

position description



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Position:	Graduate Lawyer/ Lawyer/ Senior Lawyer
Children's Worker	No
Location:	National Office
Business Unit:	Legal Services
Group:	Corporate Solutions
Reporting to:	Team Manager as appropriate
Issue Date:	April 2019
Delegated Authority:	Nil
Staff Responsibility:	Nil

Our Role

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is the lead agency for the social sector. We help the Government to set priorities across the sector, co-ordinate the actions of other social sector agencies and track changes in the social wellbeing of New Zealanders.

The Ministry provides policy advice, and delivers social services and assistance to young people, working age people, older people, and families, whānau and communities. We work directly with New Zealanders of all ages to improve their social wellbeing.

We serve over a million people, working out of more than 160 centres around the country. It is likely that every New Zealander will come into contact with the Ministry at some point in their life.

Our work, together with our social sector partners, is essential to achieving a sustainable and prosperous future, where all New Zealanders are able to take responsibility for themselves, be successful in their lives and participate in their communities.

Our Purpose

We help New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent.
Manaaki Tangata, Manaaki Whānau.

Our Principles

MSD people: All own what we all do | Take responsibility for what we do | Understand our role in the big picture, who can help us and who we can help | Navigate through ambiguity and the opportunity it brings to create better ways of doing things | Act with integrity, courage and transparency | Celebrate our achievements and those of our clients.

Position Description Approved By:

Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Solutions

Date:/...../.....

Group:

The Corporate Solutions group consists of functions in the areas of human resources, finance, information technology, property and facilities, health, safety and security, legal advice, information security, privacy, risk management and assurance. The group also accredits social service providers, helps resolve historical claims and provides business coaching to government agencies.

The group provides advice and services to MSD, Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency.

Business Unit:

Expert legal advice is critical to the Ministry achieving the outcomes it seeks. Legal Services provides professional legal advice and advocacy services to all areas of the Ministry. We advise frontline and National Office staff on a diverse range of matters including welfare, human rights, privacy, media, contracts, and employment law. We conduct proceedings in the District and Employment Courts and represent the Ministry before the Social Security Appeal Authority and other Tribunals. Legal Services offers a broad range of professional opportunities for staff.

Purpose of the Position:

To deliver legal services to the Ministry. The role provides legal advice, legislation and advocacy services on the range of operational and corporate issues facing the Ministry. The role will also help the Ministry identify legal risk and put in place strategies to manage that risk and identifying legal issues of importance to the Ministry.

Working Relationships**Internal:**

- Chief Legal Advisor
- Other Legal Managers and staff
- Ministry Managers and staff


External:

- Relevant external agencies, in particular Crown Solicitors, Crown Law, Legal Practitioners, the Judiciary, Courts and the Law Society.

Key Accountabilities:

Key Result Area	Accountabilities
Legal Advice and Services	<p><i>Graduate Lawyers will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality legal advice and advocacy (under supervision) for the Ministry • Develop a broad overview of legal issues with the Ministry • Develop professional expertise in one or more areas of Legal Services • Maintain a high standard of personal integrity in all matters and ensure Ministry processes and protocols are followed • Provide up to date resources to management and staff (in the area or areas designated) by way of education and materials in law related areas, where required • Assist with training and education of management and staff on their legal duties and obligations, where required • Assist with the coordination and liaison with Crown Lawyers, other practitioners, Courts and other agencies throughout the area or areas assigned • Assist in the development of instruction to the Crown or other lawyers to conduct legal business for the Ministry <p><i>Lawyers will also:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality legal advice and advocacy for the Ministry • Provide support and assistance to managers in the management of legal issues and risk • Initiate and provide specialised non-adversarial dispute resolutions and negotiations as required • Actively promote the services available from Legal Services • Assess the need for training and education with clients and develop/deliver tailored training where necessary and as requested • Contribute suggestions for the initiation or amendment of the Ministry's policies and legislation • Be responsible and accountable for the conduct of proceedings in the District Court/Family Court/Youth Court or other Tribunal as required • Represent the Ministry in any other legal proceedings as required • Coordinate and liaise with Crown Lawyers, other practitioners, Courts and other agencies throughout the area or areas assigned • Instruct the Crown or other solicitors to conduct legal business for the Ministry as required <p><i>Senior Lawyers will also:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance/mentoring to other legal staff • Help clients manage the overall legal risk and develop strategies, plans and actions to address these risks • Identify improvement opportunities in area of practice and ensure operating procedures are based on best practice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal advice and advocacy to senior management throughout the Ministry as required • Actively participate in and contribute to future planning for Legal Services (where appropriate)
Relationship Management	<p><i>Graduate Lawyers and Lawyers will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders • Maintain a client focused approach • Assist in building appropriate levels of understanding among key stakeholders of the operations, imperatives and constraints of the Ministry • Assist in building and maintaining close cooperative relationships with key external providers of Legal Services (both public and private sector) <p><i>Senior Lawyers will also:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and build strong working relationships at all levels of the Ministry and within the legal profession.
Team and Individual Performance	<p><i>Graduate Lawyers and Lawyers will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the development and operation of projects which include team members and others throughout the Ministry • Contribute to team communication activities • Identify and act on personal learning and development opportunities • Participate in peer review of own and others work <p><i>Senior Lawyers will also:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead projects which include team members and others throughout the Ministry as required • Provide leadership, mentoring and coaching within Legal Services
Leadership	<p><i>Senior Lawyers will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance, mentoring and coaching for less experienced legal staff • Provide leadership at a site or sub-team level, including (as directed by the manager) the allocation and supervision of work by others • Work with managers, identify mentoring, training and development needs for team members within the designated areas of expertise, skill or knowledge and work with the manager to see these needs are met • Work with managers, proactively establish, maintain and monitor effective quality assurance mechanisms within the designated areas of expertise, skill or knowledge, ensuring all work meets / exceeds national service standards • Actively encourage others and seek out opportunities for process improvement • Guide and support colleagues; motivating legal staff to achieve set objectives



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contribute to practice development and innovative delivery approaches within the team across Legal Services
Safe and Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understands and adhere to MSD health, safety and security (HSS) policies and procedures• Implements HSS accountabilities at work to keep themselves, colleagues, clients and others safe and well.

Technical/Professional Knowledge and Experience

All levels will have:

- Been admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor in New Zealand and have (or be eligible for) a practicing certificate
- Good computing skills and typing ability and be competent working with MS Office

Graduate Lawyers will have:

- Some experience or the ability to acquire experience in the application of relevant areas of law in which the Ministry operates
- A sound understanding of issues relevant to the Ministry's business
- Some experience or the ability to acquire practical experience in providing advice clients

Lawyers will also have:

- Expertise in the application of relevant areas of law in which the Ministry operates
- A strong understanding of policy and practice issues relevant to the Ministry's business
- Practical experience providing advice to clients or in conducting cases and appearing before Courts and Tribunals
- Sound knowledge of the justice systems, the parliamentary system and Public Service administration

Senior Lawyers will also have:

- Extensive expertise in relevant areas of law in which the Ministry operates
- Experience in the development of and adaptation of policy and practice issues to ensure continuous improvement is made
- Extensive experience providing advice to clients within a complex political environment or in conducting cases autonomously and appearing before Courts and Tribunals

Other Requirements

- Willing to travel to fulfil job requirements
- Holds current drivers licence and is prepared to drive the Ministry's vehicles if required.