

Improving access to legal aid by reviewing our means test

Why did we need the means test review?

We haven't kept up with what disadvantage looks like today.

"if only there was an easier way for people in need to access justice."

"It is incredibly inflexible and frustrating."

"It is important that the means test reflect reality - that legal fees are incredibly expensive."

"The system is wrong if it causes people to lose stable housing."

"\$1095 (savings) is an emergency away from disaster. Up to \$500,000 in (home) equity is not comparable."

The means test has not been reviewed for 20 years.

From 1 July 2018 it will be easier for more Victorians to access legal aid

People who are casually employed and/or in insecure housing

Young people

People experiencing family violence

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Why is it important for more people get legal aid?

- Reduce the stress and trauma for everyone in the justice system – families, children, victims, witnesses and accused
- Solves legal problems before they become worse leading to a fairer and safer community
- More in tune with what is needed today for a fair and safe community
- Saves money and reduces time in the courts

How did we decide what to change?

Surveys

Submissions

Focus groups

Social media

Presentations

We would like to thank the following review contributors

Social Services
VCSS, Jesuit Social Services, Homeless Persons' Clinic

Community Legal Centres, eg. CommUnity Plus, Inner Melbourne Legal

Legal profession networks, eg. The Law Institute of Victoria

People who missed out on legal aid
General community

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention & Legal Service Victoria