



Advocacy and Referral Officer

Position Title Advocacy and Referral Officer

Responsible Council Parramatta Central Council

Reports To Reports to the Caroline Chisholm Centre (CCC) Service Manager through the CCC Client Programs Coordinator

Base Location Mount Druitt

Primary position objective The Advocacy and Referral Officer is responsible for the provision of support to clients who are experiencing disadvantage, including barriers to accessing appropriate supports and services within the community. The Advocacy and Referral Officer works as part of a multidisciplinary team toward the shared goal of empowering local community members to access resources that will increase quality of life and promote social inclusion.

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St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a member and volunteer based organisation that has been assisting people experiencing disadvantage in NSW for more than 130 years.

The Society was founded by a 20 year old man named Frederic Ozanam in 1833, who with a group of friends, wanted to make a difference to the poverty and disadvantage that he saw around him in post-Revolution France. Leading by example and with boundless energy, Frederic started what is now a world-wide movement in just 20 short years. The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has around 16,000 members and volunteers and 2000 staff. Our local member networks, referred to as Conferences, are present in over 420 communities across NSW.

Our members and volunteers provide assistance to people experiencing disadvantage including food parcels and vouchers, financial assistance, assistance with energy bills and other debt, budget counselling and the provision of other material items such as furniture, clothing and bedding and any other household items. Importantly, our members also provide vital emotional support and referral services as needed.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a leading provider of community support services and has close to 100 Special Works across the State in the areas of homelessness, mental health, disability, financial counselling, supported accommodation, food provision, refugees and migrants and addiction counselling.

Our work is funded by all levels of government, the generous support we receive from the community and our 250 Retail Centres across NSW.

Parramatta Central Council (PCC)

The Parramatta Central Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW (PCC) covers a large area from Parramatta to Blackheath, Warragamba to Richmond taking in a number of Local Government areas. With as many as 100 cultures represented in the area, the demand for assistance is growing and diverse in nature. PCC is divided into 5 Regional Councils: 47 Conferences; 480 Conference members; 22 Vinnies Stores, 4 Special Works (including pathways to education, social work, advocacy and other programs) and over 1600volunteers.

The Caroline Chisholm Centre for Social Justice

The Caroline Chisholm Centre for Social Justice is committed to supporting community members to develop skills and capacity to overcome disadvantage. The centre delivers a range of support services and is open during the hours of Monday – Friday 9am – 3pm.

The Caroline Chisholm Centre, provides free of charge services to community members, including;

- Emergency Assistance including financial and material support
- Men's and Women's groups and activities
- Education and training including TAFE Outreach courses and Clemente University program
- Work and Development Orders – Assists with Office of State Revenue fines
- Social Work and Case Management programs
- Advocacy and Referral services
- A range of community information and capacity building programs

Duties and Responsibilities

Primary Responsibilities

- Provide assistance and support to community members accessing the CCC, as part of a holistic and client focussed service
- Provide non-legal advocacy and referral support to community members accessing CCC services
- Collaborate with community members and relevant stakeholders to develop person centred support plans including plan implementation, ongoing review and evaluation
- Refer community members to other sources of support as required and appropriate
- Deliver service based activities and community activities as directed by CCC management
- Maintain community networks to support equitable and diverse community engagement opportunities for all community members
- Undertake other tasks within the scope of position and classification as directed by CCC Management

Professional Responsibilities

- Work under the supervision of the Client Programs Coordinator to deliver a high standard of service and support through ethical practise and professional standards.
- Participate in ongoing professional development and training opportunities

Work Practices

- As an employee, be responsible under the Workplace Health and Safety Act for the health and safety of all persons they come in contact with through the course of employment
- Report all hazards and injuries to the Caroline Chisholm Centre for Social Justice WHS officer and/or delegated manager, and contribute to a safe work environment
- Follow all service and Society policies and procedures

Working Relationships

- Report to the Client Programs Coordinator
- Work closely with internal and external stakeholders including staff, clients and management to assist in the development of Centre services which meet the needs of the community and mission of the Society
- Work in a professional and ethical manner reflecting the ethos of the Society
- Interact professionally with a diverse range of community members
- Maintain a collaborative approach to service delivery in working within a team
- Ensure a supportive and safe environment is provided for all community members and visitors to the service.

Program Improvement

- Ensure high standards of client support are maintained through working with Client Programs Coordinator to evaluate and review service delivery
- Under the guidance of Client Programs Coordinator, manage and submit reports
- Attend relevant training and educational development
- Ensure all reports, data collection and record keeping are maintained
- Attend scheduled supervisory meetings as required
- Meet standards/objectives/goals set by the Society

Essential Criteria

- Minimum Cert IV in Community Services or relevant field and minimum three years employment in community services sector role.
- Demonstrated experience providing person centred support to clients who are experiencing disadvantage
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrated experience working with ATSI and CALD community groups
- Demonstrated understanding of the not for profit sector
- Ability to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Driver's Licence

Desirable Skills

- An understanding of the barriers experienced by people in contact with the criminal justice system, including people exiting custody
- Group facilitation skills and/or experience in the facilitation of community group activities.
- Working knowledge of the Western Sydney area and the geographical disadvantage experienced by people residing within the Blacktown LGA

The St Vincent de Paul Society is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer