

POSITION TITLE:	Solicitor or Senior Solicitor
POSITION LOCATION:	Warrnambool
CLASSIFICATION:	Level 5, 6 or 7 of the <i>Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Award</i> based on Employee's experience.
REPORTS TO:	Principal Solicitor
DIRECT REPORTS:	None
TEAM:	Legal Services Team – 6 people
EMPLOYMENT:	Full-time (Part-time or flexible work hours considered for the right applicant)

OUR ORGANISATION

Emma House Domestic Violence Services Incorporated (EHDVSI) was established in 1979 and provides support and assistance to women and children who are experiencing, or who have experienced family violence. It is the primary specialist family violence service for South West Victoria. Our range of services can include crisis response, legal advice and representation, accommodation and/or outreach services, all of which are high quality and contemporary best practice models of service delivery.

EHDVSI is a feminist organisation, and our aim is to provide an empowering, respectful and culturally sensitive service committed to best practice. The EHDVSI hope is for a society where women and children live free from family, domestic or intimate partner violence in all its forms, and we work towards this each day.

Emma House and The SAFV Centre have recently entered into a partnership for the joining of the two organisations through a proposed merger. The merger is pending government approval to take place during 2023. The SAFV Centre is providing leadership support to Emma House in the interim.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Solicitor will work as part of a team to provide professional legal advice and casework services to women experiencing domestic/family violence.

Reporting to the Principal Solicitor, you will be responsible for providing legal advice and preparation of cases primarily in the Family Court and including as part of rotating team acting as a duty solicitor at each Intervention Order sitting day at the Warrnambool, Portland and Hamilton Magistrates Courts.

In addition, if appointed to a more senior role, you will be responsible for coaching and mentoring other legal staff and supporting the Principal Solicitor to identify service improvements and manage more complex case work and advocacy matters.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Personal and Professional

- Deliver quality legal services, including legal information, advice and casework by appointment, phone or teleconference and via outreach visiting services, in family law, child protection, sexual assault, immigration (FV Provision) and family violence intervention order matters.
- Participate in the provision of duty lawyer services at each Intervention Order sitting day at the Warrnambool, Portland and Hamilton Magistrates Courts, if needed.
- Work collaboratively with Emma House colleagues to provide legal services within an integrated practice model so as to deliver effective trauma-informed early intervention.
- Participate in professional supervision and reflective practice.
- Participate in the annual performance management processes.
- Willingness and commitment to attend training and educational opportunities as identified in the annual individual professional development plan as negotiated with the Chief Executive Officer or Principal Solicitor.

Administration, Documentation and Reporting

- Maintain appropriate documentation and records within a compliance framework including digitally recording client information in accordance with agency and funding body requirements.
- Maintain contemporaneous case notes.

Technical Skills and Knowledge

- Assist in the development, implementation, and ongoing monitoring of an integrated practice model for legal services and crisis support services within Emma House so as to deliver effective early intervention and a trauma-informed approach to the delivery of legal assistance and advice.
- Assist the Principal Solicitor in the provision of legal education programs to professionals and members of the community that encourage greater awareness of legal rights and responsibilities as well as access to the legal system.
- Keep up to date with relevant legal developments and procedures by attending professional legal education program and maintaining an understanding of issues impacting the justice system.
- Able to multitask and prioritize workload.

Communication and Teamwork

- Commitment to effective communication and information sharing with colleagues, Executive Officer, Managers and the EHDVSI Board.
- Willingness to represent the organisation professionally and promote services appropriately.
- Ability to work in a well-organised manner, both independently and with team members and to contribute to a harmonious and team-based working environment.
- Understanding of the principles of effective decision-making and dispute resolution processes.
- Commitment to constructive networking with other agencies, businesses and services.

Continuous Quality Improvement

- Participate in the organisation's CQI processes.
- Participate in the quality improvement practices and outcomes in accordance with the relevant industry standards.
- To participate in the Accreditation process and continuous improvement plan.

