

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Solicitor
Position Number:	100048
Work Unit/Division:	Legal, Operations
Classification:	VPSG 4
Salary Range:	\$97,955 to \$111,142 per annum plus 12% employer superannuation contribution
Employment Type:	Ongoing
Position Reports to:	Managing Principal Solicitor
Location:	Victorian Ombudsman (VO) Level 2, 570 Bourke Street, Melbourne 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

We have an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic and motivated solicitor to join the in-house legal team at VO.

The solicitor will draw upon their knowledge of administrative law principles to provide critical support to the Legal Team in the areas of preparing succinct and practical legal advice, drafting correspondence and court documents and assisting with legal support and administrative duties.

The 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 solicitor be 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* (Vic).

Key Accountabilities

- Provide oral and written legal advice to teams across the organisation on a diverse range of issues relating to the Ombudsman's powers and functions.
- Preparing, administering and delivering correspondence to the Integrity Oversight Victoria.
- Assist with the drafting of high-level reports and contribute to the development and maintenance of policies, procedures and systems regarding the Ombudsman's use of coercive powers.
- Assist in the preparation of responses to applications made under the FOI scheme.
- Consider, assess and respond to issues concerning the Ombudsman's statutory and compliance obligations under the Ombudsman Act or any other laws relevant to the investigative process.
- Provide training, guidance and support to Ombudsman staff in meeting their legal obligations.
- Assisting with practice management including administrative duties such as mailbox and file management.
- Support other areas of the Legal team as necessary, including in respect of litigated matters, briefing and instructing barristers, liaising with Courts as well as or other areas of the Ombudsman's legal practice including public interest disclosures and privacy.
- Any other work as required by the Managing Principal Solicitor.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Bachelor of Laws or equivalent legal qualification from a recognised tertiary institution and a current practising certificate under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (or eligibility to acquire a practising certificate), or admission to practice as an Australian Lawyer (or eligibility to gain admission).
2. Demonstrated experience in providing administrative law, human rights and/or public sector decision making is essential. Experience as part of an inhouse legal team and/or Victorian Government is preferred. Experience in commercial law would be well regarded.
3. Experience in the provision of high-level written and oral legal advice to teams across the organisation on a diverse range of issues.
4. Experience in the provision of training, guidance and support to staff in meeting their legal obligations.
5. Demonstrated experience supporting practice management including administrative duties such as mailbox and file management.

Key capabilities required for role

- Bachelor of Laws or equivalent legal qualification from a recognised tertiary institution.
- Current practising certificate under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (or eligibility to acquire a practising certificate).
- Admission to practice as an Australian Lawyer (or eligibility to gain admission).
- Previous experience in administrative law, investigations, human rights and/or public sector decision making is desirable.
- Previous experience working at a regulator is also desirable.

Personal Attributes

- **Resilience:** Gives frank and honest feedback/advice. Listens when ideas are challenged, seeks to understand the nature of feedback and respond constructively; Displays confidence and conviction when communicating an opinion.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Accept changed priorities without undue discomfort. Responds quickly to changes. Comfortable working in collaboration with teams across the organisation.
- **Works Collaboratively:** Builds a supportive and cooperative team environment; Engages other teams to

share information in order to understand or respond to issues; Supports others in challenging situations.

- **Promotes Inclusion:** Recognises behaviours that promote a culture of inclusion; Takes corrective action where behaviours displayed do not promote an inclusive workplace.

Meaningful Outcomes

- **Strategic Planning:** Ensures that day to day planning and work processes are in line with team/organisation strategy; Identifies and develops own and team objectives linking strategies to actions to achieve these; Guides others in strategic planning process.
- **Systems Thinking:** Assesses situations and identifies the best system tools for analysing, understanding the system and addressing problems; Identifies and understands the impact of particular courses of action on other parts of the organisation or more broadly.
- **Future Focus:** Develops objectives that link to broader team and organisational objectives; Has regard to future aims and goals of the team and organisation in prioritising own and others' work; Integrates relevant technologies into own ways of working and supports others in this; Proactively stays up to date with best practice and leading developments relating to expertise and area of work.

Enabling Delivery

- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Resolves issues through deep understanding or interpretation of existing guidelines. Where guidelines are not available, analyses ideas available and takes action through self, or in consultation with others to resolve problems. If required, determines additional information needed to make informed decisions. Applies critical thinking and problem-solving concepts in the right context.
- **Project Delivery:** Defines tasks to be delivered to meet agreed outcomes; Coordinates and guides others in the execution of work activities; Monitors progress of tasks against plans and takes corrective action when required.
- **Political and Organisational Context:** Understands issues and pressures to which the organisation has to respond; Understands the reasons and values underpinning the organisational climate and culture.

Authentic Relationships

- **Influence and Persuasion:** Consistently adapts the content, style, message or tone of a presentation to suit the audience and plans how to tackle objections; Applies own ideas by linking them to others' values, needs and goals.
- **Managing Difficult Conversations:** Listens to and acknowledges that the concerns of others have been heard; Clarifies problems, seeks options to resolve conflict.

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:
 1. Statutory Declaration for recruitment purposes
 2. 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.

Values: All VO employees comply with the Victorian Public Sector Employees of Special Bodies values. These values require that public officials demonstrate responsiveness, integrity, impartiality,