



**Position title:** Professional Standards Officer Early Resolution Service (ERS) & Frontline

**Department:** Professional Standards

**Reports to:** Team Leader Early Resolution Services (ERS) & Frontline

**Location:** Wellington

### **About the Law Society**

The New Zealand Law Society | Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa is the professional body for barristers and solicitors in New Zealand. The Law Society regulates all lawyers practising in New Zealand and is the membership organisation for practising lawyers. With 13 branch offices throughout the country, the Law Society is the Kaitiaki (guardian) of the practise of law in Aotearoa New Zealand and the consumers of legal services.

### **Position Purpose**

To respond to and facilitate early resolution of a wide range of complaints and concerns raised about lawyers by the public and lawyers.

To process complaints and reports in accordance with Part 7 of the Lawyers and Conveyancers Act 2006, the Procedure Manual, Guidelines and Practice Notes issued by the Law Society.

### **Key Internal Relationships**

- General Manager Professional Standards (Regulatory)
- National Complaints Manager
- Early Resolution Manager
- Regional Managers and Team Leads
- National Prosecutions Manager
- Professional Standards Officers and Administrators
- Registrar
- Other Law Society branches and staff

### **Key External Relationships**

- Members of the Public and the profession
- New Zealand Law Society Standards Committees members
- Legal Complaints Review Officer
- New Zealand Lawyers and Conveyancers Disciplinary Tribunal
- Other relevant external bodies

## Accountabilities, Responsibilities and Performance Measures

Accountabilities/Responsibilities	Performance Measures
<p><b>General accountabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend to the 0800 line, complaints and inquiries emails.</li> <li>• Provide guidance and assistance to persons to make complaints or reports.</li> <li>• Assess whether a complaint meets the criteria for a complaint in accordance with the Act and regulations.</li> <li>• Ensure that all relevant information is collected before a complaint is referred to the Screening Panel or a standards committee.</li> <li>• Enter all enquiries, concerns, complaints and reports into the case management system and database according to requirements set out in the Procedures Manual.</li> <li>• Apply the complaints criteria and prepare papers, reports, and summary documents for the Screening Panel.</li> <li>• Facilitate the resolution of enquires and concerns where appropriate and undertake mediation or resolution of complaints where appropriate.</li> <li>• Respond to correspondence and telephone communications with complainants and respondents and their counsel.</li> <li>• Maintain regular contact with the parties to a complaint to advise of process and next steps in accordance with Key Performance Indicators.</li> <li>• Oversee and undertake recruitment of standards committee members.</li> <li>• Act in accordance with the directions of the standards committees under delegated authority, and the Act and all regulations, practice notes and procedures manuals.</li> <li>• Receive and monitor inspectorate reports and refer those of concern to the screening panel.</li> <li>• Attend screening panel and standards committee meetings as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds trust through excellent communication with internal and external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Facilitates resolution of enquiries and concerns.</li> <li>• Undertakes mediation, and facilitation early resolution of complaints</li> <li>• Establishes a strong relationship with screening panel and standards committee members, representing the organisation.</li> <li>• Encouraging a cohesive team approach to resolving complaints.</li> <li>• Produces papers, memoranda, reports, summary documents and agendas, and minutes to a high standard and provides these to the standards committee in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Works with the screening panel or standards committee to schedule regular meetings and establish a quorum</li> <li>• Consistently works in a proactive manner</li> <li>• Completes all actions and directions following screening panels and standards committee meetings in a proactive and timely manner.</li> <li>• Prioritises their own workload to meet objectives.</li> <li>• Works with their team in collaboration to achieve results.</li> <li>• Maintains databases and reporting tools to a high standard.</li> <li>• Case management system and databases are regularly updated with correspondence and documentation.</li> <li>• Investigations are completed and information gathered in a timely manner.</li> <li>• All parties receive regular communication and updates on progress of their cases.</li> <li>• Incoming correspondence is managed in a timely fashion.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as secretariat/investigator/legal researcher to standards committees under delegated authority.</li> <li>• Undertake investigations and collect information on behalf of the standards committee.</li> <li>• Prepare papers, reports, summary documents and draft decisions for standards committees.</li> <li>• Advise Standards Committees in accordance with the requirements set out in Procedures Manual, guidelines and practice notes issued by the Law Society from time to time.</li> <li>• Raise issues and risks on cases with Team Leader to enable further action to be taken and provide better transparency on complaint workflows</li> <li>• Advise the parties of the outcome of their complaint</li> <li>• Attend to enforcement of certain standards committee orders</li> <li>• Liaise with the Legal Complaints Review Officer as required including answering inquiries, providing files and reports.</li> <li>• Action Legal Complaints Review Officer directions e.g. for reconsideration by standards committee.</li> <li>• Assist with matters to be heard before the New Zealand Lawyers and Conveyancers Disciplinary Tribunal or the High Court if required by Prosecutions Manager.</li> <li>• Liaise with other teams in the Professional Standards Group as appropriate.</li> <li>• Represent the Law Society professionally in all dealings with complainants, respondents, and volunteer standards committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively contributes to team meetings; projects, working groups and other organisation activities.</li> <li>• Is able to present to external stakeholders on matters relating to the complaints handling processes.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of other aspects of the Law Society business.</li> <li>• Actively and willingly assists others.</li> <li>• Takes responsibility for their own development in conjunction with organisation training and coaching.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend training sessions on complaints issues, as organised by the Law Society.</li> <li>• Be a member of working groups set up by managers to undertake projects connected to the operation of the Lawyers Complaints Service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieved as required.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Other duties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All other duties as reasonably required by your manager.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved as required.</li> </ul>

### Safety and Wellbeing

The incumbent is responsible for:

- My own health and safety and that of my colleagues
- Reporting of any/all incidents and near misses

### Skills, Knowledge and Experience

To be effective in the position of **Professional Standards Officer ERS & Frontline** you must have the following knowledge, and experience:

- The position is suitable for a legal practitioner with a minimum of 3 years' legal experience or equivalent investigations and complaints handling experience. A practising certificate is not required for this role.
- Experience in property law and/or trusts and estates will be advantageous but not essential.
- Sound written and oral communication skills are essential. Written skills must include the ability to produce concise, well-structured, and well-reasoned material and to produce succinct summaries of complex and lengthy complaints. Oral skills must include the ability to communicate clearly with standards committee members (both collectively and individually) members of the profession and members of the public. Complainants and respondents are under pressure during the complaints process. Strong empathy skills are a must.
- Be prepared to perform under pressure. The Standards Committees aim to work to strict timetables, and an ability to meet deadlines and to plan and structure workload is required. This includes the ability to keep the work of several committees up to date simultaneously.
- Be flexible in the work he or she is prepared to undertake and help colleagues as required.
- Good judgement and a high level of discretion.
- Sensitivity to the demands of legal practice is required when dealing with busy committee members.
- A professional supportive approach to members of the public is also necessary. A high level of resilience is required.
- Excellent computer literacy and skills.
- Ability to work as part of a team and independently when required.