

# Are you in a prison and need legal help?

## Ask the Prison Legal Advice Service

If you're in a correctional centre and need legal advice, Legal Aid Queensland's prison legal advice lawyers can help you over the phone, via videoconference or by meeting with you at the prison.

### What is the Prison Legal Advice Service?

We offer free legal help to prisoners in Queensland's correctional centres. Our prison legal advice lawyers provide legal information and advice either face-to-face, via videoconference or over the phone.

### How do I get legal help if I am in a correctional centre?

If you're in a correctional centre and need legal help, you should try and talk to one of our prison legal advice lawyers.

You will need to make an appointment by putting your name down on the Legal Aid prison legal advice list at your correctional centre.

### You can put yourself on the prison legal advice list by:

- calling Legal Aid Queensland using the Prisoner Telephone System
  1. enter your Inmate ID number
  2. enter your four digit PIN
  3. enter \*#04
- speaking to the correctional officer in your unit
- getting a friend or family member to call Legal Aid Queensland on 1300 65 11 88 and booking you in (local call costs apply)
- speaking to the correctional centre counsellor (if you need special help and you think the counsellor should call on your behalf).

### Can you help me lodge an appeal against my conviction or sentence?

Yes. We can help you prepare and lodge a Notice of Appeal against your conviction or sentence. You can also apply for legal aid for a lawyer to help argue your appeal in court. When we assess applications, we look at a person's financial situation (what they earn and own) and whether their case has merit — eg whether it is more likely to succeed than fail in court.

Strict time limits apply when you are trying to appeal a conviction or sentence. You only have one calendar month from when you were convicted or sentenced to lodge your appeal. This is why it is important to see the prison legal advice lawyer as soon as possible.

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*“You should get legal advice immediately if you have just been charged with a criminal offence and are due to appear in court.”*

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### How can the legal advice service help me?

The prison legal advice service can provide free legal information and advice.

If you have ongoing legal matters and you're not already represented, you may be asked to fill out an application for legal aid when you first speak to the Prison Legal Advice Service.

If your application is approved a solicitor will be appointed to represent you in court.

It is important you apply for legal aid so you have a lawyer to represent you when you go to court. You don't want to keep going to court and have your matter adjourned again and again.

## Can you help if I've been refused bail?

If bail has been refused by a magistrate, you may be able to apply to the Supreme Court for bail.

You should contact your own personal solicitor or get legal advice from the prison legal advice lawyer. The prison legal advice lawyer will be able to explain how the process works and what you need to do next.

## Can you help with other legal problems not related to the reason I am in prison?

Yes. If you have a civil or family law problem we can still provide legal information and advice. For example, we can offer legal help so you can try and:

- arrange to see your children
- resolve your debt problems.

## What if I've been remanded in a correctional centre?

You should get legal advice as soon as you can and immediately ask to be placed on the prison legal advice list.

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*"If your application for legal aid is approved, a lawyer will be appointed to represent you in court."*

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## Can you help with parole or other issues at the correctional centre?

If you have problems with parole, classification or other administrative matters within your correctional centre, the Prisoners' Legal Service (a separate organisation from Legal Aid) may be able to help you.

Ask about the free Prisoners' Legal Service phone line available from your correctional centre. Friends or family can call the service on your behalf on (07) 3846 3384 or 1800 813 940 (free call outside the Brisbane area).

## How do I get legal help if I am in a watch-house?

If you have been charged with a criminal offence and will soon appear in court, you should try and get legal advice immediately.

You should ask to see the Legal Aid duty lawyer before you go into court. The duty lawyer usually comes to the watch-house each morning.

### The duty lawyer can usually give you free legal advice and represent you in court as your lawyer for:

- ✓ pleading guilty for less complex matters
- ✓ putting your case off until another court date (adjournment)
- ✓ applying for bail
- ✓ changing your bail conditions
- ✓ warrants for failing to appear and bail breaches
- ✓ breaches of community based court orders
- ✓ extradition proceedings.

### The duty lawyer won't help you if you're going to court for:

- ✗ a first or second drink or drug driving offence (unless it's likely you will go to jail)
- ✗ minor traffic offences (eg speeding or careless driving)
- ✗ civil matters (however, in some courts we have a domestic and family violence duty lawyer)
- ✗ a committal hearing or a trial
- ✗ complex sentence hearings.

## Is your help confidential?

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

## What if English is my second language?

If you would like this factsheet explained in your language, you can contact us through the translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50. TIS will organise an interpreter in your language and will connect you to Legal Aid Queensland. This is a confidential and free service.



## 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.

