

Rural financial counsellors

National selection documentation

Job description

Rural financial counsellors provide assistance to primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses experiencing financial difficulties by analysing their financial circumstances and identifying their financial and business options. Rural financial counsellors help clients identify ways to become self-reliant and better equipped to manage change and adjustment.

Rural financial counsellors should apply a case management approach to assist clients to identify the actions they need to take to achieve self-reliance and record progress against those actions so that clients can reach a recognisable, clearly defined outcome.

Rural financial counsellors do not provide financial advice, family, emotional or social counselling or prepare farm succession plans but they can provide referrals to appropriate professionals.

A current driver's licence is essential and frequent travelling is required. Some after hours work may be required. Rural financial counsellors located in remote areas will often be required to work without direct day-to-day supervision. However, they are all subject to regular performance reviews.

Rural financial counsellors are required to undertake ongoing professional development. Rural financial counsellors may be required to transfer to other locations to address both short and long term service needs.

Duty statement

1. Analyse clients' farming or business activities and financial circumstances and provide objective information to help them identify their financial and business options for business improvement or adjustment.
2. Provide case management support to clients where appropriate, with the aim of assisting the clients to achieve self-reliance and being better equipped to manage future change.
3. Facilitate clients' negotiations with lenders and financial institutions in the presence of the client or with the written authority of the client.
4. Provide information on government and other assistance schemes (including industry and community-based programs) to facilitate clients' participation in such programs.
5. Provide referrals to appropriate professionals, such as accountants, lawyers, social counsellors, agricultural advisers and educational services, and to Centrelink and other relevant government agencies.
6. Maintain client records and electronic data and provide reports as required by the Rural Financial Counselling Service, the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the relevant state government department.

Selection criteria

1. Demonstrated ability to prepare detailed financial analyses for clients and the ability to develop and present a range of financial and business options for business improvement or adjustment, with a focus on helping clients adapt and change.
2. Ability and preparedness to provide case management support to clients to develop their capacity to take control over the financial affairs of their enterprise and help them adapt and change.
3. High level of oral communication, interpersonal, mediation and networking skills, including the ability to communicate with diverse cultural groups.
4. Demonstrated ability to self-motivate and to plan, manage and report on work, and to prioritise and meet competing deadlines while working as part of a dispersed team.
5. Demonstrated understanding of rural issues, including farm enterprise activities and business management issues.
6. Demonstrated computer skills, including skills with word-processing software, financial analysis spreadsheets, data entry and email.
7. Demonstrated awareness and understanding of the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) issues relating to employment as a rural financial counsellor.

Minimum qualifications

- Diploma in Community Services (Financial Counselling)
 - Applicants who do not have the diploma must be prepared to begin the diploma within six months of appointment and complete it within two years. Applicants who have other relevant post-secondary qualifications may be able to access recognition of prior learning. Applicants with significant relevant work experience may be able to undertake recognition of current competencies.
- Current unrestricted driver's licence.

Police Checks

Successful applicants may be required to undergo a police check.

The fitness of applicants to perform the role of a rural financial counsellor may depend on the results of a criminal history check performed by the relevant police authority.

Selection process

Applicants should address each individual selection criteria in writing in their application.

If selected for interview, applicants should provide two referee reports with comments against each selection criteria. At interview, applicants may be asked to demonstrate competencies in financial analysis, the development of business options and interpersonal skills.

Total remuneration package: \$68 000–\$78 000

The remuneration range for rural financial counsellors is standardised nationally. The total package may include elements such as salary, superannuation, private use of a car or mobile phone and subsidised housing.