

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
Who looks after the panels? Who do I contact?	The Private Lawyer Quality Standards (PLQS) Unit. (02) 9219 5662 panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au
As Principal of a Law Practice what information do I need to notify/update Legal Aid NSW about?	Please advise Legal Aid NSW of any of the following changes in an email to panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au ASAP: The Service Agreement at 5.5 states: The Law Practice must immediately notify Legal Aid NSW in writing if: 5.5.1 an Associate leaves the Law Practice. 5.5.2 an Associate is convicted of or charged with any of the Disqualifying Offences set out in Schedule 2 of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 and is or will be providing legal services in any assigned matter to a person under the age of 18. 5.5.3 an Associate has a working with children check clearance refused, cancelled, revoked or interim barred. 5.5.4 bankruptcy or professional disciplinary investigation or proceedings has been commenced against any Law Practice, or Associate who undertakes legal aid work, or any circumstances that could give rise to a claim for unsatisfactory professional misconduct or professional misconduct. 5.5.5 an Associate who undertakes legal aid work is charged with any criminal offences except summary traffic offences or is subject to a final Apprehended Violence Orders (AVO) under Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 NSW or equivalent across Australian States or Territories. 5.5.6 a court, tribunal or professional body expresses concern about the conduct of a matter during any legal proceedings. 5.5.7 a court, tribunal or professional body investigates a Law Practice or Associate who undertakes legal aid work. 5.5.8 a finding of workplace misconduct is made by an investigating body concerning an Associate who undertakes legal aid work.

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
<p>I am a Principal of a Law Practice; how do I apply for my Law Practice to be on a panel?</p>	<p>Information on how to apply can be found on our Applying to a panel webpage at point 2. How to apply and eligibility requirements can be found on our Legal Aid Panels page.</p> <p>To submit a panel application go to the Panels Application Website and use your Grants Online username and password to log in. Should you require a password re-set please contact the Service Desk on 02 9219 5999 (option 2) or servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p>
<p>Can I have my panel application prioritised/processed/approved urgently?</p>	<p>If your application cannot be finalised within 21 days the PLQS Unit will contact the Principal of the Law Practice to provide updates.</p>
<p>I overlooked requesting a panel when I submitted my application. How do I fix this?</p>	<p>As the Principal of the Law Practice you can complete and submit an Update Membership Form to nominate additional panels.</p> <p>Make sure you or any nominated associate/s meet the panel eligibility requirements before submitting the form.</p>
<p>How do I register a new Associate for Grants Online with my Law Practice?</p>	<p>Does your new Associate already have Grants Online registration?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Send an email to the Legal Aid NSW Service Desk at servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au and ask them to update their registration.</p> <p>You will need to advise in your email the name of the practitioner; the Law Practice they are now employed with (letterhead is helpful); and their contact details.</p> <p>N.B: Their details need to be up-to-date with the Law Society of NSW before Legal Aid NSW will update a practitioner's details on Grants Online.</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>No</p> <p>Have your Law Practice's Grants Online Administrator create a new user registration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Click the Create User button and the Create User page will display, you will need to use the pick list to find your office name under the field Office*, click on the magnifying glass icon which appears at the end of the Office field, this will open the Select an Office screen, your Organisation name should automatically display in the Organisation field, In the Service Type* field drop down box select Solicitor and click Search, your Office name will display under Search Results - click on the blue underlined name which will upload into the Maintain Users screen2. Leave the practitioner fields blank. Continue to fill out all the mandatory fields (those marked with an asterisk * such as First Name field and Surname field etc) and any other relevant fields including password and click Save. The new user will display on the Maintain Users page and you should get a Saved successfully message in green at the top of the page. When the new user logs in he or she will be prompted to reset their password.3. For staff who wish to be registered as practitioners with Grants Online, once they are set up as a user, they will need to email the Service Desk at servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au with their name and firm details. These will be verified against the Law Society of NSW website (or other state Law Society depending on the location of the practitioner) and once all details are verified the Service Desk will update their record to practitioner. This will allow them to certify as a practitioner, applications and extension requests and apply for panel membership.
<p>I have a new Associate who needs to be added to our firm's panel membership. What do I need to do?</p>	<p>The Principal can complete and submit an Update Membership Form to nominate any new Associate.</p> <p>The Update Membership Form covers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the addition of a panel not previously nominated/approved;• nomination of a new Associate of the Law Practice;• nomination of an existing Associate (who now meets the eligibility requirements of a panel); OR• a combination of these.

