

Position Description

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| Position title: | Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer |
| Position number: | Various |
| Group: | Corrections and Justice Services |
| Business Unit/Branch: | Corrections Victoria |
| Classification: | VPS 3 |
| Employment status: | Full Time – Ongoing |
| Position reports to: | Offender Services Manager |
| Work location: | Various prison locations |
| Position contact: | Name: Andrew Graham – Assistant Manager, Aboriginal EngagementPhone: 0419 687 836Email: Andrew.Graham@justice.vic.gov.au  |

Role Purpose

The role of an Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer is to

* Provide ongoing welfare, advocacy, and support for Aboriginal prisoners
* A demonstrated ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with members of the Victorian Aboriginal community
* Assist prisoners with access to appropriate pre and post release programs

The Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer (AWO) role was established under the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, as a response to the findings of the 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

AWO’s are part of Corrections Victoria’s commitment to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system and to ensuring that Aboriginal Victorians achieve the same justice outcomes as the broader Victorian community.

The AWO has direct prisoner contact being responsible for engaging and actively working Aboriginal people in custody. The AWO provides cultural, spiritual and wellbeing support and coordinates cultural activities and programs. This role will participate in case management of Aboriginal Prisoners, working with the multi-disciplinary team to support successful transition back to the community.

You will have an understanding of case management and a demonstrated understanding of the Victorian Aboriginal Community, both society and culture and the issues impacting on it.

As the AWO, you will also lead the coordination of cultural activities including NAIDOC events and Aboriginal specific programs within the prison.

***This is an Aboriginal Designated Position, classified under 'special measures' of section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. Only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible to apply***.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

* Provide cultural and practical support for Aboriginal prisoners through identifying their strengths, aspirations and obtainable goals for returning to a non-offending lifestyle in their community
* Interview and complete a wellbeing checklist on Aboriginal prisoners as soon as practicable following reception, aiming to provide information regarding available Indigenous specific programs and services.
* Provide cultural and wellbeing support to Aboriginal prisoners that enables individual pre and post release needs to be met, advocating on their behalf where appropriate.
* Assist Aboriginal prisoners to access programs and entitlements to assist with reintegration into the community.
* Assist Aboriginal prisoners to re-connect and/or maintain links with their families, community organisations and other support systems through advice, support and referrals.
* Participate in case management of Aboriginal prisoners, working with them and custodial staff to develop plans supporting transition back into community.
* Where required participate in case management review committees, sentence management reviews, parole board hearings and meetings that support transition back to the community.
* Provide cultural advice, support and guidance to the prison workforce about working with Aboriginal prisoners. This includes contributing to the identification of training opportunities for staff involved in the delivery of offender management to Aboriginal prisoners
* Coordinate cultural activities, including NAIDOC events, and programs designed specifically for Aboriginal prisoners.
* Support prisoners through bereavement contacting family to seek permission for attendance at the funeral, liaising with the Yilam and funeral director to support case workers in preparation of permits.
* Participate in team meetings, supervision sessions (group and individual) professional development activities and Aboriginal network meetings.
* Maintain appropriate file notes, intelligence reports and other written reports of engagement with prisoners when required.
* Collect data to inform the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of programs and services delivered.
* Attend cultural support sessions with the Aboriginal Engagement Advisor as required, and cultural debriefing services provided by the department.
* Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for that of others in the workplace by working in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's occupational health and safety (OHS) policies and procedures.
* Contribute to Corrections Victoria achieving its mission to deliver a safe and secure corrections system in which we actively engage offenders and the community to promote positive behaviour change.

Key selection criteria

Technical Expertise

* A demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the Victorian Aboriginal Community, both society and culture and the issues impacting on it.
* A demonstrated ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with members of the Victorian Aboriginal community.

Personal Attributes

* **Resilience:** Gives frank and honest feedback/advice. Listens when ideas are challenged, seeks to understand the nature of criticism and respond constructively; displays confidence and conviction when communicating an opinion.
* **Working Collaboratively:** Build a supportive and cooperative team environment; engages other teams to share information in order to understand or respond to issues; support others in challenging situations.
* **Promote Inclusion:** Pays attention to words, expression and body language; recognises behaviours that promote a culture of inclusion. Hold self and team accountable towards being inclusive to individuals from diverse backgrounds. Takes corrective actions when behaviours displayed do not promote an inclusive workplace.

Meaningful Outcomes

* **Partnering and Co-creation:** Identifies and partners with users/stakeholders/experts to ensure active collaboration in the design process to understand user needs, obtain ideas, insights and input. Work with stakeholders/users to build prototypes and coordinate testing to validate the strategy, program or product. Ensures decisions are made within agreed timeframes.
* **Systems Thinking**: Assesses situations and identifies the best systems tools for analysing, understanding the system and addressing problems; can apply system archetypes to identify common dynamics that appear in different situations; identifies and understands the impact of particular courses of action on other parts of the organisation or more broadly.
* **Future Focus:** Develops objectives that link to broader team and organisational objectives; takes into account future aims and goals of the team and organisation in prioritising own and others’ work. Integrates relevant technologies into own ways of working and supports others in this. Proactively stays up to date with best practice and leading developments relating to expertise and area of work.

