

Position Description



Position: General Counsel
Classification Code: SAES1
Division: Strategy and Partnerships

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Summary of Role:

The General Counsel is a senior leader who works closely with and provides expert legal and strategic advice to the Board, CEO and Executive Team. The role ensures that organisational decisions are legally sound, risk-informed, and aligned with Legal Services' statutory purpose and values. It also provides strategic legal guidance on policy, practice, and emerging trends to support informed decision-making, mitigate risk, and enable the effective and efficient delivery of services.

The General Counsel will be responsible for leading, managing and supervising a high performing team of subject matter experts on the delivery of legal, policy, compliance, governance and risk management for Legal Services.

The General Counsel will also oversee Legal Services complaints and internal appeals functions as well as well as our insurance program.

The General Counsel will possess a strong commitment to strategic values and objectives of Legal Services and will represent Legal Services. on legal matters relevant to its functions as required.

Reports to:

Director, Strategy and Partnerships

Direct Reports:

Legal, Policy, Compliance, Complaints and FOI Officer
Risk and Governance Officer
Other team members, as recruited

Working Relationships:

Legal Services' Board
Executive Leadership Team
Managers, Team Leaders and employees of Legal Services
Relevant State and Commonwealth Government departments including Crown Solicitor's Office
The legal aid sector across Australia

Special Conditions:

The employee:

- may be required to undertake some out of hours work.
- may be required to undertake some intra/interstate travel.
- may be required to work at any Legal Services office as required.
- will undergo periodic National Police Clearances and DHS Working with Children Checks.
- is required to comply with the standards outlined in the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector, relevant legislation, and Legal Services policies and procedures.
- is required to maintain strict confidentiality in accordance with Section 31A of the *Legal Services Commission Act 1977*.
- is required to participate in performance reviews and development programs.
- is required to attend mandatory in-house training and Mandatory Continuing Professional Development.

Key Responsibilities and Duties:

The General Counsel Position Description is not exhaustive and describes the type and nature of duties that may be required. The General Counsel may be required to perform any duties commensurate with their classification level, skills, experience and qualifications.

The General Counsel is responsible for:

Key Responsibilities	Duties	Key Performance Indicator
<p>Legal and Strategic Advice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide risk based, practical and timely advice to the Executive Leadership Team and Board on complex legal, compliance and regulatory issues including procurement, contracts, human resources, privacy and data protection matters, and represent Legal Services in any negotiations, as required • Monitor and respond to changes in the legislative, policy and regulatory environment, advising on implications for Legal Services operations and ensuring that legal frameworks remain contemporary, integrated and aligned with government priorities • Provide legal input regarding public statements, media responses, and external communications • Provide advice on administrative law issues, statutory interpretation, procedural fairness, and decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of high level and expert advice • Quality and timely advice is provided to a high standard • Frank, expert and honest advice is provided notwithstanding any strong contrary views
<p>Strategic Policy and Legislative Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the research, analysis and interpretation of complex legal policy and regulatory matters to produce high quality submissions, reports and recommendations that strengthen governance, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic initiatives are implemented to a high standard

	<p>inform decision making and drive organisational improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret and provide guidance on Legal Services enabling legislation, the <i>Legal Services Commission Act 1977</i> including proposing amendments to align with contemporary practices 	
Leadership and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead, manage and supervise members of the team to foster initiative, promote teamwork, achieve outcomes and meet deadlines • Develop and facilitate implementation of strategies that enable Legal Services to achieve its strategic goals and core business outcomes, to be a model legal aid service and develop partnerships to create better solutions • Actively promote Legal Services and its services among relevant professional networks to reinforce its reputation as a leading and highly respected legal assistance provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Services' objectives in relation to quality, cost and timeliness of work are achieved
Complaints, FOI and Litigation Management	<p>Responsible for the oversight and management of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Services complaints function, FOI requests and grants appeals process • Any legal disputes including acting as the primary liaison with the Crown Solicitor's Office or other lawyers, where required, and ensuring the effective coordination and delivery of high-quality services • Analysing the need for and establishing a debt and costs recovery program for Legal Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of services and responses in accordance with legislative and policy timeframes. • Debt and costs recovery policy is developed
Ethical and Professional Conduct Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direction and guidance to Legal Services on questions of law, practice and procedure, ethical questions and service standards • Serve as Legal Services internal ethics advisor on matters involving conflicts of interest and professional conduct • Advise on the application of legal professional privilege and confidentiality obligations in an organisational context • Support investigations into breaches of conduct standards • Develop legal resources and training materials regarding legal professional obligations for Legal Services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of services and responses in accordance with legislative and policy timeframes • Delivery of training for legal professional obligations

