

Child Support Legal Service Victoria Legal Aid

Where can I get more legal information?

More information is on our website at
www.legalaid.vic.gov.au

We also have free booklets about the law in English and other languages. You can get the booklets on our website or at any Victoria Legal Aid office.

To order publications

Telephone 9269 0223 or email publication@vla.vic.gov.au or visit www.legalaid.vic.gov.au or any VLA office.

Our public law library

Open Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm
350 Queen Street, Melbourne

About our services

We can help you with criminal matters, family breakdown, family violence, child support, immigration, social security, mental health, discrimination, guardianship and administration, tenancy, debt and traffic offences.

Our free legal services include:

- information over the phone
- seminars and workshops
- legal advice across Victoria, including most courts and tribunals.

Our Legal Information Service

Open Monday to Friday, 8.45 am to 5.15 pm

Telephone 9269 0120 or country callers 1800 677 402



Contact us for free information about the law and how we can help you.

You can speak to someone in English or other languages.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment



You can call us via the National Relay Service. Call 133 677 if you use a TTY or 1300 555 727 for Speak and Listen, then ask for Victoria Legal Aid on (03) 9269 0120.

See www.relayservice.com.au for more information.

Our offices

Open Monday to Friday, 8.45 am to 5.15 pm

Bairnsdale	5153 1975	
Ballarat	5329 6222	Toll free 1800 081 719
Bendigo	5448 2333	Toll free 1800 254 500
Broadmeadows	9302 8777	
Dandenong	9767 7111	
Frankston	9784 5222	
Geelong	5226 5666	Toll free 1800 196 200
Horsham	5381 6000	Toll free 1800 177 638
Melbourne	9269 0120	Toll free 1800 677 402
Morwell	5134 8055	
Preston	9416 6444	
Ringwood	9259 5444	
Shepparton	5823 6200	Toll free 1800 119 918
Sunshine	9300 5333	
Warrnambool	5559 7222	Toll free 1800 651 022

All offices are accessible to people with a disability.

What is the Child Support Legal Service?

The Child Support Legal Service helps separated parents who are having problems with child support payments or child maintenance orders. This service is part of Victoria Legal Aid. It is not part of the Child Support Agency or Centrelink.

What are child support payments?

Child support payments are made by one parent to the other to help with the costs of a child. These payments are separate from any parenting or other Centrelink payments a parent may get. However, child support payments can affect how much you are paid by Centrelink.

How can we help you with child support?

We can:

- explain how the Child Support Scheme works
- help you apply for child support
- help you get the Child Support Agency to change a decision
- explain court documents and how the court works
- explain how changes to the child support law may affect you
- help you with back payments of child support
- help you get proof of parenthood, if necessary.

How does child support affect the Family Tax Benefit?

You have 13 weeks to apply for child support after you separate. If you do not apply, your Family Tax Benefit can be reduced or stopped.

Child Support Legal Service

Victoria Legal Aid

A Family Tax Benefit is a payment to help with the cost of raising your children.

We can help you get child support. We may also be able to help you get an exemption in some circumstances.

What are child maintenance orders?

Child maintenance orders were made if you separated before 1 October 1989 and no child of the relationship was born after that date. In most cases, child maintenance orders do not apply as the children are 18 or over.

How can we help you with child maintenance?

We can help you get child maintenance if your child is 18 or over and they are studying or have a disability. We can also advise you how to change or stop a maintenance order.

How can I get legal advice?

To get advice from one of our lawyers, call the Child Support Legal Service between 8.45 am and 5.15 pm, Monday to Friday, on 9269 0120 or 1800 677 402 (country callers).

If you need more detailed advice, you can make an appointment. Child support lawyers visit each Victoria Legal Aid office every month and most major regional centres at least every three months.

Appointments by video link are available at some locations. Call us for more information, locations, and bookings.

How do I get money to pay for a lawyer?

To get money to pay for a lawyer you need to apply for a grant of legal assistance. The grant money may cover some or all of your legal costs.

You can use a grant to:

- pay a lawyer to help you reach agreement or speak for you in court
- go to our family dispute resolution service.

Getting a grant will depend on your financial situation and your legal problem. You may get a lawyer from the Child Support Legal Service, a community legal centre or a private law firm.

Call us to find out how we can help you to apply for a grant.

What other services can help?

Victoria Legal Aid has other services that can help separated parents with their legal problems. Speak to us about how Family Law Service or Roundtable Dispute Management may also be able to help you.