

## **Legal Assistant, Indigenous Community Legal Clinic (ICLC)**

At UBC, we believe that attracting and sustaining a diverse workforce is key to the successful pursuit of excellence in research, innovation, and learning for all faculty, staff and students. Our commitment to employment equity helps achieve inclusion and fairness, brings rich diversity to UBC as a workplace, and creates the necessary conditions for a rewarding career.

### **Job Summary**

The Peter A. Allard School of Law, Indigenous Community Legal Clinic (ICLC) exists for two purposes: first, to provide free legal services to the Indigenous community in British Columbia, and second, to provide legal education to law students in the Allard School of Law. By enrolling in the ICLC program, students interested in advocacy, social justice and Indigenous peoples can gain practical experience and make a meaningful contribution to a historically underserved and marginalized community. Working at the ICLC gives students practical hands-on experience managing client files and making court appearances.

The Legal Assistant provides confidential, sensitive, program management and legal coordination of all aspects of the Clinic's legal service and operations. The Legal Assistant plays a key role in providing administrative leadership to ensure the ICLC works effectively to deliver advocacy and legal support to vulnerable, Indigenous communities. The Legal Assistant provides administrative and program leadership for the ICLC's legal client services, client advocacy, programs, and administrative management. The Legal Assistant provides leadership for the ICLC in managing its administrative relationship to Law Society of British Columbia, and to the Allard School of Law.

### **Organizational Status**

Reports to the Director's of Litigation Services; takes direction from the Legal Directors and supervising lawyers.

### **Work Performed**

#### **LEGAL CLIENT SERVICES**

- Explain the function of the ICLC to people who contact the clinic by telephone or walk in.
- Interview potential clients by phone or in person. Triage Indigenous peoples into the legal support services offered within the program.
- Compile and review client intake forms with supervising lawyers in order to assist in determining whether the ICLC can offer assistance, should open a client file, and the scope of work that will be involved.
- Lead all front-end communications to all accepted and non-accepted persons; suggest alternative sources of legal assistance as required.

#### **ADVOCACY**

Under supervision of supervising lawyer:

- Provide advocacy to clients, primarily by telephone, fax and email, regarding legal issues
- Advocacy may include: summary advice (under supervision of a lawyer), informal advocacy, providing written submissions, personal representation at tribunals, and appearing in court as agent to request adjournments.
- Manage administrative requirements of all ICLC client files, to sensitively and confidentially support files from triage to completion
- Reviews and determines legal merit of cases and determines the level of service to be provided.

#### DOCUMENT PREPARATION:

Under supervision of supervising lawyer:

- Assists students in the preparation of a variety of legal documents such as civil forms, affidavits, powers of attorney, representation agreements, and Wills
- Directs students to practice manuals or other materials for information on proper execution, certification, and methods of filing and serving documents; refers students to precedents, court rules, regulations, practice manuals, practice rulings and in-house manuals.
- Oversees the correct execution of all legal materials for the ICLC with the appropriate pagination, tabs, tables of contents, pleadings (provided by students or lawyer), exhibits, affidavits, Orders, Judgments and Transcripts in their proper order as defined by the particular proceeding.
- Maintains a precedent and protocol manual and creates memos on Clinic operations.

#### CLINICAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT:

- Coordinate the ICLC's annual student orientation and intake programs
- Coordinate event speakers, and lead all aspects of event coordination
- Lead information sessions during student orientations to the administrative and operational aspects of the ICLC, including protocols on legal intake, client document processes, and all other policies and procedures as necessary
- Manage the complex, confidential file storage of all legal documentation for the Clinic, including short and long term time-frames for storage and destruction of legal files in accordance with Law Society Rules.
- Manage and ensure the successful coordination of all legal meetings for the ICLC clinicians, Directors, and clients
- Oversees the review and submission of all documentation in adherence to the Law Society to ensure regularly compliance for the ICLC.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT:

- Manages the front desk and office of the ICLC for client intake and triage.
  - Organizes ICLC calendars and meetings as necessary.
  - Organizes internal databases, legal precedents, and templates as necessary.
  - Oversees all aspects of the Clinic's financial management and reporting; builds strong working relationships with the Allard School of Law Finance team to ensure the successful management of the ICLC operational budget.
  - Prepares Law Foundation of British Columbia reports and applications, including the monthly, semi-annual, and annual reports, as well as the annual funding application, working with the ICLC team.
  - Acts as ICLC administrative liaison with the: Allard School of Law, Allard Faculty and Senior-Staff, the Indigenous Legal Studies Program, the Law Society; Law Foundation; Indigenous Legal Studies Program at UBC; First Nations House of Learning at UBC; Continuing Legal Education Society of British Columbia; Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of British Columbia; legal practitioners and others.
  - Manages the physical space of the ICLC.
- Performs other duties as required.

#### **Consequence of Error/Judgement**

Errors in judgments during the intake process could result in the client being without legal representation. Failure to report errors could result in the client not receiving adequate representation. Failure to be sensitive to Indigenous issues and culture could result in alienation of clients or students and of the Indigenous community, resulting in loss of credibility of program.

**Supervision Received**

ICLC Directors' of Litigation Services and supervising lawyers.

**Supervision Given**

Monitors the work of temporary administrative support staff.

**Minimum Qualifications**

- Undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline, or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Knowledge of legal procedures and terminology.
- Excellent organization, management, or program coordination experience.
- Familiarity working in a university setting, with a focus on student learning an asset.
- Completion, or working towards completion, of a Paralegal certificate from a recognized institution. 1-2 years of Paralegal experience an asset.

**Preferred Qualifications**

Excellent interpersonal and communication skills

- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment, with minimal supervision.
- Ability to communicate and relate to Indigenous people and their communities.
- Ability to work independently in a fast-paced environment, handling multiple, simultaneous tasks, prioritizing and meeting deadlines effectively.
- Ability to work in a team environment and to take instructions.
- Ability to use own initiative and make independent decisions.
- Ability to draft routine correspondence. Ability to organize workload, identify urgent work items, and set priorities.
- Ability to cope with a heavy workload.
- Ability to exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality.
- Ability to deal with distressed, demanding and/or hostile clients.
- Ability to work effectively with a wide range of people including those with low incomes, physical/emotional disabilities, limited literacy, or otherwise disadvantaged.
- Ability to exercise empathy and to assist disadvantaged clients, including those with mental disabilities, those with low income, or those whose first language is not English.
- Ability to exercise sensitivity to aboriginal people's issues.
- A demonstrated awareness of the Indigenous community's cultural diversity.
- Ability to exercise a high level of professionalism