

POSITION:	Specialist Trauma Counsellor – Telephone and Online Counselling Service
REPORTING TO:	Program Leader - Telephone and Online Counselling Service
DIRECT REPORTS:	Nil
KEY RELATIONSHIPS:	Program Leaders, Manager, Client Services, CEO, General Manager Operations and Executive Team members
POSITION STATUS:	Fixed Term ending 31 December 2019

1. PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

Within the parameters of our constitution, service philosophy and the Strategic Plan established by the Board, and under the direction and supervision of approved **safe steps** staff, the Specialist Trauma Counsellor will work as part of a telephone and online counselling team providing highly specialised services to those whose lives have been impacted by domestic and family violence and/or sexual assault. The positions will be working within an established national framework based on the knowledge of best practice principles and requires the highest level of professionalism, ethical behaviour and compassion.

2. ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

safe steps Family Violence Response Centre (formally known as the Women’s Domestic Violence Crisis Service) was set up in 1974 as the Women’s Refuge Referral Service to provide a 24 hour 7 days a week telephone helpline for women experiencing domestic violence.

It is now a state-wide incorporated association funded primarily by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a range of services 24 hours 7 days a week for women and their children who experience family violence. **safe steps** is the primary contact and referral point for access to women’s refuges in Victoria. It provides a range of complementary family violence services from prevention, early intervention, response and recovery including:

- a telephone information, support, advocacy and referral service and
- a high security supported safe house accommodation service
- Counselling services

The organisation operates out of two separate work locations, one of which houses the 24/7 immediate response telephone service, strategy and development programs and administration, and the other, which provides safe accommodation **safe steps** is governed by a constitution and a Board of Governance with ten members. The Board elects its own chair and meets monthly to set the strategic direction and policy parameters for the organisation and its work. The organisation is managed by a Chief Executive

Officer who operates with a high degree of autonomy, and at the same time working closely and effectively with the Board. She attends Board meetings and services the work of the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring effective relationships with our funding bodies and with sector partners, and for developing protocols to ensure that the best possible services are provided to the women and children who need them. **safe steps** is a lead organisation in a wider network of domestic violence services in Victoria.

The organisation has an annual budget turnover of more than \$10 million; it employs more than 65 full-time staff, part-time staff, volunteers and students to support the work of the organisation.

The Specialist Trauma Counsellor is based at the **safe steps** office in Melbourne and reports to the Program Leader – Counselling Services, in accordance with Service philosophy, code of conduct, policies and procedures.

The Specialist Trauma Counsellor is expected to uphold the organisation's policies and procedures, State and Federal legislative requirements as well as the Department of Human Services Standards (DSS), which include the following obligations:

- to respect client confidentiality
- to obtain consent for the disclosure of information about a client
- to inform any client who wishes to make a complaint about the organisation of their right to do so, and to assist them to initiate a complaint

safe step's locations and unlisted telephone numbers may not be disclosed to any other person except in accordance with service procedures. The locations and unlisted telephone numbers of any high security refuges may not be disclosed to any other person other than in accordance with the instructions of each such service.

3. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Counsellors are responsible for assessing and providing appropriate trauma counselling to clients of the service experiencing either domestic and family violence or sexual assault, within a supportive and safe environment.
- Providing specialised counselling intervention tools and models dependent on needs and ensuring work is carried out to a high standard of professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Delivery of specialised counselling specific to the needs of ATSI and CALD communities.
- Provision of referrals and other additional services and support, based on the needs of the clients.
- Meet statutory obligations such as Mandatory Reporting in cases of children and young people at risk of harm.
- Escalate identified issues and clinical risks through the appropriate formal escalation channels.
- Adherence to a telephone based practice counselling framework.

- Recording all required data for internal information management systems and ensuring information is concise and secure.
- Undertake project and other activities as required, which is designed to improve the overall national service.
- Actively participate on on-shift and individual supervision sessions, professional development, in-service training and team processes.
- Operate effectively and harmoniously as a member of the team, continuously improving concept and service delivery.
- Ensure work practices are ethical and comply with the codes of the Australian Psychological Society; the Australian Association of Social Workers or the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia.

OTHER TASKS

- Build and maintain positive relationships with a broad range of stakeholders including 1800 Respect staff and interstate counselling service partners
- Abide by all organisational policies and procedures, including all workplace health and safety measures
- Carrying out other duties as requested by line manager, General Manager, or Chief Executive Officer including working up, across and down as may be required.

4. ESSENTIAL KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Build and maintain positive relationships with a broad range of stakeholders including 1800 Respect staff and interstate counselling service partners
- Minimum 3 year tertiary qualification in counselling, psychology, social work, social services or a related field is essential.
- Eligible for membership with a governing body of profession with either Australian Association of Social Workers , the Australian Psychological Society or the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia
- 3yrs minimum trauma specialist counselling experience (preferably telephone counselling) or full time equivalent experience in specialised sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling.
- Experience and understanding of issues relating to service delivery with an agency that is committed to socially and culturally inclusive practices.
- Understanding of federal and state based legislation including child protection legislation relevant to service delivery
- Demonstrated ability to work in a fast paced and high demand work environment, including working within agreed timeline parameters
- Well-developed oral and written communication skills including the ability to communicate effectively with a diverse range of cultural and social groups.
- Intermediate use of Microsoft office suite and keyboard skills
- Current Working with Children Check or capacity to obtain.

- Candidates must be available to work across a variety of shift times

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EXEMPTION

safe steps is exempt from the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 which would otherwise require the appointment to this position to be on non-gender specific basis. Applications for this position will be considered from women only (Exemption A366/2011).

6. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory background checks including a National Police Check (including an international police check if resided continuously in an overseas country for 12 months or more in the last ten years), Working with Children Check, disclosure of previous or current disciplinary action, referee checks, proof of eligibility to work in Australia and qualification checks.
- Where background checks are not to the satisfaction of **safe steps** in its absolute discretion, the offer of employment may be retracted or terminated.
- If you are offered employment with **safe steps** and are not currently an existing employee you will be required to disclose full details of any pre-existing injuries or illness that may be affected by the work and/or undergo a health assessment. The disclosure/health assessment is conducted to ensure you have the health and mental capacity to meet the requirements of the position and to identify any adjustments that may need to be made in the workplace. Failing to notify or hiding a pre-existing injury or illness which might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment, could result in that injury or illness being ineligible for future compensation claims.

7. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received, reviewed and fully understand the position description.

Employee Name	
Employee Signature	
Date	