

Legal Aid ACT



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

WHO WE ARE

Legal Aid ACT was established under the *Legal Aid Act 1977*, and acts independently of government. We aim to inform people of their legal rights and obligations, and to improve their access to the justice system.

There are legal aid services in every Australian state and territory. If you live outside the ACT we can put you in touch with a legal aid service in your area.

WHAT WE DO

Legal Aid ACT offers free legal information, referral and advice to everyone in the ACT community. We also provide ongoing legal assistance and representation to people who cannot afford a private lawyer (eligibility criteria apply).

LEGAL ADVICE AND INFORMATION

We provide a number of free services for mental health clients in the ACT. There is no means test for any of these services.

Mental health duty lawyer service at the hospital

People who have been detained in hospital under the *Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994* can be advised and assisted by a legal aid duty lawyer. If you have been detained, please contact 1300 654 314 for assistance and/or to arrange an appointment for a lawyer to come and see you.

By phone

Contact the Legal Aid Helpline on 1300 654 314 (8.30am-5pm) weekdays.

By appointment at the Legal Aid office

Phone 6243 3411 for an appointment at our Civic office. When you come to the appointment, please bring all of your documents with you.



LEGAL ASSISTANCE

If you need ongoing legal assistance or representation, you can apply for a grant of legal assistance.

If you are currently on a psychiatric treatment order or community treatment order and it is coming up for review, legal aid may be able to assist you (eligibility criteria apply). Please call 1300 654 314 for more information.

Contributions

Most grants of legal assistance are given on the condition that you pay a contribution towards the costs of providing the assistance. For further details see our pamphlet 'Applying for a grant of legal assistance'.

What if your application is refused?

You can ask legal aid to reconsider a:

- refusal to grant you legal assistance;
- decision about a contribution;
- decision to stop or change your grant of legal assistance;
- decision to limit the type or extent of legal assistance you are receiving

You should write a letter to the Chief Executive Officer of Legal Aid ACT at our postal address stating your reasons and including all the information you think is relevant. Send your letter to legal aid within 28 days of finding out about the decision.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the appeal, you can request an independent review of the decision. To request a review write to the Chief Executive Officer, again with your reasons, within 28 days of finding out about the outcome of the appeal.

Complaints and suggestions

If you have any complaints or suggestions to make about our services, please write to the Chief Executive Officer at our postal address.

Interpreter

If you need an interpreter, please contact Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450.

