

# Position Description

<b>Position title</b>	Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP)
<b>Program/Unit</b>	Family Relationship Centre, Broadmeadows
<b>Classification</b>	SCHCADS LEVEL 6 - Dependent on qualifications and experience
<b>Position reports to</b>	Team Leader

## Organisational context

Established in 1997, MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop) strives to ensure all families are supported to provide children with a safe and permanent home, and the best possible start to their lives.

Continuing the child and family welfare programs of our three founding agencies - the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St Joseph and the Christian Brothers - we provide early intervention programs to support the most vulnerable families, and provide education, disability support, home-based care and out of home care for vulnerable children and young people in Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia.

MacKillop has almost 1,500 staff, operating out of more than 50 sites, and has forecast annual revenue for the 2022/23 financial year of over \$213 million.

Like our founders, we are deeply committed to our work, and are driven by social justice. We believe every child should be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation, and are a child-safe organisation that is committed to protecting and advocating for the best interests of children and families across all our programs.

Our work is underpinned by our values, and by a deep understanding of the impact of trauma, informed by the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is a blueprint for organisational change, which supports organisations to provide a safe, non-violent environment for people affected by trauma. It also supports staff and carers to form communities that are safe and caring, and to maintain a culture that reflects these qualities at every level within the organisation. MacKillop is the only licensed provider of training in the Sanctuary Model in Australia.

MacKillop is deeply committed to promoting diversity. Our diversity encompasses differences in race or ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, sexual orientation, language, age, religion, socio-economic status, relationship status, physical and mental ability, thinking styles, experience, and education. We believe that the wide array of perspectives that results from such diversity makes us more creative, flexible, accessible and productive.

## Our purpose

MacKillop Family Services continues our founders' passionate commitment to social justice - to work for the rights of children, young people and families to be safe, to learn, feel nurtured and connected to culture. We provide high quality services to promote healing from trauma and loss, and to enable hopeful futures.

MacKillop Family Services will care compassionately, respond large-heartedly and advocate courageously.

## Our vision

Children, young people and families are welcomed and supported by MacKillop to be empowered and thrive.

## Our values

We commit to the following five foundational values which we continue to embed in the culture of our organisation and practice:

**JUSTICE.** We believe in the right of all people to experience respect and to have access to quality services irrespective of sex, race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, marital status, disability, sexuality or age. We advocate for inclusiveness and social justice in the wider community and commit to these principles across our organisation and all services we provide. ***We believe in the right of all people to be treated justly and fairly.***

**HOPE.** We commit to creating positive and hopeful relationships where people find meaning in their experiences and relationships and are able to learn, explore their strengths and create possibilities for growth and change. ***We seek to foster hope that assists people to find meaning.***

**COLLABORATION.** In our work with individuals, families and other organisations and groups, we commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, partnership and empowerment. ***We commit to working in a collaborative spirit through cooperation, coordination, partnership and empowerment.***

**COMPASSION.** Compassion is an attitude of the heart, an expression of our shared humanity and a deep desire to alleviate another's suffering. We commit to creating an attitude of openness to others and to their circumstances. ***We seek to foster compassion, an attitude of the heart and a response to exclusion and suffering.***

**RESPECT.** We value ourselves and other people, the earth and all creation. We seek to listen and learn from each other and build relationships with respect, being proud of what we hold in common and with understanding and tolerance of our differences. ***We seek to act with respect with regard to each other, the earth and all creation.***

## Our Sanctuary Commitment

Our values are brought to life through our commitment to the Sanctuary Model. Sanctuary is an evidence-supported, whole-of-organisation framework that guides how we practice as an agency. Sanctuary enables a shared language, knowledge, and response to the impact of trauma and loss on all of us.

Our seven Sanctuary Commitments are as follows:

- Non-Violence - Mean what you say and don't be mean when you say it
- Emotional Intelligence - Look out for yours and other people's feelings
- Social Learning - We all learn from, and teach each other
- Democracy - Everyone is heard
- Open Communication - Be honest and share information
- Social Responsibility - We all help each other ... It takes a village to raise a child
- Growth and Change - Open to new ideas and ways of thinking

## Position purpose

This position is situated within the Family Relationship Centre (FRC) in Broadmeadows. The Family Relationship Centre is overseen by a consortium that includes MacKillop (lead agency) and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre.

