

Role Description



Role title:	Classification:
Senior Legal Officer	LE5
Division/Business unit:	Reports to:
Workforce Development and Integrity / Legal Policy	Director, Legal Policy

Role purpose:

The Senior Legal Officer is a role within Workforce Development and Integrity and is accountable to the Director, Legal Policy for:

- Providing high-level legal policy analysis, advice and practical guidance to DHS divisions on complex, sensitive and emerging matters affecting departmental functions, programs, and decision-making.
- Supporting the Director, Legal Policy to provide timely and well-considered advice to the Minister, Chief Executive, Executive and senior managers, including through briefs, correspondence, submissions, and options papers.
- Identifying matters that require Crown Solicitor's Office (CSO) advice or other specialist input, and preparing clear instructions, issue summaries, and questions for CSO consideration.
- Supporting the management of sensitive policy and operational matters by coordinating legal policy input, project work, stakeholder engagement and risk-aware advice.

Key outcomes and accountabilities:

1. Lead high-level legal policy research, analysis and advice on complex or sensitive matters with strategic impact for DHS, including the interpretation and application of legislation, policy, delegations and public sector obligations.
2. Provide practical, risk-aware advice and guidance to DHS divisions on legal policy issues affecting operational decision-making, service delivery, governance, administrative processes and emerging portfolio matters.
3. Prepare, review and settle high-quality written material, including executive and ministerial briefings, Cabinet-related material, correspondence, submissions, policy documents, CSO instructions, options papers and decision records.
4. Identify legal, policy, operational and reputational risks arising from sensitive matters and provide clear options and recommendations to support lawful, defensible and practical decision-making.
5. Contribute to legislative, regulatory, policy and governance projects, including law reform, implementation planning, consultation, stakeholder engagement and coordination across divisions or agencies.
6. Maintain effective relationships with CSO and other legal, policy, industrial relations and governance stakeholders, and represent or support the Director to represent DHS on relevant internal, inter-agency or national forums dealing with complex legal policy or sensitive portfolio matters.

Note: Any other responsibilities in line with the classification level of the role as assigned by Line Manager and/or the Department. The responsibilities as specified above may be altered in accordance with the changing requirements of the role.

Special conditions:

Prior to being employed, the successful applicant will be required to obtain a National Police Check if new to the Department and a satisfactory Employment-related Screening Check where this is required for the role.

Key Relationships/Interactions:

- Director, Legal Policy
- Executive Director, Workforce Development and Integrity
- Ministers, Chief Executive, DHS Executives and Senior Managers
- Crown Solicitor's Office (CSO)
- Relevant government agencies, statutory bodies, regulators and non-government organisations

Budget/Delegations:

No budget or delegations accountabilities for this role.

DHS expectations and values: (Organisational contribution)

- Understand and follow workplace safety initiatives, identify hazards and contribute to a safe working environment, as well as follow procedures to manage and minimise risks within DHS.
- Follow the principles of a sustainable working environment by following departmental greening initiatives.
- Model ethical behaviour and practices consistent with the SA Government Code of Ethics for Public Sector Employees, Values and DHS Working with Children and Young People Code of Conduct.
- Understand and follow the principles and practices of the Information Sharing Guidelines for Promoting Safety and Wellbeing (ISG) and the DHS Appendix to the ISG to facilitate appropriate information sharing practice within the context of this department.
- Treat all individuals with fairness and respect, regardless of their race, culture, language, gender (including gender diversity), religion, sexuality, ability, or age.
- Promote and maintain inclusive workplaces that embrace diversity and actively support difference.
- Demonstrate zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or disrespectful behaviour towards or by clients, colleagues, contractors, or stakeholders.

