

**SENIOR FAMILY LAWYER**

**POSITION APPLICATION KIT**

**OCTOBER 2021**

## About Ruah Legal Services

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Welcome to Ruah where everyone is welcome, and everyone belongs. We are a Community Legal Centre and while you think you might know the community legal sector; we do things differently around here! Ruah Legal Service is the result of an innovative and WA-first merger of a community services organisation (Ruah Community Services) and a community legal centre (Mental Health Law Centre). This merger has allowed us to take bold strides into a new way of delivering legal services to clients.

While many Community Legal Centres focus on providing discrete legal advice services and information, Ruah Legal Services focuses and specialises in the provision of end-to-end legal representation with integrated psycho-social support. What does that mean? It means we help clients from the beginning to the end, in and out of Court, with advocacy and representation and until whatever the end might be. It might be a trial, or a sentencing, but whatever it is, we are there alongside the clients.

Ruah Legal Services' key practice areas include Care and Protection, and Family and Domestic Violence (FDV). Additionally, we continue to trade as the Mental Health Law Centre (MHLC) for the provision of legal services to clients subject to involuntary treatment orders under the *Mental Health Act 2014*. As well as representation before the Mental Health Tribunal, MHLC provides representation for criminal law matters and matters under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1990*.

We are looking for a Senior Family Lawyer to guide our growing team through the next phase of our development. Due to new funding, we have redesigned our practice and we are looking for an innovative and energetic leader to help us be the best Community Legal Centre in WA.

What we offer is a cutting-edge workplace, that focuses on using technology to maintain a work-life balance. We believe in working flexibly, and our sophisticated, cloud-based practice management systems enables our staff to do so. At any given hour, our staff might be working from home, in the office, in a quiet corner of a café or at the local park. This flexibility allows our staff to maintain their own wellbeing and the stress of a sometimes-challenging client group. We focus on client need and on business need, and so long as both are being met, you can manage your own flexibility.

### Our vision

To be an expert and valued legal service for people with mental health issues in our community.

To achieve this, Ruah Legal Services (RLS) provides clients with free, accessible and high-quality legal advice, advocacy and representation. We also work holistically with the broader community by providing education to address injustice and inequity.

### Our commitment to diversity

We are all better off, as a community, as a society, if we are all connected. At Ruah we believe true connection comes from a place free from judgement and discrimination, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People are welcomed and treated with respect and their culture is celebrated.

Where everyone regardless of ability, age, culture, gender, race, sexual identity or intersex status are free to be themselves. Free to celebrate our differences.

We are building a workplace where difference is embraced and encouraged – and to do this, we need people on our team who are representative of the clients we work with, who are passionate about change and courageous enough to stand up for what is right. **Everyone is welcome. Everyone belongs.**

## About this role

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The Senior Family Lawyer has is a key leadership role in the practice, working in conjunction with the Principal Lawyer to oversee the provision of legal information, advice, and representation within the CAP and FDV practice areas.

The role requires a forward-thinking and innovative person to lead an enthusiastic, integrated team. You need to be passionate about the law, challenging the status quo and making change. Our clients face adversity against systems that are often weighted against them, and we need lawyers and leaders who recognise the important role we play in being the voice for our clients, and to challenge the systems and its norms wherever we can.

You need to love supervising a skilled and professional team, as a key focus of the role is the supervision of lawyers and key workers. We are doing cutting-edge work in integrated service delivery, and we're seeing fantastic results for our clients as a result. To excel in this role, you need to have a passion for wrap-around legal service and a commitment to the case management model it requires.

We believe in evidence-based, best practice, and we are working hard to evaluate the impact of our integrated service delivery, especially in terms of client-base outcomes. The Senior Family Lawyer will work closely with the Project Officer to ensure that we're collecting the data that's needed, and that we are integrating what we are learning into our everyday practice. If you are a bit of a "data nerd", you'll love the reporting capacity of our client management system and the fascinating insights we're drawing from our work so far!

For us, everything comes down to providing an effective service to our clients, and we are keen for the Senior Family Lawyer to still operate on the front line. You will carry a small caseload of more complex matters, so we are looking for someone who is keen to do casework and court work.

### Remuneration and benefits

We know that our remuneration is lower than in private practice. We also know that remuneration is only one part of why people choose to work for us. We work hard to make sure that what we offer is a great all-round package, including base remuneration, leave, a great culture and looking after your wellbeing.

This is a full-time position with package up to \$109,000 (ex-super) depending on experience. We also offer beneficial salary packaging which provides a significant after-tax benefit. The position is a 12-month contract with the possibility of a permanent position.

You will receive 5 weeks paid leave including paid leave during Christmas period shutdown, the option to purchase an additional 3 weeks of leave, paid maternity leave and an employee assistance scheme.

## Lodging your application

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We hope the information in this Position Application Kit will give you a better understanding of our recruitment and selection procedures and help you in preparing and submitting your application.

