



Corporate Branch

EL1 Senior Legal Officer

Ongoing & Non-ongoing, Full-time or Part-time

Job reference: 26-06

VACANCY DETAILS	
Job reference	26-06
Position number	141193
Position title	Senior Legal Officer
Classification	Executive Level 1
Branch	Corporate Branch
Team	Legal Services
Location	Canberra
Salary range	\$131,199 - \$158,879 per annum + 15.4% employer super contribution
Security clearance	<i>The successful candidate must be able to obtain and maintain a Baseline security clearance or hold a current security clearance of an appropriate level.</i>
Contact officer	Michelle Baxter – Michelle.Baxter@pwss.gov.au
Vacancy Closing	Sunday, 6 September 2026 at 11:59PM AEST

Eligibility information

- This role is being advertised as both ongoing and non-ongoing. The role may be offered as either ongoing or non-ongoing subject to business needs and/or candidate preference. Where a non-ongoing position is offered, the role will be filled as a specified term vacancy for an initial period of up to 12 months.
- Under section 22(8) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, employees must be Australian citizens to be employed in the Australian Public Service (APS) unless the Agency Head has agreed otherwise, in writing.
- Candidates must be independent, impartial, and apolitical, and must be seen as such. A private interest disclosure form must be completed prior to an offer being made to disclose any material personal interests that may or may appear to influence a candidate's ability to discharge their responsibilities as an APS employee.
- Successful applicants will be required to undergo the process to obtain and maintain or continue to hold the required security clearance level for the role as indicated. All PWSS staff are required to have a minimum baseline security clearance prior to commencement.
- Successful applicants will be required to undergo a mandatory National Co-ordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC).
- The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service is committed to building an inclusive and culturally diverse workforce. We welcome applications from across our community including, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who identify as LGBTIQ+, mature-aged employees and carers.

About the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service

The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS) is a team of trusted advisors helping to build and maintain a safe, respectful, and inclusive parliamentary workplace through human resources advice, training and professional development, work, health and safety advice and trauma-informed complaint resolution and counselling.

Our terms and conditions of employment are governed by the Public Service (Terms and Conditions of Employment) (Parliamentary Workplace Support Service) Determination 2024 (the Determination). This Determination applies the terms and conditions of the *Department of Finance Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027* (Finance EA).

More information about the PWSS is available on our [website](#).

Our People and Culture

The PWSS is a friendly and inclusive workplace. We are outcomes focused and promote the APS Values and collaboration with our colleagues across Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces (CPWs) and the APS.

We value and champion the experiences, skills and perspectives of all employees. At the PWSS we support flexible work, including job-sharing, and encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and those with caring and parenting responsibilities to apply so we better represent the community that we serve.

We aim to increase our representation of Indigenous Australians and people with disability by having accessible processes, policies and practices, as well as utilising affirmative measures and the [RecruitAbility scheme](#).

Ways of working

To achieve our purpose and vision, we recognise that our approach to our work is as important as what we do:

- **Professionalism and Integrity:** We uphold APS values by demonstrating ethical leadership, maintaining independence, and ensuring trust and confidentiality in all interactions.
- **Collaboration and Tailored Solutions:** We work together with colleagues and clients to deliver customised, purpose-driven solutions that address unique needs while fostering open communication and diverse perspectives.
- **Continuous Improvement and Wellbeing:** We are committed to continuous learning, adapting to change, and prioritising the wellbeing of all stakeholders, driving better outcomes through feedback and a culture of accountability.

What we offer

- **Competitive Remuneration:** Begin your journey with remuneration that reflects your skills and experience, setting the stage for a prosperous career.
- **Supportive Team Culture:** Join a team where collaboration is key, and support is always at hand. We are committed to creating an environment where you can thrive.
- **Inclusive Workplace:** At PWSS we celebrate diversity. Your unique background, skills, and perspectives are not just welcomed but essential to our collective success.
- **Personal Development:** Take advantage of our career development opportunities, tailored to help grow and excel in your career. These are designed to meet the professional needs of both the agency and the individual. We invest in your future because your success is our success.
- **Flexibility:** We understand the importance of work-life balance, offering flexible working arrangements to support your needs.
- **Exceptional Facilities:** Working at Australian Parliament House comes with benefits, including free undercover parking, access to an onsite gym, pool, cafes, hairdressers, Westpac Bank, post office, physiotherapist and more.

About the branch

The Corporate Branch is responsible for the corporate functions of the agency including financial management, legal services, human resources (HR), ICT, security and property. The Branch works closely with internal stakeholders and shared service providers to ensure the agency operates effectively, remains compliant with legislative and policy obligations, and is equipped to support the evolving needs of PWSS.

