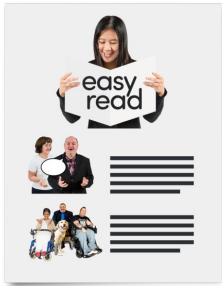


September 2023

What is a legal problem? Who can help?



We use pictures to make this book easy to understand.

You can ask a friend, family member or support worker to help you read this book.

Do you have a screen reader?

We have a Word document of this book for your screen reader.

Go to www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/publications

Search for 'What is a legal problem? Who can help?'

Download the Word document of this book.



You can also ring (03) 9269 0234 and ask for someone who works in Publications. They can email you a Word document of this book.



Important

This book has information only. It is not legal advice, which is talking about your legal problem with a lawyer.

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What is a legal problem?



Many things can be legal problems.



Problems with the police can be legal problems. Like:

- the police say you broke the law
- you get a letter that says you have to go to court
- you are in prison or jail.



Some problems with other people can be legal problems.



It may be a legal problem if you and your ex-partner cannot agree on who looks after your children.



Another person hurting or scaring you can be a legal problem.

That person could be:



- a family member (husband, wife, brother, sister, parent, child, grandparent, aunt or uncle)



- your boyfriend, girlfriend, partner or ex-partner

- your support staff or carer



- someone else you know

- someone you do not know.

You can have a legal problem with organisations like:



- Centrelink



- NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme).

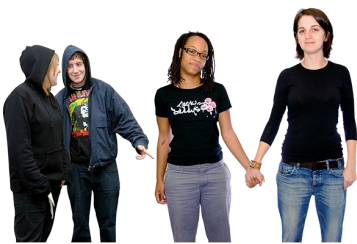
These things can also be legal problems:



- if you are not happy with your guardian or administrator



- problems with your house, like rent or getting things fixed



- if you are not treated fairly because of your disability, race, who your partner is or other things



- money problems, like not being able to pay a phone bill.

Lawyers can help with legal problems



Many people have legal problems.



Legal problems can make people feel scared or sad.



Lawyers can help with legal problems.

You may already have a lawyer.



If you already have a lawyer, you can contact them.



If you do not have a lawyer, you can contact:

- Victoria Legal Aid
- a community legal centre
- a private lawyer.



This book will tell you how to do this.

Victoria Legal Aid

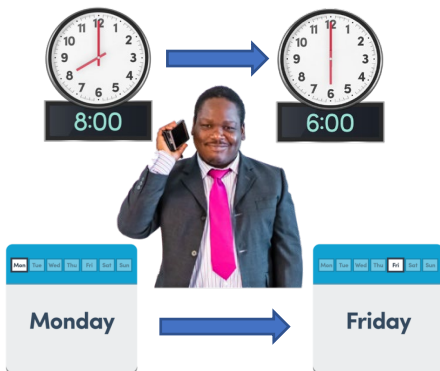


You can call Victoria Legal Aid to get help with your legal problem.



Victoria Legal Aid's phone line is called Legal Help.

You can call Legal Help on 1300 792 387.



You can call Monday to Friday from 8 am until 6 pm. The line is closed on public holidays and weekends.

Landline calls cost the same as a local telephone call. It costs more if you call from a mobile phone.

Get help with your call

A friend, family member or support worker can sit with you.



A support worker can talk to Legal Help for you.



Get ready for your call

Get any paperwork ready. Paperwork can be:

- a fine
- a letter about your legal problem
- an email about your legal problem.



Get a pen and paper so you or your support person can write things down if you want to.



If you have hearing loss or a speech impairment, you can use the National Relay Service:

- TTY users: Call 133 677
- Voice Relay: Call 1300 555 727
- NRS Chat or NRS Captions:
<https://nrschat.nrscall.gov.au>
- SMS relay: 0423 677 767
- Video relay: open Skype and contact NRS Video Relay Service.



Tell the National Relay Service to call Victoria Legal Aid on 1300 792 387.

Tell the person on the Legal Help phone line if you need an interpreter.

On the Legal Help phone line

Lots of people call about legal problems.



Sometimes you have to wait a long time when you call Legal Help.

A person from Legal Help will talk to you as soon as they can.



The person from Legal Help will ask questions.

They want to know about you so they can help you in the best way.



The person from Legal Help will ask things like:

- How old are you?
- Do you work or get money from Centrelink?
- Do you have a disability?



Legal Help can help you better if they know you have a disability.



Talking to Legal Help is private.

The person from Legal Help will only tell another person what you say, if you say that is okay.



How Victoria Legal Aid can help

Victoria Legal Aid can help with many legal problems.

The person from the Legal Help phone line will listen to you. Then they may:

- tell you what you can do about your legal problem
- give you information and the contact details of another service that can help you
- make a meeting with a Victoria Legal Aid lawyer for you.



Victoria Legal Aid



Victoria Legal Aid may be able to give you more help.

This help is free.



A lawyer from Victoria Legal Aid may be able to:

- go to court
- write letters or fill in forms for you
- help you if you need to go to court and do not have a lawyer.



Other places that can help

Victoria Legal Aid might not be able to help with all legal problems.



If Victoria Legal Aid cannot help you with your legal problem, we will tell you who may be able to.

Community Legal Centres

Lawyers work at Community Legal Centres.

They can help with some legal problems.

This help is free.

Here are some Community Legal Centres.



Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service

Call Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service on 1800 014 111.

You can call this phone line from 10 am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Go to the website www.villamanta.org.au



Disability Discrimination Legal Service

Call the Disability Discrimination Legal Service

on (03) 9654 8644.

Go to the website www.ddls.org.au



FEDERATION
OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES VIC

Federation of Community Legal Centres

They can help you find a free community legal centre close to you.

Go to the website www.fclc.org.au



Private lawyers

Private lawyers can help with some legal problems.

But they cost money.



The Law Institute of Victoria can help you

find a private lawyer.

You can talk to a private lawyer for 30 minutes for free.



You can call the Law Institute of Victoria

on (03) 9607 9550.

Go to the website www.liv.asn.au



Information about this book

Acknowledgements: VALID's self-advocacy groups, Disability Justice Australia Inc, Disability Discrimination Legal Centre and Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service gave us feedback for this book.



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But you must say Victoria Legal Aid wrote it.

You must say if you change anything.



You cannot use any pictures or Victoria Legal Aid's logo.

People in Victoria Legal Aid wrote this book.



Victoria Legal Aid

570 Bourke Street

Melbourne VIC 3000

Call 1300 792 387 if you need more information about getting help for a legal problem.

