



SENIOR LEGAL COUNSEL
1 Permanent Full-Time Position
\$120,083 to \$145,962

Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (FCSGW) is a not-for-profit Children's Aid Society, dedicated to enhancing the wellbeing of children, youth, and families in our community serving the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington. We are a compassionate network of staff, volunteers and caregivers working together with our community to create a nurturing, supportive, and inclusive environment for children, youth, and families. FCSGW is committed to the decolonization of the child welfare system while remaining focused on the safety and wellbeing of children and youth with their families. Fundamental to the work of the Agency are the foundations of Equity, Anti-Oppression, Diversity, Inclusivity, Accessibility, and Indigenous Justice.

POSITION SUMMARY:

Reporting to the Executive Director, Senior Legal Counsel is responsible for developing and driving the vision for Legal Services. They set priorities and guide implementation of strategies which align with agency mission, vision and values, integrating into service delivery.

Senior Legal Counsel is responsible for the direct supervision, coaching, mentoring and development of Staff Counsel, the Information and Disclosure Clerk and all members of the Legal Services Team. They oversee the day-to-day operations of the Legal Services Department, including administration, disclosure, and privacy.

Senior Legal Counsel provides legal consultation, acts as counsel in CYFSA and service-related matters and oversees the area of Part X, Privacy & Disclosure.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

Legal Service and Program Planning:

- Develops and leads legal and disclosure services, including those related to Part X, Privacy and Disclosure areas of the agency's strategic plan.
- Develops, guides, and implements processes to optimize effective and efficient legal practices.
- Ensures strategies and approaches integrate equity, diversity, inclusion and truth and reconciliation into practice.
- Builds a team and invests in the development of all members of the legal services team.

Legal Consultation:

- Assigns cases that require legal services to Staff Counsel, including assignments to oneself, and ensures prompt and effective legal file management to file closure; takes on the most difficult, political, significant, and challenging cases.
- Advises, monitors, and mentors Staff Counsel in all aspects of planning, organizing and delivering legal services to the Agency.
- Develops and manages trial lists and assigns Staff Counsel.
- Oversees Lawsuits and works in collaboration with Insurance Carriers and Outside Counsel as required.
- Provides legal advice and services to Agency staff on the interpretation and application of the CYFSA and other legislation pertaining to child welfare relating to the Agency's work.

- Acts as a legal resource to workers and service leaders, providing legal consultation and advice supporting the development of desired case management, focused on child protection outcomes for children, youth, and families.
- Participates in a collaborative process in selected case conferences and provides legal opinion to inform the service instructions that direct the Agency's approach to case management.

Court Related Activities:

- Prepares cases for presentation in court by coordinating the gathering of all information and evidence, drafting and/or reviewing pleadings, affidavits, briefs, orders, and other documents for filing with the court and preparing witnesses.
- Represents the Agency in all levels of the courts and tribunals in relation to the CYFSA and other statutes as needed, in both contested and uncontested matters.
- Negotiates settlements where possible.
- Represents the Agency with respect to any litigation involving disclosure of agency records.
- Represents the Agency in all matters before the Child and Family Services Review Board including complaint reviews.
- Ensures proper documentation of all legal issues, processes, and case activities, in accordance with established procedures.
- Prepares Minutes of Settlement and Settlement Conference Briefs.
- Provides assistance in the preparation of legal notice and documentation of court-related matters.
- Assists staff in their preparation to appear/participate in family law and related criminal matters relating to the Agency.
- Liaises with other outside agency lawyers with respect to court applications.
- Liaises with parents and/or counsel representing the parents and children's counsel or the Crown as the case may be.
- Maintains and analyzes data related to court activities and presents to the Leadership Team, the Board of Directors or other Stakeholders, as required.

Leadership:

- Exemplifies and inspires behaviours, actions and attitudes that are consistent with the Agency's vision, mission, and values.
- As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, participates in the development and successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Attends Board meetings as needed.
- Provides leadership for the operational success of the legal services team.
- As part of the Senior Leadership team, provides input and perspective from a full Agency viewpoint regarding organizational risks.
- Leads the department through periods of change as a positive "champion of change".
- Provides leadership to designated working groups, programs and/or committees such as case conferences.
- Participates in OACAS and joint CAS/community committees, demonstrating political acuity to ensure successful Agency representation and to share information with the Agency.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor of Law Degree and membership in good standing of the Law Society of Upper Canada.
- Minimum of 5 years of experience representing children, parents or a Children's Aid Society in CYFSA or Family Law proceedings preferred, with a minimum 1-2 years in a similar leadership role.
- Knowledge of over-representation and the barriers experienced by marginalized groups, specifically African Canadian/Black and Indigenous communities and 2SLGBTQ+
- Demonstrated understanding of Anti-Oppression, Anti-Black Racism, Anti-Indigenous Racism and work from an Equity framework

- Advanced knowledge of case preparation, presentation and litigation techniques and alternative dispute resolution strategies.
- Advanced knowledge of legislation governing child welfare including CYFSA, Family Law Rules, Rules of Evidence, Ontario Courts of Justice Act, any and all regulations and related statutes and OACAS Standards.
- Good knowledge of relevant CAS/industry system applications.
- Knowledge and experience in the application of law related legal theory and practice and the ability to transmit this through training, coaching, and mentoring.

If you don't see yourself fully represented in each requirement of the job, we still encourage you to apply. Research has shown individuals from underrepresented groups may only apply when they feel 100% qualified. We are committed to creating a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse organization and we strongly encourage all applicants with diverse identities and lived experiences to apply.

We are committed to creating an accessible environment for all. Please let us know if you have any accommodation needs.

This is an existing vacancy and we thank all applicants; however, only those considered for interviews will be contacted.

Some flexibility to work remotely is available.

Qualified individuals are invited to send their resume to:

Human Resources

Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County

employment@fcsgw.org

Posting Date: June 25, 2026