Role specific capabilities: (Skills, experience, knowledge, attributes)

1. **Professional Expertise** - Demonstrated ability to apply legal training, public law principles and statutory interpretation to complex policy, operational and decision-making issues.
2. **Political Processes & Systems** - Competent in reviewing Cabinet submissions, legal opinions, briefing notes, reports and corporate policies and procedures.
3. **Analytical Skills** - Highly developed ability to analyse complex, incomplete or sensitive information, identify risk, test assumptions and formulate clear recommendations.
4. **Project and stakeholder management** - Ability to contribute to or lead discrete projects, coordinate consultation and build effective relationships across DHS, government and CSO.
5. **Communication** - Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to translate complex legal and policy issues into concise, plain English advice.
6. **Public Sector Knowledge Base** - Sound understanding of South Australian Government processes, including Cabinet, ministerial and executive briefing processes, administrative law, confidentiality, records management and the Code of Ethics.

Qualifications:

Essential: A degree in Law and admission, or eligibility to be admitted as a Legal Practitioner

Desirable: A current practising certificate, or eligibility to obtain one, where required by the duties of the role

Key leadership competencies and expected behaviours at this classification:

Promotes strategic thinking and change

- ☐ Creates a shared vision and mission for the BU.
- ☐ Inspires and influences others to assume ownership BU goals.
- ☐ Leads teams in aligning their priorities within a broader organisational and political context.
- ☐ Champions sustainability and long-term improvement. Communicates effectively and leads others in times of change.
- ☐ Identifies and analyses difficult and complex problems that have organisation-wide impact.

Achieves objectives

- ☐ Delivers results and improvements to meet BU objectives by translating ideas into concrete plans.
- ☐ Anticipates future organisational needs, risks and uncertainties, and aligns systems and resources to meet these needs.
- ☐ Makes well-informed and timely decisions that affect the BU, even when information is incomplete and ambiguous.
- ☐ Interprets and abides by the laws, regulations and policies determining BU activities.
- ☐ Takes accountability for team/BU success and manages others to achieve outcomes.
- ☐ Monitors the performance of the team/BU, considers feedback information and seeks continuous improvement.
- ☐ Integrates technical expertise into the BU to achieve its objectives.

Leads business excellence

- ☐ Sets clear standards, manages risks, setbacks, and implements continuous improvement initiatives.
- ☐ Sets challenging but achievable goals/targets with relevant metrics based on market trends, developments and legislative changes to ensure business needs are continually met.
- ☐ Provides clear and timely recognition, promptly addresses under performance and lifts performance through coaching.
- ☐ Inspires innovation and ongoing learning, and plans strategically to meet BU goals.
- ☐ Drives outstanding customer service by enabling team members to anticipate client needs.
- ☐ Empowers others to use resources effectively.

Builds genuine partnerships

- ☐ Considers the impact of decisions and priorities on other business areas, adapting approach to meet organisational goals.
- ☐ Approaches negotiations with an understanding of key issues and is able to clearly communicate reasoning and justification to facilitate mutually beneficial solutions.
- ☐ Facilitates constructive discussions to mediate conflict and disagreements. Encourages diversity of thinking and differences of opinion.
- ☐ Identifies and develops key strategic relationships and networks to achieve goals, increase departmental knowledge and create communication channels.
- ☐ Proactively develops effective strategic relationships, networks and partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.
- ☐ Models inclusive behaviour and tailors communication style to meet the audience's needs.

Models personal drive and professionalism

- ☐ Maintains the highest level of integrity to embed ethical practice and organisation's values into the culture.
- ☐ Raises and challenges important issues constructively, and backs own judgement and actions confidently when challenged.
- ☐ Demonstrates resilience in responding to changing directions. Modifies approach, processes and procedures to fit situational changes within the BU.
- ☐ Demonstrates a high level of self-awareness and acts as a role model by openly communicating strengths and development needs.
- ☐ Champions a workplace that values respect, diversity and individual differences to build a culture of inclusivity.
- ☐ Establishes expectations and models best practice wellbeing and safety behaviours.

Approval:

Assessed by: James Johnson, Human Resources Business Partner



Date: 13/05/2026

Approved by: Mandy Smith, Director, Legal Policy



Date: 13/05/2026