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
	<p>N.B: all Associates undertaking legal aid work (including any work delegated where the panel permits) are required to have Grants Online Registration with practitioner access.</p>
<p>One of my Associates has left my Law Practice. What do I need to do?</p>	<p>Were they the ONLY eligible Associate on a panel?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Send an email to servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au and panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au advising the name of the Associate, the date they left your Law Practice, and any panel they were nominated as eligible to undertake legal aid work. Also, you need to advise if you want the Law Practice to continue to remain a member of the relevant panel. If yes, then you will need to complete the Update Membership Form and email it to panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au for approval.</p> <p>N.B: If there is no eligible associate to undertake the relevant panel work, your Law Practice Panel Membership will be made inactive.</p> <p>No</p> <p>Send an email to servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au and panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au advising the name of the Associate, the date they left your Law Practice, and request that their Grants Online Registration be made inactive.</p>
<p>I am an employee of a Law Practice; how do I apply to be on a panel?</p>	<p>Is the Law Practice a current Panel Member?</p>

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
	<p>Yes</p> <p>Speak to your Principal about them nominating you as an eligible associate to undertake legally aided work. They can do this by completing the Update Membership Form and emailing it to panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p> <p>N.B: You will need to meet the eligibility requirements for the panel you seek nomination for; and/or your Law Practice meets the requirements of the panel to delegate work to you (where delegation is permitted) under supervision.</p> <p>No</p> <p>Speak to your Principal about them applying to become a panel member. Further information can be found on our Applying to a panel webpage at point 2. How to apply.</p>
What do I have to do if I start my own Law Practice?	<p>Legal Aid NSW requires you to undertake the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Register your Law Practice with the Law Society of NSW.2. Then register your Law Practice for Grants Online. <p>Whilst awaiting registration of your Law Practice for Grants Online, you should familiarise yourself with the individual Legal Aid Panels eligibility requirements, and other conditions as detailed in the Quality Standards.</p> <p>Once your Law Practice is registered you can submit a Panel Application Form, as a new applicant, via the Panels Application Website (use your Grants Online username and password to log in).</p>
What do I need to do if I change Law Practice?	<p>Please undertake the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Email servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au and panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au advising of your departure date;

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Upon commencement at your new Law Practice ask your Principal to email servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au and panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au requesting they update your Grants Online access with your new contact details etc. (N.B: your details must be up to date with the Law Society of NSW) 3. Your Principal at the new Law Practice will then need to submit an Update Membership Form. Please ensure you meet the eligibility requirements of the panel prior to your Principal submitting the form. Panel requirements can be viewed on our Legal Aid Panels webpage or in the Quality Standards.
<p>How do I get my current files transferred to my new Law Practice?</p>	<p>A Law Practice is not obligated to transfer files to a former employee if they have eligible Associates within the Law Practice to undertake the work.</p> <p>Where your former Law Practice agrees that you can retain files they should submit a 'Transfer Request' through Grants Online for ALL files that are approved to be transferred to your new Law Practice.</p> <p>N.B: The 'Transfer Requests' will only be approved where a Law Practice has panel membership for the required panels.</p> <p>NB: the Principal may email the Grants Division if a bulk transfer (>5 files) is required. Family – Grants.Family@legalaid.nsw.gov.au Crime – Grants.Crime@legalaid.nsw.gov.au Civil – Grants.Civil@legalaid.nsw.gov.au</p>
<p>Can I still be nominated to undertake panel work should the Principal of the Law Practice not want to be nominated to undertake legal aid work?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Principal is not required to nominate themselves against any panel should they not wish to undertake legal aid work.</p> <p>All nominated associates MUST meet the eligibility requirements of the panels for which they are being nominated.</p>