About the team

Our in-house legal team is small but responsible for providing legal review and advice across all aspects of the PWSS. The team may draw on the assistance of external legal advice where required. The team is also responsible for ensuring the agency is compliant with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

About the role

The Senior Legal Officer is responsible for the provision of high-quality legal advice in relation to a wide range of government legal issues under the direction, guidance and support of the General Counsel. They will work in a fast paced and complex environment where they undertake legal work with a high degree of sensitivity and complexity. They will work collaboratively with internal stakeholders to understand their policy objectives, including their strategic and operating environments, so they can draft sound legal advice and effectively communicate legal risks and issues.

Key responsibilities:

- Drafting high-quality legal advice for internal clients. In particular, managing legal matters relating to privacy, information law, commercial law, employment law and work health and safety.
- Coordinating requests for external legal advice, ensuring procurement requirements are followed.
- Developing and maintaining strategic internal and external relationships, representing the agency in external forums and working with external legal professionals
- Working collaboratively with internal stakeholders to understand their policy objectives, including their strategic and operating environments, to draft sound legal advice and effectively communicate legal risks and issues.
- Ensuring compliance with the legal service directions.
- Supervising a member of the team, including providing performance feedback and development opportunities, setting priorities, managing workflows, and providing guidance.
- Contribute to the broader Corporate Branch and actively participate in planning and strategic initiatives.
- Other duties as required.

Our ideal candidate

The [APS Work Level Standards](#) (WLS) detail five characteristics that contain general statements about the broad job requirements, and operating context for each classification level. The PWSS is seeking candidates who possess the following job specific skills and attributes aligned to the corresponding WLS.

Additionally, the Secretaries' Charter of Leadership Behaviours sets out the behaviours Secretaries expect of themselves and SES and want to see in leaders at all levels of the APS. Regardless of classification, you will be expected to model and champion the behaviours outlined in the [Secretaries Charter of Leadership Behaviours - DRIVE](#).

Leadership and Accountability

- Ensure in-depth knowledge of and compliance with legislative, financial and administrative frameworks, government decision-making processes and agency guidelines and regulations.
- Provide expert advice on policy, complex problem solving and issues management for internal and external stakeholders.
- Engage with risk, including the conduct of risk assessment and risk management activities for area of responsibility.

Job Context and Environment

- Attain and maintain an extensive understanding of the role and responsibilities of the agency, including and understanding of the APS operating environment more broadly.
- Undertake work activities with an awareness of their possible impact on strategic, political or operational outcomes for the agency/program.

Independence and Decision-making

- Work with a high level of independence under broad direction with a concurrent need to resolve issues and deliver quality outcomes.

- Communicate and make decisions that are based on professional judgement, evaluating risks and in the context of a complex and changing environment.

Stakeholder Management

- Represent and explain the views of the agency at cross-agency meetings and other forums.
- Establish and maintain internal and external networks.
- Engage and collaborate with key stakeholders to identify opportunities, achieve outcomes and facilitate cooperation.

Management Diversity and Span

- Coordinate and undertake detailed or sensitive projects that impact on the strategic, political or operational outcomes of the agency.

Skills, experience & qualifications

- Demonstrated experience in a similar role, preferably within the APS or public sector. Small agency experience would be advantageous.
- Must have at least a Bachelor of Laws degree (or equivalent) from a recognised Australian tertiary education provider.
- Admission as a legal practitioner of the High Court or the Supreme Court of a State or Territory of Australia and be eligible to hold a practicing certificate.
- Substantial contemporary, relevant knowledge and experience in administrative law and statutory interpretation.

How to apply

If this opportunity sounds like it is right for you, then we invite you to submit an application through the PWSS's [careers](#) page on our website.

Your application will include:

- A 750-word pitch;
- A current CV, with a maximum of three pages;
- The details of at least two referees, one of which must be your current or most recent manager; and
- Your personal details.

If you are experiencing any difficulties submitting your application, please contact the Corporate Team via email to PWSSCorporate@PWSS.gov.au prior to the closing date.

Application pitch

The PWSS application process will require you to submit a pitch of no more than 750 words. Your pitch is your opportunity to tell us why you are the right candidate for the role, why you want to work for us, and what you can contribute.

When planning your pitch, you should take into consideration the role, key duties and attributes reflected in the “About the role” and ‘Our Ideal Candidate’ and ‘Desirable Experience’ sections and capabilities required in alignment with the [Work Level Standards and Integrated Leadership System \(ILS\) profile](#).

Your pitch should be written in an easy-to-read font and simple, consistent format. Build on information found in your resume by highlighting specific examples or achievements that will demonstrate your ability to perform the role.

Candidate use of AI

Please note that new APS-wide principles for AI in recruitment are in effect. The principles set the standard for the responsible and transparent use of AI in recruitment by agencies and candidates. Access the principles on the [APSC website](#).

RecruitAbility scheme

The [RecruitAbility scheme](#) allows for the consideration of people with disability for engagement or promotion in the APS where they meet the minimum eligibility requirements for a role. You will be asked to indicate if you wish to opt into the RecruitAbility scheme if you declare you have a [disability](#) in the Diversity section of the application form. You must tick the ‘opt in’ box to participate in the scheme.

