

Civil Disbursement Fund

Anyone can talk to a lawyer for free at Tasmania Legal Aid.

To get free legal information call 1300 366 611, drop into our Hobart or Launceston office (no appointment necessary) or use the Legal Talk chat function on our website. We are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

A lawyer can listen to your story and help identify the next steps you can take.

Tasmanians are able to access financial aid for civil cases under the Civil Disbursement Fund scheme being run by Tasmania Legal Aid, where they have a private lawyer acting for them. The Fund was set up by the Tasmanian Government.

What is the fund?

Tasmanians may be able to access financial aid for disbursements in civil cases under the Civil Disbursement Fund scheme being run by Tasmania Legal Aid, where they have a private lawyer acting for them. Assistance is subject to a means and merits test.

What does the fund do?

The Civil Disbursement Fund (the Fund) can receive applications from Tasmanians requiring financial assistance for disbursement expenses for their civil case. Rising civil case costs has meant that many people cannot afford to have their case heard before a Court or even attempt negotiations for an outcome. The Fund can help applicants pay up front disbursement costs to progress the matter and, if the case is won, the applicant repays those disbursements, with a premium, back into the Fund.

What type of assistance is covered?

The Fund provides assistance for serious personal injury claims, including workers compensation claims. Other civil cases will be assessed against competing resources and priorities. The Fund will provide financial assistance for expenses such as expert reports, medical reports, witness and interpreter expenses and various court fees such as transcript and trial fees. The Fund does not provide assistance to pay for practitioner fees.

How can I make an application?

Applications must be made through a lawyer. Guidelines for the operation of the Fund and application forms can be downloaded from this page. Persons who are considering making applications to the fund should be aware that applications will firstly be considered by the Fund Committee and then the Commission.

Information for legal practitioners:

What is the role of the CDF Committee?

The role of a Civil Disbursement Fund Committee member (CDF Committee member) is to consider the merits of the Applicant's case and to take into account the prospects of success, the quantum of damages and the likelihood of recovery.

CDF Committee members are practitioners with at least 3 years legal experience in the area of civil litigation. They must identify conflicts of interest in any decision-making process, have sound decision making skills, understand and adhere to relevant privacy and confidentiality processes, and undertake the functions in accordance with TLA's values.

CDF Committee members must possess a sound knowledge of civil litigation, an ability to inquire into factual issues, write reasons for decisions and produce reports when required.

How do I join the CDF Committee?

Expressions of interest for appointment as a member of the CDF Committee are to be submitted to the Associate Director – Legal Practice. Practitioners will be advised of the outcome of their expression of interest for inclusion on the Register within 28 days.

Please complete and submit the Application Form listed under "Self Help", along with any relevant attachments and Curriculum Vitae to grants.officer@legalaids.tas.gov.au.

This is written for people who live in or who are affected by the laws of Tasmania, Australia. The law changes all the time – this information is not legal advice. If you have a legal problem, you should talk to a lawyer before making a decision about what to do.