

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Managing Principal Solicitor
Position Number:	100136
Work Unit/Division:	Legal, Operations
Classification:	VPSG 6.1
Salary Range:	\$142,790 to \$166,938 per annum plus 12% employer superannuation contribution
Employment Type:	Ongoing
Position Reports to:	Director, Legal
Location:	Level 2, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne Vic 3000

About Us

The Victorian Ombudsman (VO) provides a free, independent, accessible and impartial service to the public. Our purpose is to ensure fairness for the public in their dealings with the Victorian public sector, to improve public administration, and engage within both public organisations, the government sector and the broader community. The *Ombudsman Act 1973* (Vic) is the governing legislation.

The VO's role is to ensure that the services of state and local government, and other public organisations are delivered in a fair and reasonable manner that is compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic) and that human rights have been taken into consideration in decision making.

About the Role

The Managing Principal Solicitor reports to the Director, Legal and performs a key role in ensuring the Victorian Ombudsman office complies with its obligations under The Ombudsman Act 1973 (Vic) and is responsible for leading the delivery of outcomes focused expert legal advice.

The Managing Principal Solicitor will draw upon their knowledge of administrative law principles to provide critical expert legal support to all areas of the VO by preparing succinct and practical legal advice, drafting correspondence and court documents.

The Managing Principal Solicitor role requires demonstrated skills in statutory interpretation, and an understanding of administrative law and decision making in the Victorian Ombudsman Office, and cultural and political awareness within their day-to-day work.

It is an essential component of the role that the Managing Principal Solicitor is able to consult with Investigators, Complaints Officers and their colleagues in the Legal Team, and build trust and establish & maintain constructive relationships at all levels within the organisation.

Core to your success in this role is the ability to obtain a strong understanding of the Ombudsman Act 1973.

Key Accountabilities

- Support the Director, Legal by providing day to day supervision, leadership and management to a team of legal practitioners and legal support staff.
- Drive a culture of high performance within the Legal team, by providing direction and clear communication regarding role responsibilities and expectations, support constructive working relationships and act as a role model, modelling ethical behaviours and values.
- Translate Legal team goals into realistic team objectives to ensure effective and efficient operational delivery; support staff in identifying and managing emerging risks in an environment of change and continuous improvement.
- Identify and advise on new and emerging issues in the law and the longer-term implications for the VO.
- Lead reviews of significant cases to identify improvements to systems and processes.
- Drive continuous improvement to ensure a contemporary operating model for legal services which is efficient, effective, and responsive. This includes overseeing and driving key projects, including improvements in systems, processes, technology, and ways of working.
- Review complex legal advice, reports, correspondence, policies and procedures and promptly manage and resolve more complex work-related issues through to resolution.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders to ensure service delivery is meeting the required needs and expectations of all stakeholders.
- Ensure legal related activities are relevant, accurate, timely and in accordance with industry standards (best practice).
- Provide complex legal advice, including liaison and negotiation with stakeholders, to support the organisation and its business units, meet their statutory obligations.
- Support other areas of the organisation as necessary including providing legal advice on litigated matters or areas such as public interest disclosures, privacy and freedom of information as necessary.

Key Selection Criteria

Technical Expertise

- Experience managing a team of legal practitioners.
- Significant knowledge of or the ability to quickly acquire knowledge of the Ombudsman's obligations pursuant to relevant legislation.
- Bachelor of Laws or equivalent legal qualification from a recognised tertiary institution.
- Current practising certificate under the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014* (or eligibility to immediately acquire a practising certificate).
- A minimum of 10 years' experience in administrative law, litigation, investigations and public sector decision making is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience preparing complex briefs, reports and written communication using clear, concise and grammatically correct language; ability to edit written communication to ensure they contain the information necessary to achieve their purpose and meet audience needs.
- Confidently conveys ideas and information; clearly understands the target audience and the objectives of the communication; uses audience feedback to refine communication and ensure communications are understood; handles difficult and sensitive communications well.

