

# VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

## Paralegal Volunteer

### A. Overview of organisation

Refugee Legal is an independent community legal centre specialising in refugee and immigration law, policy and practice. Refugee Legal has been assisting asylum seekers, refugees and disadvantaged migrants in the community and in detention for over 33 years and has substantial casework experience and expertise. Refugee Legal's work involves provision of key legal assistance to those who could not otherwise obtain it due to financial and other forms of distinct disadvantage often related to their cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds or experiences of torture or trauma.

### B. Duties and Responsibilities

Refugee Legal's paralegal volunteers come from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. Paralegal volunteers provide assistance to Refugee Legal staff and Lawyer/Migration Agent volunteers. The paralegal volunteer's responsibilities are to work under supervision to:

- Conduct detailed research to provide specific country information as requested, both at Refugee Legal and offsite;
- Attend night service to manage the intake of clients, complete paperwork, photocopying and ensure security of the reception areas;
- Assist staff in general administrative duties;
- Send correspondence to organisations and clients;
- Fill in forms related to visa applications to be submitted to the Department of Home Affairs;
- Meet in person with clients and interpreters to confirm application details;
- Migrate and manage data between application forms;
- Read through existing client files and identify information that may be relevant to the application forms;
- Read previous statements to clients and collect any further information
- File, photocopy and update relevant spreadsheets and databases;
- Keep detailed and accurate file notes and records of interactions

### C. Selection Criteria

Essential attributes

1. A strong interest in social justice and human rights, particularly refugee and asylum seeker rights;
2. Very strong research and analytical skills;
3. An ability to write clearly, express complex ideas succinctly and reference using AGLC;

4. Capacity to pay close attention to detail while working in a fast-paced environment and juggling multiple tasks;
5. An ability to follow instructions meticulously and complete tasks to deadlines;
6. A basic understanding of administration and administrative processes including word processing, organisational skills, basic computer skills, a good phone manner and familiarity with data collection;
7. A sensitivity to clients from a variety of backgrounds and a willingness to communicate openly with them and welcome them to Refugee Legal;
8. A flexible attitude and willingness to take on new tasks when requested.

#### **D. Accountabilities**

1. Complete assigned tasks efficiently and autonomously and ensure there is an accurate record of all activities undertaken.
2. Attend night service, day service, clinics or other Refugee Legal services if rostered on to do so.
3. Communicate availability to the volunteer coordinator in a timely manner.
4. Prior to acceptance as a Paralegal volunteer, all applicants must attend an information session and any further training required for position specialisation (Night Service, on site work or Clinics).
5. Accept and respond to feedback about performance in the role.
6. Refugee Legal volunteers are subject to relevant Refugee Legal policies including volunteer policies, equal opportunity, internal complaints, Occupational Health and Safety and accident and incident management.
7. Refugee Legal volunteers are required to maintain confidentiality of client information and all other information relevant to Refugee Legal volunteering as per Confidentiality Agreement.
8. Refugee Legal volunteers are required to declare any perceived or actual conflict of interest related to current, or past employment or volunteer role. This includes any conflict that might arise during the course of volunteering. This will be reviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator in conjunction with a senior manager and decision will be made based on individual cases.
9. All volunteers are required to pass a professional reference check.
10. A minimum fortnightly, 1 year commitment to your role with Refugee Legal where volunteering at night service. A minimum weekly, 1 year commitment is required for all day service positions.

All administrative volunteers are required to attend an information session at Refugee Legal offices, pass a professional reference check and where requested, undertake a police check.

Date Reviewed: 23/12/2021 | Date of next Review: 23/06/2022

Signed

Date