If you wish to discuss this position prior to applying, please contact Sarah Toovey, General Manager Legal Services on [sarah.toovey@ruah.org.au](mailto:sarah.toovey@ruah.org.au)

Applicants are asked to complete the following in order to apply for this role:

- Covering letter addressing selection criteria below in no more than 3 A4 pages
- Copy of your CV

Applications that do not adhere to the above requirements will not be considered.

Please send all applications to [legalservices@ruah.org.au](mailto:legalservices@ruah.org.au), attention Sarah Toovey, General Manager. The closing date is 10 November 2021 however applications will be considered as soon as they are received.

### Addressing selection criteria

You must clearly detail how you meet each selection criteria by addressing them separately. If you do not address the selection criteria, it is unlikely you will be considered for the position.

- Be admitted as a lawyer of the Supreme Court of Western Australia with at least 3 years post admission experience
- Experience in family law, and knowledge of and willingness to practice in care and protection law restraining orders, criminal, and tenancy law.
- Demonstrated competence in advocacy before Tribunals and Courts.
- An understanding of the dynamics of family and domestic violence and its impact upon women and children.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including demonstrated ability to engage respectfully and effectively with clients experiencing complex trauma and other circumstances of vulnerability.

For each of the selection criteria, make a separate heading and then detail your knowledge, skills, abilities and experience and ensure you emphasise your major achievements by giving examples. Also include any non-working or volunteer activities, such as involvement in a community organisation.

It is your responsibility to convince the selection committee you are the best candidate for the position. You should ensure the information you provide is adequate for the selection committee to assess the strength of your application.

### Resume/CV

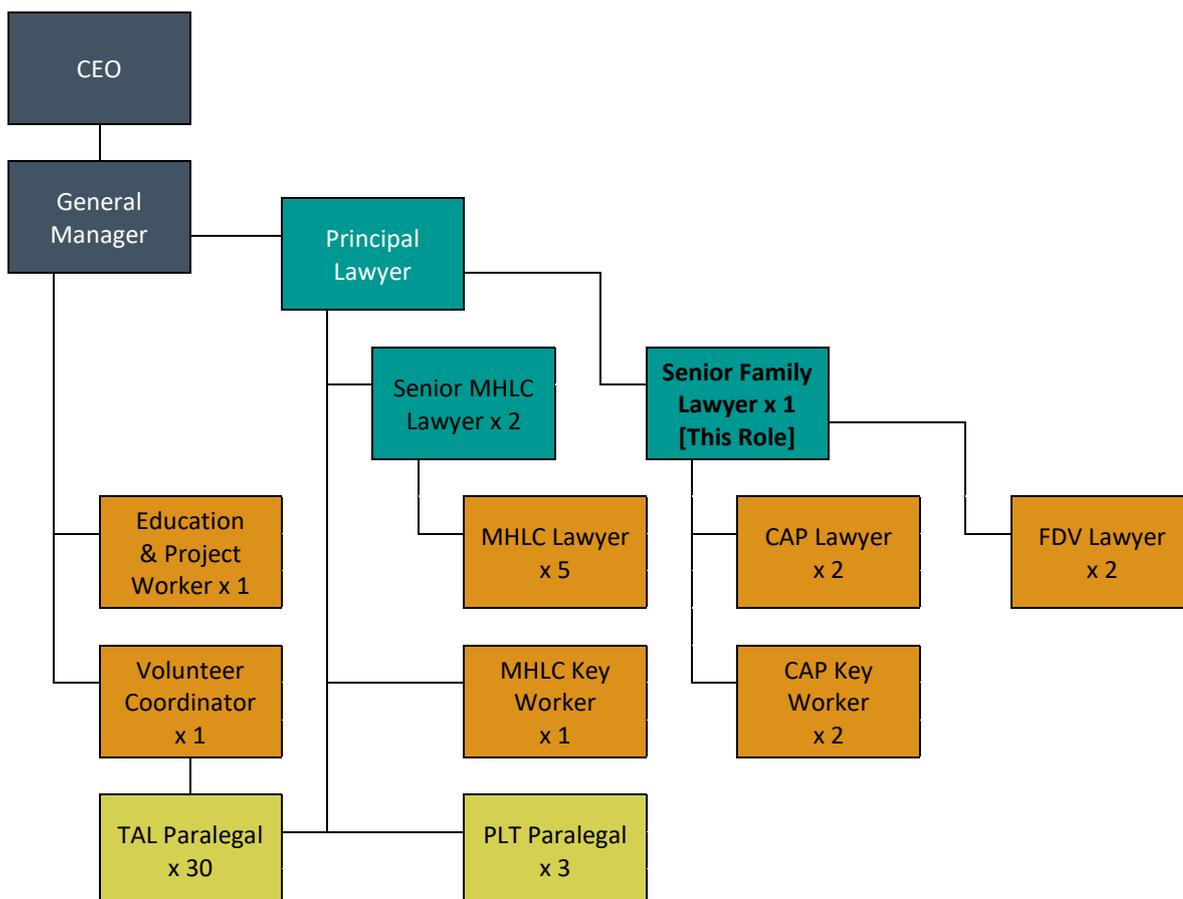
Your CV should set out:

- Your personal details
- Education and training
- Employment history – name of organisation, period of employment, job title, major duties and responsibilities, main achievements
- Skills/experience gained – inside and outside of work
- Name, address and contact telephone numbers of at least two referees who can provide the selection committee with information on your knowledge, skills, ability and experience in relation to the requirements of the advertised position. Advise your referees that you are applying for the position.