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
<p>My Law Practice is a current panel member but is not a member of a panel in which I would like to undertake legal aid work. How do I nominate myself for this panel?</p>	<p>Ask your Principal to complete and submit an Update Membership Form.</p> <p>Please ensure you meet the eligibility requirements of the panel prior to your Principal submitting the form. Panel requirements can be viewed on our Legal Aid Panels webpage or in the Quality Standards.</p>
<p>Can I submit a Panel Application Form or Update Panel Membership Form whilst I am awaiting my WWCC employment clearance number?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>A current NSW WWCC employment clearance number is a mandatory requirement in order to represent children in a legally aided matter.</p>
<p>How do I obtain a Working With Children's Check (WWCC) employment clearance number?</p>	<p>You can complete, submit and pay for your WWCC employment clearance application online through the Office of the Children's Guardian. You will be required to verify your identity and documents in person at a Service NSW centre before your clearance can be finalised.</p> <p>Your clearance could take from 48hrs up to four weeks.</p>
<p>When I apply for a WWCC what 'Child related sector' do I select on the application form?</p>	<p>We have been advised that the most relevant Child related sector under "Purpose of check" is 'Clubs and other bodies providing services to children'.</p>
<p>My Law Practice is interstate. Is my WWCC for my state sufficient for work undertaken in NSW?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>According to the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian a NSW WWCC is a requirement for anyone who undertakes child-related work in NSW.</p>

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
	Therefore, practitioners undertaking child-related legally aided matters within NSW are required to hold a current NSW WWCC employment clearance number.
When do I have to reapply or renew my Law Practice Panel Membership?	There is no requirement to renew a Law Practice Panel Membership.
When are panel applications open?	Legal Aid NSW Panels are open year-round, meaning you can apply at any time.
I'm looking at the Panel Application Form and cannot see where I need to tell you about my experience.	<p>The new panels structure was implemented to make applying for panel membership easier and quicker for private practitioners. Therefore, there is no longer a requirement to address your experience in our Panel Application Form.</p> <p>Some panels require specific training, attendance at workshops and/or webinars. In this case dates of attendance and/or certificates to confirm you meet the eligibility requirements of the panel are required to be attached to your panel application at the time of submission.</p> <p>Please note: The Appellate Barrister Panel is a separate application form whereby experience is required to be addressed.</p>
The Panel Application Form says to 'upload' documents...what documents do I need to upload?	<p>The panels that require documents to be uploaded and attached to a Panel Application Form or Update Membership Form to support that you meet the eligibility requirements of the relevant panel are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care and Protection• Independent Children's Lawyer (ICL)• Appellate Barrister Panel

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
<p>How will I know that my Panel Application or Update Panel Membership Form has been processed?</p>	<p>An email is sent to the Principal of the Law Practice listing the panels for which the Law Practice is now a member and how to execute the Service Agreement (if required).</p> <p>Please ensure that you have our Panels email address (panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au) as a 'Contact' to ensure receipt of our emails.</p>
<p>What email address are you sending my correspondence to?</p>	<p>All correspondence with a Law Practice Panel Member is sent to the email address registered under your Law Practice office contact details registered on Grants Online. This email address can be updated at any time by your Grants Online Administrator via the 'Update an Office' function on Grants Online (FAQ's).</p> <p>However, if you send an email to us at panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au then we will reply directly to that email address.</p>
<p>How do I activate my panel membership/execute the Service Agreement?</p>	<p>In order to activate your Law Practice Panel Membership you must execute the Service Agreement by undertaking the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Principal is required to log in to the Panels Application Website (use your Grants Online username and password to gain access). 2. Go to the tab titled 'Dashboard'. 3. Click on the Service Agreement link under the heading 'Service Agreements/Undertakings'. 4. Read the Agreement and click on the 'I agree' button in order to execute. <p>N.B: a Law Practice Panel Membership will not be activated until the Agreement has been executed.</p>
<p>Grants want to transfer a matter to me but they said they can't because my law practice is not on the panel.</p>	<p>Have you checked the following?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the Service Agreement been executed?

