

VLA's Panels

Firm Registration

Pursuant to ss 29A and 30 of the *Legal Aid Act 1978*

When to use this form

Use this form to request your firm be registered for VLA's Panels.

Once your firm is registered, eligible practitioners can apply for inclusion as Individual Certifiers on one or more of VLA's s 29A Panels.

This form must be completed by a principal or partner of the firm.

Returning your form

Check that all required questions are answered and that you have included any attachments.

 Email your completed form and any attachments to panels@vla.vic.gov.au.

Questions

If you have any questions about this form or the firm registration process, please contact the Panels Coordinator: panels@vla.vic.gov.au.

What are you applying for? Please tick each box that applies.

- All of VLA's Panels (s 29A Specialist Panels and s 30 Referral Panel)
- VLA's s 30 Referral Panel* only

* The Referral Panel is used to refer matters which aren't covered by one of VLA's s 29A Specialist Panels – including all civil law matters. By registering for the Referral Panel only, your firm will not be sent a Deed, and will be unable to undertake work covered by VLA's s 29A Specialist Panels.

Firm details

1. Firm name

2. ABN

3. Name of primary contact

4. Email

5. Phone

6. Business address

7. Postal address (if different from business address)

Entry requirements

8. Does the firm have the information technology capacity necessary to conduct business with VLA electronically?

- Yes
- No

9. Does the firm have adequate case management processes in place to:

- ensure the protection of clients' privacy;
- easily record open files, and identify, locate, update, and report on legally aided matters being managed by the firm; and
- invoice VLA in a timely manner?

- Yes
- No

10. Does the firm have adequate systems in place to ensure practitioners working on legally aided matters:

- have the appropriate education, training and skills to work on those legally aided matters; and
- are appropriately supervised, and their caseloads monitored?

- Yes
- No

11. Does the firm have a robust and documented conflict of interest policy, which addresses the avoidance of conflict of interest where a practitioner's own interest is involved?

- Yes
- No

12. Does the firm have appropriate processes in place to ensure that where an individual certifier or counsel who is briefed in a legally aided matter is unable to fulfil an obligation due to unforeseen circumstances, that a backup is available?

- Yes
- No

13. Does the firm have appropriate facilities to provide a private environment for clients?

- Yes
- No

14. Does the firm have an internal complaints management process in place?

- Yes
- No

ATLAS

15. Is the firm registered to use ATLAS?

- Yes
- No



Please complete 'Firm Registration for ATLAS' attached in Appendix 1.

Declaration

In submitting this application to VLA

I acknowledge that:

- all information disclosed is true,
- I have read and understand my rights and obligations arising from the entry requirements, and
- I understand that VLA will check internal and publicly available records to verify information provided or requested as part of the application process.

I authorise:

- the person named as the primary contact at **question 3** to act as VLA's point of contact for the application process, and
- VLA to place all materials submitted as part of the application process before an assessor.

VLA's Panels

Firm Registration for ATLAS

When to use this form

ATLAS is VLA's online system for practitioners to lodge and track applications for grants of legal aid. Applications for grants of legal assistance, extensions of assistance and claims must be submitted via ATLAS.

Complete this form if your firm is not already registered to use ATLAS.

This form must be completed by a principal or partner of the firm.

Returning your form

Check that all required questions are answered.

 Email your completed form to **panels@vla.vic.gov.au**.

Questions

If you have any questions about this form or the firm registration process, please contact the Panels Coordinator: **panels@vla.vic.gov.au**.

ATLAS Administrators

Nominate up to two staff members to be granted ATLAS System Administrator privileges.

Only ATLAS System Administrators can amend your firm's details in ATLAS. If you later wish to change staff ATLAS System Administrator privileges, you must advise VLA's Panels Coordinator in writing.

Administrator 1

1. Name

2. Title

Administrator 2

3. Name

4. Title

Account information

Please provide your firm's bank account details. All payments from VLA will be made into this account.

5. Full name of firm

6. Name of person to contact regarding pay advice

7. Direct phone number

8. Direct email address

9. Name of bank / financial institution

10. Branch

11. Account name

12. BSB

13. Account number

Declaration

I acknowledge and agree that the firm listed in **question 5** of this form (the Firm) will comply with:

- the requirements under the Act,
- the terms and conditions of allocation of work in VLA's Handbook,
- any special terms and conditions contained in the grant of assistance letter, and
- the ATLAS Terms and Conditions of Use.

I acknowledge that:

- failure to comply with these requirements may constitute grounds for the Firm's removal from VLA's Referral Panel.
- the Firm must notify VLA in writing if the Firm ceases to practise or changes name or address.

I authorise:

- VLA to directly credit the account in **questions 9–13** of this form for amounts owned by VLA.

Sign here

This form must be signed by a partner or principal on behalf of the Firm

Name: _____

Firm: _____

Date: _____

Recipient Created Tax Invoice (RCTI) agreement

Complete this part if your firm is registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Any firm submitting an application or request for extension of legal assistance or request for payment to Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) using electronic lodgement must agree to abide by the following provisions of this Recipient Created Tax Invoice (RCTI) agreement:

- a. VLA can issue recipient created tax invoices to the firm in respect of the services performed using electronic lodgement;
- b. The firm will not issue tax invoices in respect of the services performed using electronic lodgement;
- c. The firm acknowledges that they are registered for GST when entering into the agreement and that they shall notify VLA if they cease to be registered;
- d. VLA acknowledges that it is registered for GST when it enters into the agreement and that it will notify the firm if it ceases to be registered for GST or it ceases to satisfy the requirements of the GST law and Australian Taxation Office (ATO) rulings that allows VLA to issue recipient created tax invoices;
- e. VLA will not issue documents that would otherwise be a recipient created tax invoice on or after the date when VLA or the firm has failed to comply with the requirements of the GST law and ATO rulings that allows VLA to issue recipient created tax invoices;

- f. The above terms are modified in accordance with the current GST law and ATO rulings required for the issuance of recipient created tax invoices from time to time;
- g. The firm acknowledges that VLA will accept all of the information provided as true and correct; and
- h. The firm indemnifies VLA for any liability to tax, over claimed credits and penalties and interest as a result of error by VLA on any service for which it issues a recipient created tax invoice that might arise due to the failure of the firm to notify cessation of registration or other ATO requirements.

Sign here

This agreement must be signed by a partner or principal on behalf of the Firm

Name: _____

Firm: _____

Date: _____

Definitions in this agreement

“ATO Ruling” means a document issued for the purposes of Section 37 of the *Taxation Administration Act 1953*.

“Electronic lodgement” refers to any application, request for extension or request for payment for a grant of assistance which is submitted via the internet.

“GST Law” means *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* and *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Transition) Act 1999*.

“Recipient created tax invoice” means a tax invoice that is issued by the recipient of a service. Words or expressions that are defined in the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* have the same meaning when used in the Recipient Created Tax Invoice Agreement.