

POSITION:	Family Violence Court & Social Support Worker
REPORTING TO:	Manager Client Services
DIRECTS REPORTS:	None
KEY RELATIONSHIPS:	Victoria Legal Aid Coordinator, FASS Duty Lawyer, Family Law Court staff, General Manager Operations, Senior Practitioners, Crisis Support Advocates, DV Response Case Managers, Family Support Workers
POSITION STATUS:	Full Time Fixed Term to 30 June 2019

1. PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

Within the parameters of our constitution, service philosophy and the policy framework established by the Board, and under the direction and supervision of the Manager Client Services (or delegate) in partnership with Victoria Legal Aid, the Family Violence Court & Social Support Worker will:

- Provide assistance to families affected by family violence, both perpetrators and victims, including to navigate the complexities of moving between state and federal based court systems
- Conduct risk assessments, safety planning and coordinate and advocate for additional referrals and services
- Work closely and co-operatively with the family law courts, court staff and **safe steps** response staff to support the safety of service users and their children affected by family violence
- Work co-operatively with all stakeholders to support the safe, effective and efficient resolution of matters
- Provide assistance to women accessing the Video Conference Pilot Program and liaise with the relevant stakeholders in the magistrate's court.

2. ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

safe steps Family Violence Response Centre (formally known as the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service) was set up in 1974 as the Women's Refuge Referral Service to provide a 24 hour 7 days a week telephone helpline for women experiencing family violence.

It is now a state-wide incorporated association funded primarily by, but not exclusively the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a range of services 24 hours 7 days a week for women and their children who experience family violence. **safe steps** is the primary contact and referral point for access to women's refuges in Victoria. It provides three complementary services:

- A crisis telephone information, support, advocacy and referral service;
- A trauma counselling service for women experiencing family violence and sexual assault;
- A high security supported safe house accommodation service.

The organisation has a strong social change agenda that operates across three key pillars; prevent, respond and recover and provides community education, advocacy and awareness raising.

The organisation operates out of three separate work locations, one of which houses the 24/7 immediate response telephone service, another administration, and the other which provides accommodation.

safe steps is governed by a constitution and a Board of Governance with ten members. The Board elects its own chair and meets monthly to set the strategic direction and policy parameters for the organisation and its work. The organisation is managed by a Chief Executive Officer who operates with a high degree of autonomy, and at the same time working closely and effectively with the Board. She attends Board meetings and services the work of the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring effective relationships with our funding body and with sector partners, and for developing protocols to ensure that the best possible services are provided to the women and children who need them. **safe steps** is a lead organisation in a wider network of domestic violence services in Victoria.

The organisation has an annual budget turnover of more than \$12 million; it employs more than 80 fulltime staff, part-time staff, volunteers and students to support the work of the organisation.

The Family Violence Court & Social Support Worker is based at the Melbourne Family Law Courts Registry, Family Court of Australia, Owen Dixon Commonwealth Law Courts Building, (cnr Latrobe street) 305 William Street, Melbourne. On non-sitting court days the Family Violence Social Support Worker may be required to work from any of **safe steps** sites and community offices and will attend meetings and training from time to time.

The Family Violence Court & Social Support Worker is expected to uphold the organisation's policies and procedures as well as the Department of Human Services Standards, which include the following obligations:

- to respect client confidentiality
- to obtain consent for the disclosure of information about a client
- to inform any client who wishes to make a complaint about the organisation of their right to do so, and to assist them to initiate a complaint

safe steps' locations and unlisted telephone numbers may not be disclosed to any other person except in accordance with service procedures. The locations and unlisted telephone numbers of any high security

refuges may not be disclosed to any other person other than in accordance with the instructions of each such service.

3. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Direct Service:

- Conducting risk and needs assessments
- Engaging in a safety planning process
- Assessment of a family's social support needs
- Coordinate and advocate for additional referrals and services
- Consider the needs of children in risk assessment and make appropriate referrals and links with child protection services as appropriate
- Liaising with the family law court's registry and security staff about the implementation of the court's safety plan for the family in relation to each court event
- Information, non-legal advocacy and support for families before, during and after court
- Referral of families in relation to their social needs and co-ordination in relation to use of those services
- Liaison with the court to obtain copies of court orders and other notices from the registry on behalf of families
- Advocacy on behalf of families with stakeholder organisations, e.g. housing services, Centrelink, victim support services, and where appropriate police in relation to the bringing of an application for a family violence protection order
- Assistance to transition between, the Commonwealth family law, state/territory family violence and state/territory child protection jurisdictions
- Being mindful of any existing relationships between families and other social or therapeutic service providers, and will take account of such relationships in determining the nature and extent of the service to be provided and any referrals to be made
- Work closely and co-operatively with lawyers, police prosecutors and court staff to support the safety of families
- May be required to provide information to judges in a court room
- Work co-operatively with all stakeholders to support the safe, effective and efficient resolution of matters
- The Family Violence Court & Social Support Worker does not provide legal advice or legal assistance to service users
- Provide support to women accessing the Videolink Pilot Program.

Other Tasks:

- Provide family violence response services at **safe steps** community office as required or on nonsitting court days

- Contribute to regular meetings with court staff, police, legal practitioners and family violence related services
- Participate in peer support activities, professional supervisions and professional development activities.
- Maintain positive relationships with a broad range of stakeholders
- Follow procedures to manage privacy, confidentiality and consent
- Maintain accurate, confidential client records and a computerised database and case management system, and provide statistical reports in line with organisational standards
- Prepare reports as required for management regarding services provided (including numbers of persons, supported, support given, referrals made), external communications and meetings attended
- Represent **safe steps** on working groups, network meetings and committees
- Participate in FASS working groups and meetings
- Participate in delivering community education for internal and external services where required
- Travel to other courts and locations for family violence related meetings and duties as required
- Carry out other duties as requested by a General Manager, Manager, CEO or a delegate
- Abide by all organisational policies and procedures, including all workplace health and safety measures
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- Regularly attend and positively engage in professional supervision provided by the Manager Client Service (or her delegate)
- Regularly attend and positively contribute to team meetings and permanent staff meetings

4. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential

- Tertiary qualifications in a community/social service profession or other related field
- Demonstrated understanding of the nature and dynamics of family violence and knowledge of community resources and services to refer persons who have experienced family violence
- Demonstrated understanding of family law system
- Demonstrated understanding of trauma informed practices
- Demonstrated experience and skills in the provision of support, risk assessment and safety planning
- Demonstrated understanding of feminist practice and how this is used as a framework to understand and respond to the gendered nature of violence against women and children
- Understanding of cultural and language barriers, disability and other factors that may further marginalize women and children in crisis

- Excellent communication, interpersonal and negotiation skills
- Demonstrated capacity to work independently as well as part of a team
- Ability to deal appropriately with stress, maintain composure and apply effective engagement strategies with clients in crisis
- Capacity for self-motivation, ability to cope with changing work functions, workloads and tasks
- Competent computer database skills
- Willingness to commit to the living expression of safe steps values; courageous, feminist, empowering, ethical respectful, collaborative, reflective.
- A current Victorian Drivers Licence.
- A current Working With Children Check.
- Willingness to undergo a National Police Check.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EXEMPTION

safe steps has an Equal Opportunity exemption to employ only women —EO Exemption H42/2017

6. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory background checks including a National Police Check (including an international police check if resided continuously in an overseas country for 12 months or more in the last ten years), Working with Children Check, disclosure of previous or current disciplinary action, referee checks, proof of eligibility to work in Australia and qualification checks.
- Where background checks are not to the satisfaction of **safe steps** in its absolute discretion, the offer of employment may be retracted or terminated.
- If you are offered employment with **safe steps** and are not currently an existing employee you will be required to disclose full details of any pre-existing injuries or illness that may be affected by the work and/or undergo a health assessment. The disclosure/health assessment is conducted to ensure you have the health and mental capacity to meet the requirements of the position and to identify any adjustments that may need to be made in the workplace. Failing to notify or hiding a pre-existing injury or illness which might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment, could result in that injury or illness being ineligible for future compensation claims.

7. HOURS OF WORK

The position will work 76 hours per fortnight (1 FTE). From time to time, it is expected additional hours will be worked, including after hours to support key initiatives and events.

7. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received, reviewed and fully understand the position description.

Employee Name	
Employee Signature	
Date	

REVIEW OF THE POSITION DESCRIPTION

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with the needs of **safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre, its operations, and its clients and supporters.