Enabling Delivery

* **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Resolves issues through deep understanding or interpretation of existing guidelines. Where guidelines are not available, analyses ideas available and takes action through self, or in consultation with others to resolve problems. If required, determine additional information needed to make informed decisions. Applies critical thinking and problem solving concepts in the right context.
* **Project Delivery:** Defines tasks to be delivered to meet agreed outcomes; coordinates and guides others in the execution of work activities; monitors progress of tasks against plans and takes corrective action when required.

Authentic Relationships

* **Interpersonal Skills:** Sees things from another’s point of view and confirms understanding; understand motivations, needs and wants of stakeholders and their impact on service delivery; tailor communications according to audience and/or audience preference.
* **Stakeholder Management:** Takes steps to add value for the client or stakeholder; links people with other areas as appropriate; monitors client and stakeholder satisfaction; constructively deals with stakeholder issues.

Qualifications

* No relevant tertiary qualification is required by experience in dealing with the complex needs of Aboriginal people and community in complex environments and other relevant experience is highly desired.

Important information

* The salary range for this position is set out in the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020.Please refer to the Department of Treasury and Finance website ([dtf.vic.gov.au](http://dtf.vic.gov.au)) for further information.
* Department policy stipulates that salary upon commencement is paid at the base of the salary range for the relevant grade. Any above base requests require sign off by an executive delegate and will be by exception only or where required to match the current salary of Victorian Public Service staff transferring at-level.
* If you have previously left the VPS on a departure/ separation package, employment restrictions may apply.
* You may be required to mobilise to other areas to support priority projects or programs.
* The department is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment which is safe and without risk to the health of its employees.

Safety Commitment

* Staff safety commitment - Actively participate in health, safety, and wellbeing (HSW) programs and proactively report on all HSW incidents through the Justice Incident Management System (JIMS) to embed and support a strong safety-first culture that supports the HSW Strategy’s vision of “a workforce that thinks safety and works safely".
* Manager safety commitment - Create and maintain a working environment, that takes a zero-tolerance approach to unsafe practices and behaviours, which supports the HSW Strategy’s vision of “a workforce that thinks safety and works safely”.
* Child safety commitment - The Department of Justice and Community Safety is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We seek to prevent harm of any kind impacting children and young people and have zero tolerance for racism, child abuse and inequality.

Children and young people’s rights, relationships, identity, and culture must be recognised and respected, their voices heard, and their concerns acted upon. We aim to foster a culturally safe, child safe and child friendly environment for all children and young people we have contact with, deliver services to, or are impacted by our work.

Pre-employment checks

All appointments to the Department of Justice and Community Safety are subject to reference checks, pre-employment misconduct screening and criminal record checks. Some positions may also be subject to a Declaration of Private Interests (for executive and responsible officer roles), medical checks, and/or ‘Working with Children Check.’

If the position is based in a prison, youth justice facility or community corrections location, or has offender management responsibilities, employment may be subject to a number of additional pre-employment security and safety checks, including, but not limited to:

* Pre-employment Security and Misconduct Checks (Declaration Form)
* National Police Record and Fingerprints Check and International Police Clearance (if applicable)
* VicRoads Information Check
* Drivers Licence Check(s) (if applicable).

A National Police Check and an Australian Entitlement to Work Check is a requirement for all DJCS positions, and these checks require identification documents of either a passport or birth certificate.

For Aboriginal designated positions, a Certificate of Aboriginality will be required prior to an offer of employment being made.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants are strongly encouraged to email: aboriginal.workforce@justice.vic.gov.au for support and assistance if they have any concerns that they cannot meet the identification documents requirements.

Values and behaviours

Department of Justice and Community Safety employees are required to demonstrate commitment to:

**The Victorian Public Sector Values:** responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights.

**The Environment:** The department is committed to minimising its environmental impact and requires all staff to comply with its environmental policy.

**Recordkeeping:** The department is committed to good recordkeeping and requires all staff to routinely create and keep full and accurate records of their work-related activities, transactions and decisions, using authorised systems.

**Diversity:** The department values an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity and strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal people, people with disability, people from the LGBTIQ community, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

 Further information

Please visit About the Department on the [Department of Justice and Community Safety website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/utility/about%2Bthe%2Bdepartment/) (http//:www.[justice.vic.gov.au](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/)) for information on:

* Organisational values and structure
* Our policies such as privacy and conflict of interest
* The Victorian Public Service (VPS) code of conduct
* Our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children.