- Contribute to monitoring of service provision to ensure outcomes are in line with internal and external standards, service philosophy and goals.
- Participation in the development and review of organisational policies, procedures and work instructions as appropriate.
- Encourage service users to offer input and feedback about the service via the various channels available.

Workplace Health and Safety

- Participate in OH&S initiatives and actively take steps to ensure own health and safety and the health and safety of others in the workplace.
- Active participation in the monitoring of occupational health and safety practices within the workplace, and the addressing of any concerns via the appropriate channels, in a timely manner.

Additional Duties

- Work within the required financial parameters of the service.
- Undertake additional duties as directed and / or negotiated with the Principal Solicitor.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential qualifications, skills and experience

1. Exceptional communication skills including demonstrated ability to communicate empathically and effectively with clients who are socially and economically disadvantaged.
2. Demonstrated commitment to continuing professional development.
3. Proven ability to manage time effectively to manage a complex case load within limited time constraints.
4. Must be admitted to practice as lawyer and be entered or eligible to be entered on the High Court's Register of Practitioners and have an entitlement to practice in federal courts and courts exercising federal jurisdiction.
5. Ability to obtain satisfactory Police Records check and Working with Children Check showing to the satisfaction of Emma House that there are no barriers to employment.
6. Current Victorian Drivers Licence

And, if wishing to be considered for more senior roles:

7. At least three years post admission experience operating in the family law and family violence jurisdiction and/or substantial experience undertaking advice, advocacy and preparing cases in civil matters.

Desirable qualifications, skills and experience

1. At least two years post admission experience operating within the civil courts.
2. A demonstrated commitment to working collaboratively with others towards a trauma informed integrated legal practice.

3. Demonstrated ability to identify appropriate law reform and policy issues and contribute to positive policy and law reform affecting our target client group.
4. Demonstrated competency and knowledge of relevant court procedures and practical experience in the preparation of cases with a focus on the family law and family violence jurisdiction.
5. Demonstrated experience in taking a client focused approach that facilitates empowerment and independence for women, and safety and security for service users and their children.

And, in addition if applying for more senior roles:

1. At least four years post admission experience with an ability to independently manage a high case load.
2. Prior experience in successfully developing and mentoring more junior legal staff and contribute to a strong team culture.

Child Related Precautions

EHDVSI has an obligation to offer a safe environment for children and is required to ensure all employees are appropriately screened before working with children. Screening occurs via the mandatory Working with Children Check Act (2005), whereby all employees must have received a satisfactory assessment before employment can be confirmed, a satisfactory police record check, the interview process, whereby an applicant's personal and professional interest in working with children may be explored, and the referee check process, whereby information will be sought regarding an applicant's history regarding working with children

Other

This position description may be changed at EHDVSI's discretion.

EHDVSI acknowledges **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** as the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate. We commit to working respectfully to honour their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the country.

EHDVSI actively values and **promotes diversity and is committed to being inclusive and respectful to all**. We welcome application from women and people who identify as women who are Aboriginal, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women of all abilities.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

We offer our staff:

- A supportive team environment, working alongside other highly talented professionals and support staff who strive for human rights and excellence in service delivery.
- A strong commitment to your professional development, personal development and mental health.
- A flexible working environment.
- Salary packaging (which can add up to \$15,900 in tax-free pay per year).
- Competitive salary.
- Salary package and conditions are in accordance with the contract of employment.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Emma House has an Equal Opportunity Exemption (H12/2022) and requests applications from those who identify as female only.

Applicants should express their interest through a short cover letter attaching their resume and include a document addressing each of the essential and desirable criteria. We understand that you may not meet all of the desirable criteria – just be transparent about the skills and experiences you do have as we are interested in hearing from professionals at all stages of their career. Email your application to our recruitment consultants via gavan@cooperhardiman.com.au.

AUTHORISED BY:

NAME: Sue Finucane
POSITION: Acting CEO
DATE: February 2023