

## **JOB DESCRIPTION – CONSUMER OFFICER (LABASA)**

Position	Consumer Officer
Organization	Consumer Council of Fiji
Tenure	Three Year (Contract)
Duty Station	Labasa
Reporting to	Regional Coordinator Labasa

### **1.0 Primary Purpose**

To ensure that the Regional Office functions professionally, efficiently and effectively, and at all times meets and contributes to the Council's overall objectives. Responsible for the efficient implementation of the Council's ADR & Consumer Advisory programme and the Council's CIM and RPA programme in the Northern Division.

### **2.0 Organizational Context of Position**

The Consumer Council of Fiji (CCF) is a statutory body established under the Consumer Council of Fiji Act 1976 (Cap 235). The Council is expected to play a positive role in achieving a market place where consumers are well informed, confident and protected from unlawful, deceptive, misleading or otherwise, objectionable practices. The prime function of the Council is to drive real change for consumers based on these five themes-

- Delivering consumer knowledge, skills and information to all
- Championing and protecting the interests of all consumers
- Assist consumers in resolving complaints with traders and service providers
- Driving change (policy/procedures/practices) to benefit consumers
- Enabling consumers to make responsible choices

### **3.0 Council's Role**

The Council's roles are to:

- Improve consumers' ability to make informed decisions;
- Solve consumer complaints through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Advisory services and legal representation;
- Advise the Minister on such matters affecting the interests of the consumers;
- Collect, collate and disseminate information in respect of matters affecting the interests of consumers;
- Support or maintain legal proceedings initiated by consumers, where such support is deemed necessary;
- Make representations to the government or to any other persons or organisations on any issues affecting the interests of consumers;
- Conduct research and investigations into matters affecting consumers;
- Provide debt management and consumer credit advisory services to financially illiterate consumers;
- Conduct market surveillance to establish product prices and compliance with product labelling and safety requirements including misrepresentation

- Work in partnership with local, regional and international organizations to identify and understand emerging consumer issues, conduct research and campaign on issues in solidarity to change local and global practices.

#### **4.0 Responsibilities of the Position**

The key accountabilities of the Consumer Officer (Labasa) are:

##### **4.1 Complaints Management**

- Oversee the receipt, logging, categorization, and resolution of consumer complaints to ensure timely and efficient redress.
- Assist in handling escalated or complex complaints, ensuring fair and transparent resolution processes.
- Provide consumers with accurate information and advice regarding their rights, available remedies, and applicable regulatory frameworks.
- Coordinate with traders, service providers, and relevant stakeholders to negotiate resolutions for consumer grievances.
- Monitor and evaluate the status of open complaints, ensuring cases are resolved within the set timelines.

##### **4.2 Consumer Advisory Services**

- Deliver high-quality advisory services to consumers, empowering them with knowledge of their rights and options for redress.
- Provide tailored guidance to consumers facing specific challenges, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary information to resolve disputes effectively.

##### **4.3 Mediation Support**

- Assist the Manager ADR in organizing and facilitating mediation sessions to resolve disputes between consumers and traders/service providers.
- Prepare case summaries and mediation records, ensuring all processes and outcomes are documented accurately.
- Actively participate in mediation sessions, providing expert advice and support to ensure fair resolutions.
- Liaise with stakeholders to build cooperation and trust, improving the effectiveness of mediation processes.

##### **4.4 Data Management and Analysis**

- Maintain accurate and updated records of all complaints, advisory services, and mediation cases within the Complaints Management System (CMS).
- Analyze complaint trends and systemic issues, providing insights to support advocacy and service improvement strategies.
- Generate periodic reports on complaints and mediation outcomes for submission to the Manager ADR.
- Utilize data to identify emerging consumer protection issues and recommend proactive solutions.

#### **4.5 Campaigns and Awareness Raising**

- Carry out all education, information and awareness work for the Council in the Western Division.
- Initiate and organize all information production and dissemination, education and awareness program effectively and efficiently.
- Organize and execute campaign activities.
- Draft Press Releases and Consumer Alerts on consumer complaints/issues.
- Contribute towards the production of the Newsletter & Annual Reports as directed by the Regional Coordinator/Manager CIM.
- Prepare and assist in the dissemination of information to consumers to reduce consumer complaints.
- Deliver oral presentations to consumers and stakeholders as directed by the Regional Coordinator.
- Assist in developing and mounting awareness-raising on key consumer issues.
- Represent the Council at key engagements such as stakeholder consultation and meetings on behalf of the Regional Coordinator. Provide assistance to students on consumer enquiries as and when required.