Under the [scheme](#), a person that has declared a disability and opted in will be invited to participate in further assessments (e.g. interviews) if they meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy. Merit remains the basis for engagement and promotion.

Details about the RecruitAbility scheme can be found on the [APSC website](#).

Privacy

PWSS recognises and respects your privacy. Information supplied for this selection process will be handled in accordance with the Agency’s [Recruitment Collection Notice](#).

Who to contact

For more information about the role, please contact Michelle Baxter – Michelle.Baxter@pwss.gov.au.

Frequently asked questions

What is RecruitAbility?

RecruitAbility is a scheme that aims to attract applicants with disability.

Under the [RecruitAbility scheme](#) you will be invited to participate in further assessments if you choose to apply under the scheme, declare that you are a person with [disability](#) and meet the minimum requirements for the advertised vacancy. More information about the RecruitAbility scheme can be found by visiting the [APSC Website](#).

Merit remains the basis for engagement and promotion.

Can I request reasonable adjustment(s)?

If you identify as a person with [disability](#), our application form provides the opportunity to request and detail any reasonable adjustment(s) to ensure you can successfully partake in any and all stages of the assessment process.

We will facilitate reasonable adjustments to ensure that you can participate equitably in the recruitment process. Reasonable adjustments are not limited to persons with disability. For example, reasonable adjustments may include additional time to complete recruitment tasks, accessible computer hardware and software, or individual

needs relating to illness or injury. Please discuss your needs with the contact officer at any stage of the recruitment process. Requests will be managed sensitively and confidentially.

If you are the successful applicant, information on workplace adjustments required will be gathered as part of our onboarding process.

How will my application be assessed?

Jobs in the Australian Public Sector are classified according to expected levels of work and responsibility. For information about the expected capabilities and behaviours required, see the [APS work level standards](#) and the [Integrated Leadership System](#) (ILS) on the APSC website.

Your application will be assessed against the requirements of the job. Once the entire applicant pool has been assessed, the committee will create a shortlist of applicants. If your application is shortlisted, you may be asked to undertake further assessment.

What other assessment will I have to undertake?

Your application will be assessed on your ability to demonstrate that you can perform in the role, outlined in the Candidate Information Pack and in line with the relevant classification level. If your application is shortlisted, you will be progressed to a second phase of assessment.

We may use a variety of techniques to assess candidates. These may include:

- Interviews - held in person, by phone or video (MSTeams)
- Work sample tests

Your referees may also be contacted at any stage of the assessment process to validate your claims. We encourage you to advise them that you have applied for a role at the PWSS. You should feel confident that they will be able to support your application.

Am I able to request feedback?

Post-selection feedback is an integral part of all merit-based recruitment activities. Individual assessments are available to applicants upon request via PWSSCorporate@PWSS.gov.au.

How do I withdraw my application?

If you have submitted an application, but no longer wish to be considered for the position, you need to withdraw your application via email to PWSSCorporate@PWSS.gov.au. Once you withdraw your application you will be unable to re-submit it without contacting PWSSCorporate@PWSS.gov.au.

If you withdraw your application after the closing date, please inform the Contact Officer using the contact officer details located on the second page of this Candidate Information Pack.

What is a merit pool or merit list?

A merit list, or merit pool can be created as part of a selection process and be used to fill similar vacancies for 18 months from the date the original vacancy was advertised in the Gazette (APSJobs). If there is a ranked *order of merit (list)*, then applicants are listed in order of suitability (first, second and so on). The first offer of employment must be made to the highest ranked applicant. Any subsequent offer of employment using the merit list to fill the same or a similar vacancy must follow the ranking.

If there is a *merit pool*, offers of employment must first be made to candidate(s) in the highest group (example, *highly suitable* and *suitable*). The first offer of employment is made to the most suitable person remaining in the pool, assessed against the requirements of the vacancy. Any subsequent offer of employment is made to the most suitable applicant remaining in the pool, assessed against the requirements of the same or a similar vacancy to be filled. More information can be found on the [APSC website](#).

Merit pool sharing

The merit pool established through this recruitment process may be shared with other APS agencies at the discretion of PWSS.

What are the PWSS salary and conditions?

Our terms and conditions of employment are governed by the Public Service (Terms and Conditions of Employment) (Parliamentary Workplace Support Service) Determination 2024 (the Determination). This Determination applies the terms and conditions of the [Department of Finance Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027](#) (Finance EA) to all non-SES PWSS employees (APS1 to EL2).

The salary range will also be listed on the advertisement. Salaries are adjusted annually throughout the life of the agreement.

How long does the onboarding process take?

Following the recruitment process, if you are rated suitable and offered a position with the PWSS you will undergo pre-employment checks consisting of a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration form, National Criminal History check, security clearance confirmation, super eligibility and Australian Citizenship, prior to a formal offer being issued.

The onboarding timeframes can vary from 3-4 weeks, depending on your security clearance status. PWSS Corporate team will be in regular contact with you throughout the process.