

Legal Aid ACT Criminal Practice

Our aim

Legal Aid ACT aims to improve people's access to the justice system through education, one-off legal advice and ongoing legal representation.

We offer free legal advice to people in the ACT and provide ongoing assistance and representation to people who cannot afford a private lawyer.

Legal Aid ACT
www.legalaidact.org.au
Phone: **1300 654 314**

The Criminal Practice of Legal Aid ACT provides:

- Duty lawyer services at the Magistrates Court and Children's Court of the ACT
- Free half-hour appointments on Wednesday at our office from 9.30am – 4.00pm
- On-going assistance and representation may be available for people who are eligible for a grant of legal assistance. If you have already been charged, it is **strongly** recommended you apply for legal assistance, otherwise our ability to help you will be limited.

For more information on applying for a grant of legal assistance visit our website.

Duty Assistance

If you have not organised legal representation for your first court appearance in a criminal matter a duty lawyer may be available to provide you with limited one-off assistance.

This service is free of charge and is provided at the Magistrates Court and Children's Court of the ACT from 9am for a limited time.

Children's Court

If you are under the age of 18 you should apply for a grant of legal assistance. A means test will apply to your application. This means that we will look at your ability and the ability of your parents to pay for a private lawyer.

Youth Law Centre
Free legal service for young people aged 12-25
www.legalaidact.org.au
Phone: **(02) 6173 5410**
Email: ylc@legalaidact.org.au

Ongoing Legal Assistance

If you successfully apply for a grant of legal assistance you will be appointed a lawyer. The lawyer will talk to you about the police Statement of Facts and give you advice on what your options are. The lawyer will guide you through the process.

Criminal lawyers provide representation in court on a wide range of matters, including:

- Bail applications and variations
- Defended Hearings/Sentencing hearings
- Serious criminal offences, whether in the Magistrates Court or the Supreme Court
- Appeals, if there are reasonable prospects of success

Further Advice

You can make a free half-hour appointment at Legal Aid ACT on Wednesdays from 9.30am-4.00pm, or you can briefly see the Duty Lawyer before a court appearance.

If you are going to Court for a criminal matter it is important that you contact Legal Aid ACT or your lawyer as soon as possible. Please bring all relevant

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documents to the appointment with your lawyer. These documents include charge sheets, statement of facts provided by the police and any other documents relevant to your case. If you are charged with a criminal offence you are entitled to be given details of the allegations against you.

Legal Terms

Adjournment

If you are given an adjournment, you will get a new court date.

Criminal Case

A case where the police have arrested and laid charges against a person, or where a person is summoned to appear in Court to answer an allegation that they have committed an offence.

Charge

This will be decided by the police or the DPP, and tells you the specific offence(s) you have been accused of

DPP

The Director of Public Prosecution's role is to prosecute people accused of an offence.

Mention

This is the first date the matter is listed before the court. If you plead guilty, your matter may be heard and determined at the mention hearing.

Remand

The court may order that the accused person be kept in custody before their court appearance. This is known as remand.

Summons

Summons is a command to appear at Court.

Bail

If the court decides that the accused person does not need to be held in custody the Court will grant bail. Bail is an agreement between the Court and the accused person that they will come to Court on the next occasion. Bail is not automatic.

Get Help

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