



Position title	Principal Legal Officer	Employer	Katherine Women's Information & Legal Service
Reporting to	CEO	Direct reports	Solicitors
Classification	SCHADS 8 equivalent or above award, depending on experience	Location	Katherine, Northern Territory
Hours	Full time (P/T negotiable)	Duration	Ongoing
Effective date	March 2026	Approved by	CEO

ABOUT KWILS

Katherine Women's Information & Legal Service (KWILS) is a specialist Women's Legal Service based in Katherine, Northern Territory, on Jawoyn, Wardaman and Dagoman country.

KWILS provides free civil and family law services to women experiencing disadvantage across the Big Rivers region. Our work focuses primarily on domestic, family and sexual violence, child protection, family law and victims of crime compensation. We work in ways that are respectful, culturally aware and sensitive to trauma, providing legal advice, representation and practical support so women can navigate the legal system and access the help they need.

In addition to individual legal assistance, KWILS delivers community legal education, systemic advocacy and law reform aimed at advancing gender equity and improving access to justice for women and children.

KWILS is a values-led, community-connected organisation committed to diversity, inclusion and creating a safe, collaborative and empowering workplace. We encourage applications from people of all backgrounds, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and provide reasonable workplace adjustments to support accessibility. As a small but high-performing service, we offer a supportive environment where staff are valued and respected, along with generous leave entitlements, wellbeing initiatives and a high level of autonomy in how we design and deliver our work.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position purpose

The Principal Legal Officer (PLO) provides strategic, operational and professional leadership of KWILS' legal practice.

As a member of the KWILS Leadership Team, the PLO works closely with the CEO and colleagues to ensure KWILS remains a high-quality, responsive and forward-looking service. The position carries significant autonomy and responsibility – shaping legal strategy, supervising practitioners, managing legal risk and contributing to organisational direction.

The PLO ensures high-quality legal services are delivered to women across Katherine and the remote Big Rivers region in ways that are respectful, culturally aware and sensitive to the experiences of people who have faced violence and trauma. The position also supports the development of the legal team and contributes to strengthening how the service operates.

KWILS is an accredited community legal centre under Community Legal Centres Australia (CLCA). The PLO is responsible for oversight of KWILS' legal practice and for ensuring the organisation's ongoing compliance with the CLCA Risk Management Guide. This includes oversight of legal services and appropriate review and supervision of non-legal services delivered within the context of a community legal centre.

This is an opportunity for a senior practitioner seeking both meaningful frontline engagement and genuine leadership influence.

Key duties and responsibilities

Legal advice, casework and representation

- Deliver high-quality legal advice, casework and representation, including carriage of complex and strategically significant matters.
- Appear in relevant courts and tribunals as required.
- Provide client-centred, trauma-informed legal support across KWILS' core practice areas, including domestic, family and sexual violence, child protection, family law and victim compensation.
- Ensure rigorous file management and compliance with professional standards and internal procedures.

Legal practice leadership and supervision

- Lead and manage KWILS' legal practice in accordance with the *Legal Profession Act (NT)*, professional indemnity obligations, sector guidelines – particularly the CLCA Risk Management Guide – and funding agreements.
- Provide high-level legal supervision, mentoring and support to solicitors and relevant staff, including guidance on complex legal, ethical and practice issues.
- Maintain oversight of legal risk across all matters, ensuring compliance with professional standards and practice requirements.
- Conduct regular file reviews and monitor legal quality, consistency and risk management.
- Monitor caseloads and service capacity to support sustainable workloads and staff wellbeing.
- Lead the delivery of consistent, high-quality legal services, supporting staff to develop effective litigation strategies and case plans.
- Lead performance reviews, professional development planning and continuing professional development (CPD) coordination for the legal team.
- Provide onboarding, internal training and professional development for staff in KWILS' core practice areas.
- Develop and maintain intake processes, practice guidelines, precedents and templates to support consistent legal practice.
- Oversee file management processes, including file opening, closure, archiving and data integrity.

Strategic and organisational leadership

- Actively contribute as a member of the Leadership Team to ensure KWILS is a strong, effective and values-aligned service.
- Lead the implementation of KWILS' Strategic Plan and Operational Plan as they relate to legal service delivery.
- Work closely with colleagues to identify service gaps, strengthen systems and continuously improve client experience.
- Work with the CEO and Strategic Partnerships and Advocacy Leader to identify and progress law reform and advocacy priorities arising from KWILS' work.

- Provide regular reporting and strategic advice to the CEO and Management Committee on legal practice performance, risk and emerging systemic issues.
- Contribute to funding applications, program design and service evaluation processes.
- Support the refinement and effective use of case management and data systems.

Community legal education and outreach

- Support and participate in the design and delivery of community legal education initiatives.
- Deliver outreach services across Katherine and remote communities within the Big Rivers region, including travel and overnight stays as required.
- Ensure outreach services are safe, responsive and aligned with KWILS' service model.

Other tasks within your skills and competence as required.

Key relationships

Internal

- Chief Executive Officer
- Legal team
- Support and Connections Leader
- Strategic Partnerships and Advocacy Leader
- Operations Manager

External

- Northern Territory Local Courts
- Northern Territory Police
- External legal services (e.g. the Women's Legal Services, North Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Service, North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, NT Legal Aid)
- Child protection authorities
- Community organisations and health services across the Big Rivers region

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Admission as a legal practitioner in Australia and eligibility to hold an unrestricted Northern Territory Practising Certificate.
- Minimum 5 years post-admission experience working in legal practice.
- Strong knowledge of NT legal frameworks including practice experience in domestic, family and sexual violence, child protection and family law.
- Demonstrated senior leadership and supervision experience within a legal practice.
- Proven ability to manage legal risk and maintain high professional standards.
- Demonstrated experience providing high-quality legal advice and representation in complex matters.
- Strong understanding of the gendered nature of violence and the dynamics of coercive control and misidentification.
- Demonstrated cultural capability and commitment to working respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other intersectional communities.
- Strategic thinking and the ability to contribute to organisational planning and service development.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability and willingness to travel to remote communities, including overnight travel.

Desirable

- Experience in a community legal centre or specialist women’s legal service.
- Experience working in regional or remote contexts.
- Experience working within or alongside integrated or multidisciplinary service models.

Required qualifications and/or accreditations

- Unrestricted Northern Territory Practising Certificate (or eligibility).
 - Working with Children Clearance (Ochre Card).
 - National Police Clearance.
 - Current NT Driver Licence (or eligibility).
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I certify that I have read, understood and accept the duties, responsibilities and obligations of my position.

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Employee

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Date