

Position: Paralegal (Aboriginal)
Status: 0.6 Part time
Hours: 21 hours per week
Duration: Permanent
Salary: ASU SCHADS Category 5 \$77,577 - \$81,629 (pro rata)
Funding: Fair Trading NSW
Accountable to: the Executive Officer via Principal Legal Officer and Solicitor – Aboriginal Support. All staff are to act in accordance with Tenants’ Union policies and procedures.

About the Tenants Union

The Tenants’ Union of NSW Co-op Ltd (TU) is a Community Legal Centre specialising in housing law matters. The organisation supports the work of tenancy services with advice, training and resources; acts for individual tenants in public interest litigation; and promotes the interests of tenants with government and non-government organisations and in the media.

Collaboration with Ngalaya: Peak body for First Nations lawyers and law students

This role is offered in partnership with Ngalaya Indigenous Corporation. The Aboriginal Paralegal will have access to ongoing mentoring and support from First Nations lawyers through Ngalaya. The Aboriginal Paralegal will from time-to-time be expected to contribute towards Ngalaya projects during their work at the TU by negotiation between Ngalaya, the Aboriginal Paralegal, and the TU.

The TU’s practice concentrates on contract and housing law, however, the practice also undertakes matters of consumer, anti-discrimination, administrative, environmental, local government and credit and debt law.

The Legal Centre runs public interest test cases and litigation with strategic benefit to tenants on issues of legal interest.

The Paralegal (Aboriginal) will support the work of the Solicitor – Aboriginal Support.

Role of the Solicitor – Aboriginal Support.

The Aboriginal Solicitor – Aboriginal Support has conduct of the legal practice that relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

The Solicitor – Aboriginal Support conducts litigation and provides advice, assistance and guidance to tenant advocates in the Aboriginal Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Services (the Koori Network) as well as to solicitors and other caseworkers in community legal centres and organisations throughout New South Wales in the specialist areas of housing and residential tenancy law.

Role of the Paralegal (Aboriginal)

The tasks and responsibilities of the Paralegal (Aboriginal) include:

1. LITIGATION and CASEWORK ADVICE SUPPORT

1.1 File Management: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to complete File Management procedures including opening and closing files, file review and archiving.

1.2 Client (and Witness) Liaison: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to make contact with clients, organise client conferences as well as meet with and interview clients and witnesses.

1.3 Support and liaison with Koori Network: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) maintains strong relationships with the four Koori Services through regular calls, service visits and participation at the Koori Network meeting. If appropriate, the Paralegal also supports the Solicitor in understanding and knowledge of working with Aboriginal people and communities. The Aboriginal Paralegal assists in the coordination and convening of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee meetings within the TU.

1.4 Legal Research: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to undertake legal research. This will include locating cases and other legal precedents, identifying resources for the legal library, producing case summaries, contributing to training materials and collating answers to frequently asked questions e.g. fact sheets.

1.5 Drafting documents: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) may be required to draft correspondence, costs agreements, client agreements, closing letters, pleadings and other processes, affidavits submissions and other documents that are filed in courts and tribunals. The Principal Legal Officer or the Solicitor – Aboriginal Support must settle these drafts before they are used.

1.6 Filing and serving documents: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) may be required to file documents in courts and tribunals and serve them on the other parties in litigation.

1.7 Administrative support: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to provide the Solicitor with administrative support including (but not limited to) drafting reports, data entry, compiling a contact list, compiling resources, compiling a list of pro-bono assistance, photocopying, filing, taking notes and mail outs.

2. OTHER GENERAL TASKS:

2.1 TU administration: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to assist in the general day-to-day administration of the centre, participating in fortnightly staff and case meetings during which decisions about allocating the TU's resources are made.

2.2 Policy and Law Reform: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to participate in policy work and undertaking research and preparation of policy documents on housing law issues and updating relevant legal manuals.

2.3 Tenants' Union Advice Line: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) may be required to participate in service delivery of the Advice line.

2.4 Community liaison: The Paralegal (Aboriginal) is required to participate in maintaining and extending links between the Legal Centre and other local community organisations and the public generally.

Selection Criteria

Essential:

1. Is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
2. Strong research skills
3. Good written skills
4. Effective communication skills including cross-cultural
5. Commitment and ability to provide an accessible legal service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
6. Computer literacy

Desirable:

1. Knowledge of Aboriginal housing providers particularly Aboriginal Housing Office, Housing NSW, Lands' Councils, Community Housing providers and Co-operatives
2. Knowledge of tenancy law particularly the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)*
3. Experience in a community legal centre or relevant community organisation
4. Willingness to travel outside the Greater Sydney region but within NSW