<p>Legal Risk Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, assess and manage legal and reputational risks across Legal Services and develop mitigation strategies • Prepare legal briefing and risk reports for the Executive Leadership Team, Board and other key stakeholders on legal risk, significant incidents and steps being taken to respond, ensuring accountability and informed oversight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring and reporting on the enterprise risk register • High quality briefs and reporting is provided
<p>Corporate Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and oversee enterprise governance frameworks, ensuring compliance with alignment with contemporary governance and risk management principles • Oversee the development, implementation and maintenance of compliance programs • Support the Board processes including review of papers for legal risks and tracking governance actions to implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring and reporting on the enterprise risk register • High quality briefs and reporting is provided
<p>Insurance Program Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for Legal Services insurance program including claims reporting and management and providing advice on risk transfer strategies and appropriate insurance coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the insurance program
<p>Stakeholder Relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with a diverse range of major external stakeholders to influence outcomes, including with relevant State and Commonwealth government agencies, the Crown Solicitor's Office, South Australian Law Society and Bar Association • Maintain productive working relationships with Legal Aid agencies nationally • Represent Legal Services on relevant Committees and working parties, both nationally and within the SA public sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective engagement and reporting on key stakeholder activity
<p>Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an active commitment to and modelling of a work culture aligned with Legal Services' values • Pro-actively safeguard the health, wellbeing and resilience of staff by ensuring safe work practices are undertaken by self and others in the workplace by adopting appropriate management practices to manage legislative requirements of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> • Embrace and contribute towards diversity and cultural differences in the workplace by advocating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead active participation and contribution in responsible, diverse and safe work practices • Pro-active measures are undertaken to adhere to and prevent injuries.

	<p>equal employment opportunities and diversity in the workplace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and maintain a commitment to an inclusive workplace in support of First Nations people and other underrepresented groups. • Work within the legislative requirements of the <i>Legal Services Commission Act 1977, Fair Work Act 1994, Work Health and Safety Act 2012, Equal Opportunity Act 1984, Return to Work Act 2014 (SA), Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 (SA), Public Finance and Audit Act 1987</i> and other relevant Acts and Regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abides by the Acts, Regulations, Policies and Procedures. • Individual differences are encouraged and accommodated in the workplace
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

Educational/Vocational Qualifications:

- Be an admitted practitioner of the Supreme Court of South Australia or currently eligible for admission to practice in South Australia.

Personal Abilities/Aptitudes/Skills:

- Demonstrated ability to lead high-performing teams and foster professional culture
- Strong people development and change leadership capability
- Demonstrated ability to assess complex legal and regulatory environments
- Strong risk-based judgement and problem solving
- High-level communication, negotiation and relationship management skills to positively engage with key stakeholders
- Ability to manage high workloads, competing priorities and sensitive matters
- High ethical standards, confidentiality and sound judgement
- Commitment to access to justice and service to vulnerable communities

Experience:

- Have a minimum of eleven years post-admission experience in a relevant legal field.
- Demonstrated experience in:
 - managing a multidisciplinary team
 - leading teams effectively through processes of setting direction, motivation, delegation and monitoring performance
 - leading teams through change and continuous improvement including transformation projects or reform initiatives
 - advising senior leadership (and ideally boards/committees) on governance, legal risk and compliance issues in a complex service delivery environment
 - leading and successfully delivering legal services.

Knowledge:

The appointee must have:

- knowledge of the Professional Conduct Rules issued by the Law Society of South Australia
- knowledge of the principles of leadership and management
- familiarity with performance measures/indicators
- an understanding of Workplace Health and Safety and Equal Opportunity principles

Position Description Approval

Approved by:

Signed by:
Annamarie Lumsden
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Delegate

27 March 2026

Date