The centre helps separating families achieve workable property and parenting arrangements outside the court system by providing information, support, referral and dispute resolution services.

The Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP) is a member of the Family Relationship centre team and reports directly to the Centre Manager.

## Primary objectives

This FDRP role has a focus on providing family and property mediation and dispute resolution services to separating families that are both child focused, culturally appropriate and with the opportunity for child inclusive practice.

The Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner's (FDRP) role is to help families with their relationships through the provision of parenting after separation programs, information and referral to a range of services.

## Key result areas and responsibilities

The Position Title will:

- Provide in-depth screening and assessment for both parties to the dispute, taking into account specialised needs such as family violence, mental health issues and addictions.
- Provide family & property assessments and mediations that enable both parties to understand their family and financial situation and the range of options by which they could resolve or manage it.
- Promote our family and property mediation services to the community, and to local services, agencies and community legal centres.
- Develop referral pathways for family and property mediation services within the FRC and from external services
- Work closely with the FDR Team Leader and with other FDRPs to support the ongoing development of the role and practices within the FDR program
- Undertake mediation and case coordination that promotes shared parental responsibility within workable parenting plans.
- Use a range of FDR strategies such as Co-mediation, Lawyer Assisted Dispute Resolution (LAFDR), Video conferences, Working with Child Inclusive Practitioners and Interpreters.
- Work in a way that is sensitive to the needs of CALD and Indigenous clients and establish a safe negotiating environment encouraging problem solving processes and strategies that manage power imbalances.
- Maintain client records and collect data as required to comply with service standards and program accountability.
- Use a range of technology and data bases.
- Use referral sources beyond the Family Relationship Centre that assist to support families and children.
- Attend and participate in group supervision, staff meetings, training, program planning, community meetings and work within Sanctuary frameworks.
- Be available one evening a week for some after-hours appointments for mediation sessions, parent information sessions, and parent assessments.
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities as required.

## Key selection criteria

The incumbent will have:

- A knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and values and an awareness of the current issues faced by Aboriginal children, young people and their families
- Tertiary qualifications in Law, Social Work, Social Sciences or equivalent.
- Possession of Graduate Diploma Family Dispute Resolution.
- Evidence of current registration as a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner with the Attorney General's Department.
- Knowledge and expertise of the Family Law Act as relevant to the work done as a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner.
- Experience in both Property and Family Dispute resolution
- Considerable experience in intake, assessment and case management.
- Demonstrated experience and understanding of the impact of family violence on separating families.
- Demonstrated ability to work with families with a range of complex needs including mental health and drug and alcohol issues or from CALD and indigenous backgrounds.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, with a demonstrated capacity to use highly developed communication both written and verbal to work collaboratively with team members, stakeholders and the broader community.
- Understanding and commitment to the objectives and values of the organisation.

## Other information

The incumbent is required to:

- Sign and actively abide by MacKillop's Code of Conduct.
- Observe and actively support MacKillop's P.8 People and Workplace Policy
- Observe and fulfil health and safety responsibilities as contained within 'WHS-P-001 Responsibility Statements' document
- Attend mandatory and other training as required.
- Actively participate in MacKillop's Bid Management process as required.
- Participate in and promote continuous quality improvement processes.
- Promote an environment that is culturally safe and strengths focussed.
- Abide by principles and commitments of the Sanctuary Framework.
- Incorporate cultural safety into your practice with Aboriginal families.

The incumbent must possess a:

- Valid and current Driver's Licence.
- Valid and current Working with Children Card.
- Valid and current NDIS Worker Check (for NDIS risk assessed roles).
- Satisfactory criminal history check conducted by MacKillop Family Services.

## Approval

• Director or General Manager's full name:	Rhiannon Walker	Date:	26 June 2023
Director or General Manager's position title:	General Manager		
Incumbent's full name:			
Incumbent's signature:		Date:	



MacKillop Family Services acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal children, young people, families and staff who are a part of MacKillop Family Services.



MacKillop celebrates and draws strength from diversity and respects the dignity of all people. Every person at MacKillop has the right to be safe and to be treated justly. We value every person's ability, cultural or linguistic backgrounds, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, relationship status, religious or spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status, and age.