## Position Description

<b>Business area</b>	Ruah Legal Services
<b>Position Title</b>	Senior Family Lawyer
<b>Code</b>	Various
<b>Division</b>	Operations
<b>Classification</b>	4+ years P.A.E
<b>Salary range</b>	\$88,000 - \$109,000 depending on experience
<b>Reporting to</b>	Principal Lawyer
<b>Supervision of</b>	2 x CAP Lawyer, 2 x CAP Key Worker, 2 x FDV Lawyer

## Organisational structure



## Key tasks

<b>Mission and Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively promoting and demonstrating behaviours and conduct that champion Ruah’s values and commitment to ethical practice on behalf of clients.</li> <li>Maintains confidentiality in accordance with Ruah policies.</li> <li>Ensures adherence across the area of <b>Legal Services</b> to policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibilities regarding the Legal Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees, supervises, and mentors lawyers and community workers operating in the CAP and FDV practice areas.</li> <li>Assists the Principal Lawyer with case allocation to ensure appropriate skills match and case workload.</li> <li>Provides legal advice and legal services for clients in relevant legal matters, but not limited to, family law, care and protection, criminal law, restraining orders, migration and tenancy matters.</li> <li>Works closely with social workers, support workers and other services to provide holistic and wrap-round services for clients.</li> <li>Visit refuges and FDV service centres to provide outreach services to clients.</li> <li>Deliver legal services in an accessible, culturally safe and trauma-informed way to all clients.</li> <li>Actively seek feedback from clients, sector peers and stakeholders, and identify and act on concerns and opportunities for service improvement.</li> <li>Ensure the efficient operation of the legal practice in the context of the wider organisation.</li> <li>Keeps up to date with legislative and other developments.</li> <li>Ensure that Ruah Legal Services, its mission, programs and services are consistently presented in a strong, positive image to the community legal sector, the wider legal profession and the community at large.</li> </ul>
<b>People Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports, motivates, and develops a high performing team.</li> <li>Ensures that the needs of clients are addressed through competent, capable, and empowered staff.</li> <li>Contributes to a supportive working environment.</li> <li>Promotes an active learning and development culture.</li> <li>Provides performance coaching when necessary to assist staff deliver services to meet contractual obligations.</li> </ul>
<b>Education and Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervises and work closely with volunteer paralegals.</li> <li>Prepares and delivers community education, training and resources to promote an increased understanding of the relevant laws within the community and in the legal profession.</li> <li>Assists in identifying policy and law reform issues and conduct research and prepare papers/reports as appropriate and when requested.</li> </ul>
<b>Quality and Risk Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of Ruah Legal Services’ need to comply with legal, regulatory and insurance requirements, including pursuant to the legislation in force in Western Australian governing legal practices and practitioners and in compliance with the NACLC’s Risk Management Guide.</li> <li>Identify risks of non-compliance and report these to the Principal Lawyer.</li> </ul>
<b>Other duties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As directed.</li> </ul>

## Selection Criteria

### *Essential:*

- Be admitted as a lawyer of the Supreme Court of Western Australia.
- At least 4 years post admission experience in family law and care and protection law, and knowledge of and willingness to practice in restraining orders, criminal, migration, and tenancy law.
- Demonstrated competence in advocacy before Tribunals and Courts.
- Experience supervising legal staff.
- An understanding of the dynamics of family and domestic violence and its impact upon women and children.
- An understanding of issues facing Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities and clients, especially in relation to the dynamics of family and domestic violence.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including demonstrated ability to engage respectfully and effectively with clients experiencing complex trauma and other circumstances of vulnerability.
- High level written and oral communication and presentation skills.
- Negotiation and conflict resolution skills to manage workplace issues.
- Exceptional time management skills and demonstrated ability to prioritise tasks.
- Excellent communication skills and ability to work co-operatively.
- Willingness and ability to work within and contribute to the vision, mission, core values and the guiding principles of the organisation.

### *Desirable:*

- Experience working in a community legal centre.
- Experience supervising legal staff.
- Experience with integrated approaches to legal practice which involve collaboration with non-legal support services.
- Experience in family law property matters.

### *Required Compliance Documents:*

- Current drivers' licence