

Central Coast CLSD Q2 Meeting
28.06.2023 | 10am – 12pm | Central Coast CLC

MINUTES

Present: Deborah MacMillan, Sym'mon Andrews (Central Coast CLC); Chris Murnane, Kate Halliday, Kai Wu, Seema Sanghi, Haney Cho, Sophia Cloke (Legal Aid NSW); Silas Pollard (Headspace)

Agenda item	Discussion
1. Opening and purpose	<p>Deborah MacMillan acknowledged that the meeting took place on Darkinjung Country (and noted that this region has the fastest growing first nation population in Australia)</p> <p>Purpose of today's meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final meeting for Central Coast CLC in the role of Regional Coordinators. Opportunity for any organisation interested in hosting the Regional Coordinator role to ask questions.• Information share with regards to grants of legal aid (from Legal Aid NSW) for family law matters• A review and discussion of where we are up to with current CLSD projects
2. Accessing Legal Aid Grants - Family Law	<p><i>A grant of legal aid provides people with advice and legal representation by a lawyer who works for Legal Aid NSW or a private solicitor paid for by Legal Aid NSW. This session, presented by Haney Cho from Gosford/Newcastle, looked at the operation of grants for family law matters.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Grants of Legal Aid in Family Law Matters</p> <p>Haney Cho (Solicitor, Family Law Gosford/Newcastle).</p> <p>There are different kinds of grants of legal aid depending on the type of help needed and the areas of law (family law, care and protection, child support). The means test applies to most grants of aid for family law assistance.</p> <p>Haney emphasised that people can get quick guidance about whether they are eligible for a grant of legal aid for family law matters by making an appointment to get legal advice from a Legal Aid NSW family lawyer, this can be done by contacting LawAccess 1300 888 529. Legal Aid NSW now applies triage when people contact LawAccess for legal advice to ensure that people who are offered a legal advice appointment for family law are likely to benefit</p>

most from their help. She also emphasised the importance of getting advice early. Legal Aid NSW has an inhouse Family Dispute Resolution Service providing mediation across all areas of the family law practice.

Legal Aid NSW Family Law Policies and Guidelines

The family law [policies](#) and [guidelines](#) set out when aid is available for family law matters.

Legal aid is available for mediation of disputes about property matters where the net value of the pool of assets is less than \$600 000 (excluding superannuation) and the applicant is a survivor of domestic violence, has a disability or is over the age of 55 years. Legal aid may also be available for proceedings in court regarding property where mediation has not been successful. Further detail [here](#).

Family [Extended Legal Assistance](#) (ELA) provides advice and representation for early intervention in adoption, child support, care and protection and family law matters and is provided by the in-house lawyers only.

[Care and Protection](#) - Early Intervention Mediation is also now available

Mediation is also available at an early stage where DCJ has started to have contact with a family regarding concerns about children, before any court proceedings have been started by DCJ.

The general principle with grants of legal aid is that there is a [means test](#).

Legal Aid NSW Means Test

- The means test considers a person's income and assets.
- It is important to know that when Legal Aid NSW assesses a person's income, they consider whether they have any dependents, and they deduct costs like:
 - o Rent
 - o Mortgage repayments
 - o Childcare
- There is a cap on the value of a home, which operates to exclude properties from the means test below the cap and include properties above the cap.
- There is a [Means Test Indicator](#) online that people and services can use to gauge whether someone may be financially eligible for legal aid
- **Important Update:** on 2 May 2023 the Means Test was increased to reflect increases in the cost of living and for the purpose of the Means Test the Central Coast is now considered part of Greater Sydney. As a result, it

<p>c. Central Coast Joint Legal Referral Guide</p> <p>d. Revenue NSW Update</p> <p>e. Final CLC CLSD meeting</p> <p>4. Next Meeting</p>	<p>-The CLSD Unit to send through the updated template to both Deborah and Chris to settle the content.</p> <p>Revenue NSW Update – June 2023</p> <p>Outreach officer: Central Coast/Hunter: Laurence (Bud) Crawford: laurence.crawford@revenue.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>-Kate Halliday (Legal Aid NSW Program Manager) acknowledged the dedication of the CLC to the CLSD partnership for 16 years and the many varied projects that have been undertaken including many wills clinics, the Sorry Business and the Law project, Aboriginal Access Worker, Traffic clinic and the Legal Health = Mental Health collaboration.</p> <p>TBC</p>
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