Capabilities

Knowledge and Skills

Capability Description

Strategic planning	Consider the needs of the stakeholders, organisation, national and global developments to articulate actions that addresses immediate and future needs of the community. Objectively analyse and evaluate available data, points of view, needs of stakeholders and potential solutions before recommending relevant actions or decisions.
Critical thinking and problem solving	Objectively analyse and evaluate available data, points of view, needs of stakeholders and potential solutions before recommending relevant actions or decisions.
Political and organisational context	Understand the relationship between political dynamics, regulatory or legislative requirements and diverse stakeholder perspectives to ensure service need solutions are fit for purpose.
Stakeholder management	Identify stakeholders impacted by decisions, takes steps to keep interested parties engaged while managing expectations on outcomes
Lead and navigate change	Articulate changes required, support individuals to successfully adopt change and achieve organisational goals.

Personal Qualities

Capability Description

Influence and persuasion	Develops long-term and multi-phased plans to influence others; Implements complex strategies to build buy-in from key internal and external clients/stakeholders; Effectively negotiates with clients/stakeholders to achieve desired outcomes.
Communicate with Impact	Identifies key messages and information required for decision-making; Provides high level advice on influencing and the needs of target audiences; Provides advice on the content and style appropriate to the audience.
Managing people	Builds an organisational culture in line with public sector values; Respects the dignity and rights of others; Inspires commitment of others towards goals and vision of the organisation; Drives a positive organisational culture; Promotes and maintains the wellbeing and motivation of others.
Develop capability	Improve knowledge, skills, and ability of others to deliver against performance expectations and outcomes for the community.
Working collaboratively	Builds trust and rapport with others; Sets common goals through a high degree of empathy; Display willingness to share control and responsibility with peers the service, external partners, and community) in the delivery of work and outcomes.
Promote inclusion	Embrace diversity, draw on insights into the community's beliefs, needs, and values to inform required actions.

Responsibilities:

Environmental: VO is committed to lead by example, through environmentally sustainable practices in our workplace and activities.

OHS: Under section 25 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others and cooperate with their employer in the workplace.

Recordkeeping Responsibilities: As an employee of the officer in charge of a public office, full and accurate records of the business of the office must be kept in accordance with Section 13(a) of the *Public Records Act 1973*.

Other relevant information:

All appointments to Victorian Ombudsman are subject to reference checks, pre-employment misconduct screening, Working with Children and criminal record checks.

Mandatory checks include:

- Applicants must be an Australian Citizen, Permanent Resident or hold a valid work permit or visa.
- The successful applicant will be employed pursuant to the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2024 and VO's relevant policies.
- Appointments will be subject to a National Police Check and Working with Children Check.
- Completion of a conflict of interest and declarable associations form.
- Satisfactorily complete (as per legislation) a:
 - Statutory Declaration for recruitment purposes
 - Confidentiality Declaration
- All new employees are required to take an oath or affirmation on commencement.
- All new employees will refrain from engaging in any other remunerative employment without the explicit prior consent of the Ombudsman.

VO Values: Our values support our work towards a constructive culture. They act as a compass for how we work together and with others.

Fairness

- We pursue fairness in our work.
- We keep people at the centre of decision making and seek to address inequity.
- We treat each other and everyone with dignity, respect and compassion.

Impact

- We make intentional choices to bring about meaningful and enduring change.
- We work with those we oversight to develop innovative solutions to improve the lives of Victorians.
- We bring creativity and curiosity to our work.

Trust

- We build trust with the community and government by listening and acting with independence and integrity.
- We strive to be a valued voice in improving public administration.
- We work in a spirit of openness and collaboration to support a constructive workplace culture.

All VO employees comply with the Victorian Public Sector Employees of Special Bodies values. These values require that public officials demonstrate responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership, and that they respect and promote human rights.