

# Need legal help?

## Ask Legal Aid Queensland

Legal Aid Queensland helps people who have a legal problem but can't afford to pay a lawyer. We are an independent, government-funded legal service committed to helping the most disadvantaged members of our community.

### How can Legal Aid Queensland help me?

You can get free legal information to help you work out your legal problem by visiting our website, calling our Client Information Service Centre on 1300 65 11 88 or visiting one of our 14 offices. Our experienced client information officers will listen to your problem and may be able to give you some general legal information to help you. They will also tell you about our services and how to access them.

If your problem is more serious, and you meet our eligibility criteria, you can arrange to discuss it with a lawyer at a legal advice session. By applying eligibility criteria, this will help us manage demand and ensure our services are targeted at those who need them the most. You can get legal advice over the phone or face-to-face by visiting one of our offices around Queensland.

### Am I eligible for advice?

To be eligible for legal advice, your combined household income must be less than \$111,020 a year (\$2,135 a week) unless you are:

- experiencing domestic or family violence
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- under 18
- a prisoner.

If you're not sure whether we can help with your legal problem, just call us and ask. If we can't help, we'll refer you to someone who can.

### What legal problems can you help me with?

We provide legal help for criminal, family and civil law problems. Some problems we can help with include:

- You've separated or divorced and need help working out where the children will live, how to divide your assets or child support issues.



- You've experienced violence in your relationships.
- You or your child need help with a child protection matter.
- You've been accused of breaking the law or been charged with a crime.
- You've been the victim of a consumer rip-off, been added to a credit blacklist, harassed by debt collectors or you're having trouble paying loans.
- You've been unfairly discriminated against because of your race, age, gender identity, sexuality or family responsibilities.

#### We can't help you with:

- commercial transactions or dealings with real estate
- personal injury
- will making/preparing powers of attorney
- taxation and superannuation
- planning and environmental law
- local government matters
- matters where you're representing a company, business, club or association.

### Can I get a lawyer to represent me in court?

Legal Aid Queensland may be able to provide a lawyer to represent you. This service is means and merit tested—we will look at what you earn, what you own and if your case has a good chance of success to decide if you are eligible for legal aid. We use the means and merit test to make sure we spend our limited funding on the most needy cases.

If you rely solely on Centrelink payments for your income, you will usually pass the income section of our means test. You will however, still need to be assessed under the assets section of the means test. Young people aged 17 years and under don't have to meet the means test to be eligible for aid, but may have to meet other guidelines.

## How do I apply for legal aid?

You need to complete an application form, which you can get from our offices throughout Queensland or from our website at [www.legalaid.qld.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au). Your application for aid is more likely to succeed if you get legal advice before you apply.

Our Grants team will assess your application to see if it meets our guidelines. If you are eligible for aid, we will send you a letter and let you know what to expect. If not, we will let you know how to appeal the decision.

## Who will represent me?

If your application is approved, you will be represented by a lawyer from our legal practice or from a private law firm which takes on legal aid cases. All of our lawyers are qualified and many are experts in their fields.

Our staff receive ongoing training to keep them up to date with advances in the law. Lawyers from our legal practice and external law firms are also regularly audited to ensure they are providing the highest standard of service to our clients.

## Will I have to pay any legal costs?

If your application for legal aid is approved, you may have to make a payment towards your legal costs. Whether you have to pay depends on your legal problem and your financial situation. We will write to you to let you know if you have to contribute to your legal costs.

If you have any questions about whether you will have to make a payment, please contact us.

By asking clients to make a contribution to their legal costs, we can provide legal services to more people.



## Is your help confidential?

Yes. Our services are confidential and we are committed to protecting our clients' privacy. We will not provide your personal information or details about your legal problem to anyone, unless we are legally required to.

## Can you organise an interpreter?

Yes—we can organise for an accredited interpreter to help you. We are committed to making our services accessible to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disabilities.



If you would like this factsheet explained in your language, please phone the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 1450 to speak to an interpreter. Ask them to connect you to Legal Aid Queensland. If you have a hearing or speech impairment please call the TTY service on (07) 3238 3023. These are free services.

*“I went to one of Legal Aid’s family law conferences after my divorce. It meant I could work out arrangements for the kids without the drama of going to court. I think that was better for everyone involved.”*

## How do I provide feedback or make a complaint?

Your feedback—complaints, compliments and suggestions—is welcome and we take it seriously.

To make a comment about the service you received from Legal Aid Queensland, you can complete our client feedback form. The form is available from your local Legal Aid office and our website.

You can also give us feedback by writing to us at GPO Box 2449, Brisbane, Qld, 4001, or calling 1300 65 11 88.

## Your local Legal Aid Queensland office:

### BRISBANE

44 Herschel St, 4000

### BUNDABERG

3rd Floor, WIN Tower,  
Cnr Quay & Barolin Sts, 4670

### CABOOLTURE

Ground Floor, Kingsgate  
42 King St, 4510

### CAIRNS

Level 2, Cairns Square Complex,  
42-52 Abbott St, 4870

### INALA

Level 1, Inala Commonwealth  
Offices, 20 Wirraway Pde, 4077

### IPSWICH

Level 7, 117 Brisbane St, 4305

### MACKAY

Ground Floor,  
17 Brisbane St, 4740

### MAROOCHYDORE

Ground Floor, M1 Building  
1 Duporth Ave, 4558

### MOUNT ISA

6 Miles St, 4825

### ROCKHAMPTON

Ground Floor, 35 Fitzroy St, 4700

### SOUTHPORT

Level 2, 7 Bay St, 4215

### TOOWOOMBA

1st Floor, 154 Hume St, 4350

### TOWNSVILLE

3rd Floor, Northtown  
280 Flinders St, 4810

### WOODRIDGE

1st Floor, Woodridge Place,  
Cnr Ewing Rd & Carmody St, 4114

**For more information  
about our services visit  
[www.legalaid.qld.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au)  
or phone 1300 65 11 88.**

