

INVITATION FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Legal Aid is developing a new Strategic Plan to guide our organisation for the next three years.

We are using the process to reflect on all aspects of our organisation - from our values, purpose and goals to identifying new opportunities for improvement and change. We are reviewing our priorities and areas of focus, and looking to strengthen existing partnerships and build new collaborations.

To this end we are consulting widely with key partners across Tasmania – staff, clients, legal and non-legal partners and others across the justice system. We have not done this before as an organisation. It's an exciting and productive process.

As part of the consultation process we are meeting with the Law Society, the Tasmanian Bar, the Courts and the DPP.

Legal Aid acknowledges the important role of private practitioners in delivering legal assistance. As a key partner, we are keen to hear your thoughts on how Legal Aid can maintain and improve our delivery of legal services to disadvantaged Tasmanians in the challenging context of growing demands and budgetary constraints.

Private practitioners from across the State are invited to make a written submission to the process. We are also holding a series of regional roundtables with private practitioners.

If you need further information, please contact Prue Cameron on 62363825 or prue.cameron@legalaid.tas.gov.au

Please send written submissions to Prue at prue.cameron@legalaid.tas.gov.au by 19 February 2020.

Background

Legal Aid was set up 30 years ago under the *Legal Aid Commission Act 1990*, to deliver legal advice and services for Tasmanians experiencing disadvantage. Since then we have operated in an increasingly challenging environment. Demand for services has increased and matters have become more complex. Over time, we have been required to deliver a greater diversity of services and continue to meet our core service commitments of providing legal advice, information and education, and legal representation in criminal, family and civil matters.

Legal Aid receives funding from various sources. The National Partnership Agreement (NPA), a five-year funding agreement that expires in June 2020, sets out the amount paid by the Commonwealth, which must be used for Commonwealth matters/priorities such as family law.

The Commonwealth also provides specific funding for initiatives such the Cross-examination Scheme and the Small Property FDR Trial.

The State Government provides funding to assist people with State matters, such as state criminal prosecutions. We also get some specific funding for family violence services.

The Solicitors Guarantee Fund is the third main source. This provides funding for key duty lawyer services in the Magistrates Court and before the Mental Health Tribunal.