

# a career at the heart of State Government

As a lawyer at the Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (OCPC), you have the chance to pursue a unique and rewarding legal career at the very heart of State Government.

The preparation of legal instruments is a feature of legal practice in both the private and public sectors. But unlike private practice, where lawyers advise clients in relation to the law as it stands, OCPC lawyers are directly involved in creating new laws and changing existing ones.

Legislative drafting is one of the most important legal tasks carried out by lawyers in government. A lawyer in private practice may draft a legal instrument that affects the rights and interests of a handful of parties, but in drafting legislation OCPC lawyers draft legal instruments that may affect the lives of millions of people.

This impact is also often long-lasting—as any law student or lawyer knows, statutes can remain on the books for decades or even longer.

It would be difficult to find anything in private legal practice that offers lawyers a similar chance to engage in work of such lasting importance to the community.

Drafting legislation is a broad field of legal practice. OCPC lawyers draft legislation across the full spectrum of State law, and frequently develop substantial expertise in one or more fields.

The following is a selection of the areas of law that you could work in as a legislative drafter—

- ▣ Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage law
- ▣ building and construction
- ▣ constitutional and administrative law
- ▣ criminal law
- ▣ emergency and security law
- ▣ education and training
- ▣ electoral law
- ▣ fair trading and consumer law
- ▣ gambling and racing
- ▣ human rights
- ▣ industrial law
- ▣ land law
- ▣ local government and planning law
- ▣ personal injuries and accident compensation
- ▣ professional regulation
- ▣ public health and human services
- ▣ taxation
- ▣ transport, road safety and infrastructure law
- ▣ water, energy and resources
- ▣ wildlife protection, conservation and environment law
- ▣ workers compensation and occupational health and safety



## Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel

The Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel (OCPC) is the legislative drafting office for the State of Victoria. Established in 1879, it is one of the oldest government legal offices in the State.

OCPC employs around 20 lawyers and a similar number of administrative, editorial, printing, publishing and IT staff.

The Chief Parliamentary Counsel is Gemma Varley.

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A career with OCPC also offers a great opportunity for those with an interest in the workings of Parliament.

Naturally, the main role of OCPC is to draft Bills for the Government. However, OCPC lawyers may also be required to draft Bills for non-Government members of Parliament, and amendments to Bills as they make their way through Parliament. From this vantage point, OCPC lawyers gain a unique insight into the procedures and political processes of Parliament.

OCPC lawyers also have a critical role to play in the development of subordinate legislation.

Every statutory rule made in Victoria is either drafted or settled by our lawyers. OCPC helps to ensure that subordinate legislation is legally valid as well as legally effective. This is an important and interesting task—a substantial amount of subordinate legislation is made each year regulating a wide range of activities, which makes this task as significant in its impact on society as the preparation of Bills for Parliament.

## what qualities do we look for in a lawyer?

To be appointed as a legislative drafter you must be admitted, or qualified for admission, as a lawyer of the Supreme Court of Victoria.

An OCPC lawyer must have a solid grounding in the law in general, but that is only the basic foundation of what we look for. In addition, the following are essential traits for becoming a legislative drafter—

- ▣ clarity of thought;
- ▣ creativity and problem-solving skills of a high order;
- ▣ a flair for the written word coupled with a commitment to plain English;
- ▣ attention to detail and a passion for precision.

Legislative drafters are public servants as well as lawyers. As public servants, they are bound to uphold Victorian Public Sector Values, including integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and respect for human rights.

## location

OCPC offers a pleasant working environment that is located close to Parliament, at 1 Macarthur Street, Melbourne.

The “Paris end” of Collins Street is on our doorstep, as are the beautiful Treasury and Fitzroy Gardens.



## interested?

If you would like to find more information about OCPC and a career in legislative drafting, visit our website at:

[www.ocpc.vic.gov.au](http://www.ocpc.vic.gov.au)

Vacancies are advertised on our website and in the press, as well as on the main Victorian Government careers website at:

[www.careers.vic.gov.au](http://www.careers.vic.gov.au)

OCPC also offers summer clerkships to law students who are about to commence their final year of study, although we do not offer articles of clerkship.



The Victorian Public Service is an equal opportunity employer.

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