their obligations to comply with legislation, rules, policies, guidelines and codes of conduct Recognise and report misconduct, illegal or inappropriate behaviour Report and manage apparent conflicts of interest
Relationships Communicate Effectively	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailor communication to the audience Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary Create opportunities for others to be heard

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Relationships Commit to Customer Service	Foundational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listen to others and clarify own understanding Write fluently in a range of styles and formats
Relationships Influence and Negotiate	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the importance of customer service Help customers understand the services that are available Take responsibility for delivering services which 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
Results Deliver Results	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise 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 Keep discussion focused on the key issues
Results Think and Solve Problems	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete work tasks to agreed budgets, timeframes and standards Take the initiative to progress and deliver own and team/unit work Contribute to allocation of responsibilities and resources to ensure achievement of team/unit goals Seek and apply specialist advice when required
Business Enablers Project Management	Foundational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and deliver tasks in line with agreed schedules Check progress against schedules, and seek help to overcome barriers Participate in planning and provide feedback about improvements to schedules