



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Creating Futures Justice Program Caseworker

Position title	Caseworker
Reports to	Creating Futures Program Manager
Responsible for	Developing relevant networks and providing comprehensive, holistic, intensive client-centred casework support to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders a genuine chance at creating a future that does not involve the criminal justice system. Provision of pre- and post release support and court support and advocacy for mainly Aboriginal offenders in the City of Sydney LGA
Location	Your position is initially based at the Weave Head Office in Waterloo Oval on Gadigal Land but you will be required to work at other sites during the course of your employment
Hours	Part time (4 days per week/28 hours per week)
Status	Part Time: All positions at Weave are dependant on continued funding and are subject to a 6 month probation period
Award	Social Community Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (SCHCADS)
Grade	SCHCADS SACS Level 4 Paypoint 1-4 depending on qualifications and experience. Weave hourly rates are above the SCHCADS rates. The current Weave hourly rates for Level Paypoint 1-4 are \$40.76 - \$43.85 exclusive of superannuation and annual leave loading
Benefits	Superannuation @ 10% and leave loading @17.5% plus generous wage packaging/salary sacrifice available

SUMMARY OF THE POSITION:

The degree of over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system is well known, as is the negative impact that this has on the wellbeing of the individual, their families and communities. Effective support of those leaving custody is recognised as essential to minimising the risk of continued contact with the criminal justice system, including reoffending. More broadly, good transitional support has a huge impact on the health and wellbeing of individual clients and their families and communities.

In 2018, the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) Report, Pathways to Justice – Inquiry into the Incarceration Rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples emphasised that prisoners who are released from prison without support to transition into the community are vulnerable to continued cycles of reoffending (ALRC, 2018, 314). This echoes the findings of the Council of Australian Government’s 2016 Prison to Work Report that there is not enough support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leaving prison, especially services that are trauma-informed and culturally competent (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016, 7).

Research shows that people in prison have a range of social, health, economic, education and disability related needs (Baldry et al., 2006; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2015; ALRC, 2018). Indigenous people leaving prison, or who are under corrective services orders, often have complex and multiple support needs, as well as personal and intergenerational trauma and long-term experience of disadvantage. These present significant risk factors for reoffending. Detainees released to the community often experience homelessness, poor mental health and high rates of illicit drug use; recidivism and premature death are significant risks in the months following release from prison (Baldry et al., 2006).

Funding models that favour short-term support for people post-release have been widely critiqued (Schwartz et al., 2020, 32-35), but for Indigenous people in particular, more intensive services that are longer in duration and involve meaningful levels of contact are needed (CIRCA, 33). Additionally, the Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia states that these programs need to adopt a holistic approach that targets multiple risk factors and that operate in several domains simultaneously (ibid). It is in this service context that Weave’s Creating Futures operates.

Weave’s Creating Futures is an intensive support service for people leaving custody or otherwise involved in the criminal justice system on bail, community orders or court diversion. It provides court support and advocacy and wraparound casework tailored to the needs and goals of each client. Creating Futures works with people aged 18-30 years living in, or with a strong connection to, the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide individual casework and case management support to clients with complex trauma histories and complex needs, including support with mental health and AOD issues, legal issues, housing, family issues, relationships, domestic violence, justice, education, employment, culture etc
- Provide court support and advocacy to endeavour to divert people from custody
- Pre-release exit planning with young people who are in custody prior to release
- Provide comprehensive, holistic post release support for people in the target group who are transitioning to community from custody
- Therapeutic/trauma informed case-management and counselling
- Intensive case management commences pre-release and continues post release. Client led case plan with achievable goals in relation to Housing, legal issues, health, mental health and wellbeing, education and training, relationships and family, alcohol and other drug issues, grief and loss, processing trauma, cultural connection and healing
- Work with the Aboriginal Cultural Support program to assist with your clients connection to culture, family and community through involvement in existing programs or those created for the young people in the program
- Facilitated access to the holistic suite of Weave programs and services including mental health and AOD support employment hub, creative arts programs and opportunities to give back via our leadership and advocacy programs and community development programs and events
- Collaborating and working closely with other services – housing, social security, police, health, mental health, employment services, drug and alcohol rehabilitation services, recreational and sporting clubs
- Establish and nurture relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community organisations to ensure they are aware of support provided by those services and therefore identify opportunities for collaborative engagement, or otherwise to make appropriate onward referrals when necessary
- Ensure that your practice is culturally safe and responsive with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities
- To understand and accept Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews surrounding family and kinship, and utilise such as a strength and resource in developing healing outcomes for clients and their families
- Provide Court support and diversionary program support
- Provide support with training and employment pathways by connecting young people to existing support
- Supported referral to other services
- Develop close working relationship with NSW Department of Corrective Services

- Use Weave's client database to manage client files, track client's journeys, record casenotes and case plans and measure client outcomes and satisfaction
- Ensure all disputes with both staff and service users are resolved according to the Weave complaints and grievance procedure
- Fully participate as a member of the Weave team
- Promote the service and its programs to the local and wider community.
- Participate in probationary review meetings and Annual Performance Review with your Program Manager and Management
- You may be required to perform other duties as directed from time to time to suit organisational requirements and which are broadly consistent with your role

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL WEAVE STAFF:

- Work as part of the wider Weave team displaying effective team membership and upholding the Weave values at all times
- Participate in Weave staff meetings, retreats, planning days, training and performance appraisals as required
- Perform all duties in accordance with the Weave Code of Conduct and Weave policies and procedures
- Maintain a commitment to EEO policy and WHS safety standards, ethical practice principles and a commitment to the principles of cultural diversity.
- Take responsibility to ensure Weave is a warm, inviting and hospitable environment for everyone to enjoy; treat people like you would if they were guests in your home
- Notice when things are untidy and proactively clean up as needed
- Make sure all visitors to the centre are welcomed and looked after including offering cups of tea, coffee, water etc. and that they get the assistance they came for, or at least information and referral if Weave cannot assist directly
- Hospitality is a shared responsibility of the whole of the Weave team and is included in the Position Descriptions of all staff
- Support and maintain a healthy, inclusive, positive Weave culture and embody the Weave values
- Expectations of workers roles can change according to the needs of the community and available resources

SELECTION CRITERIA:

1. Qualifications in social work, community work, welfare, community management or other relevant discipline
2. Excellent skills in managing complex community dynamics
3. Complex casework and case management experience.
4. Experience in youth work

5. Understanding of issues affecting Aboriginal communities, families, young people and children
6. A commitment to EEO policy OH&S safety standards, ethical practice principles and a commitment to the principles of cultural diversity
7. Able to work in a flexible and adaptable manner under stress
8. Common sense and an excellent sense of humour
9. NSW Class C drivers licence
10. Current NSW Working With Children Check clearance
11. NSW Police Check (If we interview you and shortlist you for the role, we will require you to complete a criminal record check. Having a criminal record does not necessarily exclude you from applying for the role.)

Desirable Criteria

- Understanding of the criminal justice system and trauma informed care
- Aboriginality