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
<p>I'm pretty sure we received an email saying we are.</p>	<p>The original applicant can check if the Service Agreement has been executed by logging onto the Panels Application Website and clicking on the 'Panel Activity' tab.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A Law Practice can view their panel memberships using the 'Update an Office' function in Grants Online. Please note that only a user with Administrator Access can view these details. 3. Barristers appointed to a Briefing Panel can view these memberships on Grants Online using the "Update a Person' function.
<p>Grants said that my Law Practice is not a member under the new Panels Structure. How do I get on the panel?</p>	<p>Has your Law Practice applied for Panel Membership?</p> <p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Check points 1 and 2 in the answer above; · Locate your Panel Membership approval email and forward to GrantsFamily@legalaid.nsw.gov.au or GrantsCrime@legalaid.nsw.gov.au. <p>No</p> <p>Information on how to apply can be found on our applying to a panel webpage at point 2. How to apply. Make sure you meet the panel eligibility requirements before submitting the form.</p> <p>To complete and submit a panel application form the Principal of the Law Practice needs to log in to the Panels Application Website (using their Grants Online username and password).</p> <p>Should your law practice NOT be registered for Grants Online, you will need to complete and submit a Registration Form before you can log in and submit a Panel Application Form. If you are unsure if your Law Practice is registered please contact the Legal Aid NSW Service Desk on 02 9219 5999 (option 2) or servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p>
<p>Can I add an additional region to my Law Practice Panel Membership?</p>	<p>You may seek approval to add an additional region to your Law Practice Panel Membership.</p>

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
	<p>Prior to submitting a request we suggest that you check the Law Society of NSW Regions to ensure your Law Practice has capacity to service the entire region.</p> <p>Email your request to panels@legalaid.nsw.gov.au listing the region you seek to add and how/why you have the capacity to service that region.</p> <p>N.B: Legal Aid NSW will not meet travel and/or accommodation expenses, nor any additional costs that would not have been incurred if a matter was assigned to a law practice practising at or near the venue of the proceedings in accordance with the travel entitlements under the Legal Aid NSW fee scale.</p>
<p>How are panel offers made?</p> <p>How do we know if there has been an offer made to our Law Practice?</p> <p>Why are we not receiving any, or minimal, offers of legal aid work?</p>	<p>Grants Online utilises an electronic rolling list.</p> <p>Notification of a panel offer is sent to the email address registered under your Law Practice office contact details. Your Grants Online Administrator can update your email address under the 'Update an Office' function in Grants Online.</p> <p>Appointment to a panel does not confer an entitlement to work. Only a limited number of offers are made to panel members. Offers of work made via Grants Online to a panel are usually matters that are unable to be conducted by the In-house Practice or where the initial application for funding was not submitted by a panel member. Further information is available in the Grants Allocation Guidelines.</p>
<p>How do I reset my Grants Online password?</p>	<p>Your Law Practice Grants Online Administrator can reset passwords for all users within your law practice via Grants Online (except for their own).</p> <p>If you are the Administrator or unsure who has the access, you can contact the Legal Aid NSW Service Desk to request a password reset on servicedesk@legalaid.nsw.gov.au or 02 9219 5999 (option 2).</p>

Panel FAQs for Private Lawyers and Law Practices

Question	Answer
Why is my panel membership showing as inactive on Grants Online?	<p>Under the new panels structure, Panel Membership is attached to the Law Practice and NOT to an individual.</p> <p>Panel Memberships listed against your personal details are no longer active unless you are a Barrister on a briefing panel.</p> <p>Law Practice Panel Memberships are listed under the 'Update an Office' function in Grants Online. Please note that your Grants Online Administrator can access this information.</p>
How do I apply to get onto the Back Up Duty Scheme (BUDS)?	<p>This is a separate process to Panels, please express your interest by emailing BackUpDuty@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p>
How do I apply to get onto the Family Law Cross Examinations Scheme?	<p>This is a separate process to Panels, please express your interest by emailing CrossExamScheme@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p>
Who do I contact to be added as an approved FDR Mediator?	<p>This is a separate process to Panels, please express your interest by emailing Mediatorpanel@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p>
I am in regional NSW, how can I assist with the Duty Solicitor Scheme in my area?	<p>This is a separate process to Panels. Information can be obtained via the Duty solicitor scheme webpage or expressing your interest in an email to Duty.Scheme@legalaid.nsw.gov.au.</p>