

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Aboriginal Legal Officer</b>
<b>Status:</b>	0.8 Full time
<b>Hours:</b>	28 hours per week
<b>Salary:</b>	ASU SCHCADS Award recommended rates Category 6-7
<b>Funding:</b>	NSW Fair Trading
<b>Accountable to:</b>	the Executive Officer and Principal Legal Officer. All staff are to act in accordance with Tenants' Union policies and procedures.

### **About the Tenants Union and this position**

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.

The work of the Aboriginal Legal Officer arises out of Aboriginal housing and involves advice, litigation, research, policy development and the delivery of training, primarily to the four Aboriginal Tenant Advice and Advocacy Services in NSW.

### **Responsibilities and Duties**

The main tasks and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Legal Officer include:

1. **Advice:** advise and provide material assistance to tenant advocates and solicitors working in other community organisations around NSW. Participate in the Tenants Union Advice Line.
2. **Litigation:** The Aboriginal Legal Officer has conduct of litigation undertaken by the TU, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, under the supervision of the Principal Legal Officer.

Litigation may be conducted in a variety of jurisdictions. The Aboriginal Legal Officer will conduct all of the ordinary duties of a solicitor in litigation, and also act as an advocate as appropriate. Most matters arise at first instance in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and the TU will often act on appeal or judicial review arising out of Tribunal proceedings.

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

3. **Staff Supervision:** Supervise and support the Aboriginal Paralegal position. As appropriate, convene the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Other tasks include from time to time

4. **Training:** in conjunction with the Learning and Development Coordinator develop and deliver training and resources for tenant advocates.
5. **Legal information:** keep up to date with relevant legal and policy developments affecting the Aboriginal housing sector and disseminate information about those developments for the use of others who advocate for Aboriginal tenants.

6. **Policy and law reform:** In conjunction with the Policy Team undertake research and preparation of documents on housing law issues, present information and update relevant legal manuals and publications.
7. **Community liaison:** visit and consult Aboriginal tenant advice services around NSW and represent the TU at public forums and in meetings with Government and community organisations. The ALO is required to travel for up to 8 weeks each year.
8. **TU administration:** 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.

### **Selection Criteria**

#### **Essential:**

1. Hold or eligible to hold, a current NSW practising certificate
2. Advocacy experience in courts or tribunals
3. Negotiation experience
4. Ability to manage a high volume litigation and advice practice
5. Effective written and verbal communication skills (including cross-cultural communication)
6. Good knowledge of tenancy law, particularly the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010 (NSW)* and its operations within NSW
7. Commitment and ability to provide accessible legal services to Aboriginal clients
8. Computer literacy
9. Ability to work independently and in a team

#### **Desirable:**

1. Experience as an advocate in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal
2. Experience in a community legal centre or relevant community organisation
3. Experience delivering peer education
4. Experience of supervision of staff or volunteers