#### **4.6 Research and Policy Support**

- To conduct regular market surveillance, trader and service visits and necessary follow-ups and produce reports on these market surveillance, trader/service visits in the Western Division.
- Provide information on what research is already available in a policy area including in cross cutting areas involving economic and social development matters, towards preparation of papers and technical presentations as required.
- Coordinate the day-to-day activities of interns and volunteers attached to the RPA Division.

#### **4.7 Stakeholder Engagement**

- Build and maintain strong relationships with traders, service providers, and regulatory agencies to facilitate efficient complaint resolution and collaboration.
- Represent the Council in meetings, workshops, and consultations related to consumer protection and advocacy.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to address systemic consumer issues and promote fair trade practices.

#### **4.8 Capacity Building and Team Support**

- Provide guidance and mentorship to junior officers, ensuring consistent adherence to the Council's policies and standards.
- Participate in training programs and workshops to enhance knowledge and skills in complaints handling, mediation, and consumer advocacy.
- Support the Regional Coordinator and Manager ADR in identifying opportunities for process improvement within the Division.

#### **4.9 National Consumer Helpline (NCH) Support**

- Monitor complaints received through the NCH, ensuring accurate logging and resolution.
- Provide advisory and follow-up support for consumers using the Helpline.
- Collaborate with Helpline staff to identify recurring consumer issues and suggest improvements to service delivery.

#### **4.10 Work Programme and Reporting**

- Prepare Monthly Reports of the Alternative Dispute and Consumer Advisory Division and submit to the Regional Coordinator.
- Prepare Quarterly Reports and submit to Regional Coordinator.
- Assist Regional Coordinator -Lautoka in reviewing and developing Work Plan and Business Plan for the Western Division.
- Produce weekly, monthly and quarterly activity reports.
- Attend to reception duties, dispatch or collection of mails, refreshments for meetings, telephone calls and register.
- Obtain quotations for office equipment's.
- Maintain file and update Councils documents.

### **5.0 Key Selection Criteria**

#### **5.1 Qualifications**

- A Degree in Law, Communication, Journalism, Business Studies, Social Sciences or Economics, Office Administration or Customer Service.

#### **5.2 Technical Expertise**

- At least 2 years of demonstrated experience in mediation, information dissemination, education or awareness work.
- Ability to conduct market surveillance and price surveys.
- A commitment to consumer justice.
- Good knowledge of consumer issues nationally and internationally.
- Good knowledge of consumer legislation and practices.
- Should have excellent analytical and research skills.

#### **5.3 Key Skills and Competencies**

- Excellent communication skills (oral and written) and the ability to communicate fluently in English and another vernacular.
- Ability to resolve complaints through ADR processes.
- Ability to assess multiple sides of an issue.
- Ability to make decisions.
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills.
- Strategic thinker, innovative, performance driven and an effective decision maker when dealing with complaints.
- Must have excellent analytical and people skills.
- Excellent negotiation skills.
- Ability to interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds both internal and external.
- Must possess excellent interpersonal skills, self - motivation, and good organizational skills.
- Ability to work in a high volume, high pressure environment.
- Ability to work constructively as an individual and as part of a close-knit team.
- Must be a critical thinker and be able to work independently.
- Ability to multi – task.
- Self - Starter, self - organized and motivated.

- Understanding of Council's obligations to statutory agencies.
- Demonstrated ability to maintain confidentiality and neutrality in a sensitive environment.
- Demonstrated ability to work under minimum supervision and heed directives.
- Adheres to the CCoF communication standards, formats, procedures and style.
- Places the team's agenda before any personal agenda.
- Keeps abreast of current developments in own area of specialization and brings new ideas to the team.

## 6.0 Contacts

This position has regular contacts with the following organizations:

- Government Ministries/Department
- Relevant Statutory Organizations
- Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Commercial Organizations
- Bureau of Statistics
- Various Traders and Respondents to complaints
- Consumers
- Other Consumer Protection Agencies

## 7.0 Challenges and Impact on Organization Results

The challenges facing the position holder include the development of effective communication with the consumers and traders. It also requires building relationships with other organization including media, schools, NGOs, community groups, traders and service providers for consumer redress. The incumbent has to develop and maintain knowledge of monopolies and multinational companies to understand the strategies used which may not be fair to the consumers.

The incumbent is expected to take a positive approach to these challenges and develop creative/innovative approaches to handle them. Lateral and strategic thinking is often required to come up with effective and achievable approaches.

The incumbent needs to be strongly consumer-focused and, frequently needs to prioritize and manage multiple tasks/demands set by circumstances.

Taking a humble approach in understanding the plight of every consumer (whatever their state of mind or socio-economic background) and rendering the best service possible.

## 8.0 Organisation Structure

Immediate supervisor: Regional Coordinator – Labasa

Positions Reporting To You	No of Staff Reporting To Them
None	None