

ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES

Burnie and Launceston Offices

TELEPHONE ADVICE

The primary way that Women's Legal Service Tasmania (WLST) delivers advice and assistance to women in Tasmania is through our telephone advice line (1800 682 468). The call is taken by a solicitor who will provide the client with legal information, referral or advice over the phone.

WLST is able to provide initial legal advice, information and referral to any Tasmanian women who require assistance. The provision of initial advice, information or referral is not subject to financial considerations, and is provided free of charge.

INITIAL CLIENT APPOINTMENTS

Telephone advice is offered initially to assess whether a face-to-face appointment is necessary.

A face-to-face appointment will be offered where:

- there are language barriers;
- there are concerns about the ability of the client to understand the advice over the phone;
- the issue is complex and/or there are multiple documents that need to be reviewed before advice can be given;
- the client is too upset to continue on the phone, or
- the issue is particularly sensitive.

Outreach appointments can be made for particularly vulnerable clients who are not otherwise able to attend our Hobart, Burnie or Launceston offices, on a case by case basis.

REPRESENTATION SERVICES

WLST is sometimes able to represent a client with further assistance. Our Burnie and Launceston offices are part of a specific response to family violence, and as such, we are able to provide further assistance to women who have experienced family violence, those who are currently experiencing family violence, and those who are at risk of experiencing family violence.

The representation services that our Burnie and Launceston offices are able to provide are also dependent upon a number of further considerations:

- the client must be a woman or identify as a woman;
- there must be no conflict of interest;
- the type of legal issue involved;
- the client has a healthcare or concession card, or is otherwise financially disadvantaged;
- the client is ineligible for a grant of Legal Aid;
- there are no other legal services better able to assist the client;
- the level of urgency associated with the casework;
- case merit and likelihood of success;
- the client's capacity to self-represent;
- the resources required and available to complete the casework; and
- capacity.

For clients who receive assistance through our Burnie and Launceston offices, we will also record whether they identify under the following categories:

- Children and young people (aged up to 24);
- Older people (those over 65);
- Indigenous Australians;
- People who are culturally and linguistically diverse; and
- People with a disability.

Definition of Financial Disadvantage

- *Where a Centrelink benefit is the client's sole source of income and the client has no, or limited, equity in assets such as a house, car, or furniture.*
- *Where Centrelink benefits are not the client's sole source of income, financial disadvantage can be established by relying on the Henderson Poverty Line.*

AUTOMATIC REFERRAL

We will provide the client with an automatic referral to a private lawyer if the legal issue is related to:

- personal injury
- drafting Wills
- workers compensation
- Binding Financial Agreements
- caveats
- contracts
- bankruptcy
- immigration
- commercial law
- tax

WLST is able to provide initial telephone advice on these matters, but we are unable to provide representation services or ongoing legal support in these legal areas.