Position Description as at January 2009

Duty Lawyer Supervisor: Auckland District Court

(Fixed term contract to operate for the period of the Duty Lawyer Administrative Changes Test at the Auckland District Court.)

The Legal Services Agency

The Legal Services Agency undertakes the services defined in the Legal Services Act 2000, namely:

- administering a legal aid scheme that assists people who have insufficient means to pay for legal services to nonetheless have access to them; and
- provide other schemes of legal assistance; and
- support community legal services by funding community law centres, education and research.

The Strategic Development team is responsible for the implementation and operation of the Duty Lawyer Administrative Changes Test at the Auckland District Court.

Testing changes to the duty lawyer service at the Auckland District Court

This job description should be read in conjunction with the information sheet *Testing Administrative Changes to the Duty Solicitor Scheme*[1]. Changes to the duty lawyer service at the Auckland court will be phased in from October 2006 onwards, with appointed supervisors assisting the Agency to implement the changes. The test is expected to run for a minimum of 6 months, following which decisions will be made about future service administration.

Duty lawyer supervisors will be rostered on a daily basis and will be responsible for managing the operation of the duty lawyer service at the court during their rostered day. Final decisions on the number of supervisor positions will be made during the appointment process, but the expectation is that up to ten supervisors will be appointed. For the period of the test supervisors will report to the Manager, Strategic Development.

Main duties of the Job

- Supervise and schedule the ongoing daily duty lawyer work programme. Ensure there are sufficient duty lawyers available at all times (including across the lunch hour as required) to meet the needs of clients and the court.
- Liaise regularly with LSA staff, courts staff, prosecutors, judges, probation staff, and other relevant agencies to ensure that the duty lawyer service provides an effective contribution to the criminal summary process at the court.

[1] The information sheet can be found on www.lsa.govt.nz (see “About Us” on the home page and “”Legal Services” / “Duty Solicitor Sheme”).

- Liaise regularly with other duty lawyer supervisors at the court to ensure consistency of service, and to discuss matters affecting all teams such as the preparation of rosters, arranging training sessions etc.
- Participate in the court induction programme for trainee duty lawyers, providing training and assessment as required.
- Ensure duty lawyers in the team have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to provide high quality and appropriate services to all clients. If necessary identify specific training needs of individual duty lawyers and work with the LSA to address those needs.
- Ensure duty lawyers have knowledge of procedures or protocols specific to the Auckland District Court (for example the operation of the Registrars Court and requirements around providing assistance to defendants in the Status Hearing Court). This may involve arranging seminars or training sessions in discussion with other duty lawyer supervisors and court-based agencies.
- Contribute, in consultation with other duty lawyer supervisors and the Duty Lawyer project team, to the preparation of the duty lawyer roster for the court. Arrange for replacements on the daily roster as required.
- Receive complaints concerning the duty lawyer service. Take appropriate action in accordance with the agreed complaints process.
- Attend to other administrative requirements as agreed with the LSA, including signing off duty lawyer invoices and collecting statistical information.
- Where necessary provide duty lawyer services to clients. Although supervisors are expected to spend the majority of their time on supervisory duties, they will also be required to provide assistance as a duty lawyer.
- As required assist clients to complete legal aid application forms.
- As required (ie in the absence of LSA staff at the court), ensure that urgent applications are forwarded to the appropriate LSA office for granting and assignment.

Person Specification

- Current Legal Services Agency listing approval as a duty solicitor
- A minimum of 5 years' recent criminal law experience, including work as a duty lawyer
- Knowledge of the Legal Services Act and the criminal court process (familiarity with the operation of the Auckland District Court would also be an advantage)
- Experience in training and managing lawyers or other professionals
- Strong planning and organisational skills
- A strong commitment to providing high quality duty lawyer services to clients
- Effective relationship management skills