

What is the new Property Mediation Program?

Following the recent Commonwealth Property Mediation Pilot which ended in late 2022, Legal Aid NSW has made changes to its property mediation program – most importantly more generous client eligibility criteria and the greater flexibility of a 2-stage mediation model which will enable clients to provide full financial information and increase the likelihood of settlement.

Who is eligible to apply for funding for property/children and property mediation?

A client who has a family dispute about property or children and property where

- the 'pool of assets' has a net value of less than \$850,000 plus Superannuation and
- the client is vulnerable due to at least one of the following criteria:
 - they are over 55
 - the family is impacted by family violence
 - they have a disability

**Note: the client must also meet the Legal Aid means and merit tests for Family Dispute Resolution.*

What is different about the new program?

- It offers more than one mediation session (2x 2-hour sessions for a property only matter, and 3 mediation sessions for a property and children matter)
- Solicitors and clients are asked to complete more detailed financial information forms which are exchanged between the parties
- **There is a focus on full financial disclosure between the parties before mediation**
- **A contribution is payable where there is a payout of \$30,000 or more**
- Fees claimable by lawyers and mediators include the additional mediation time plus a preparation component.

How do I apply for a new property or property and children mediation?

Clients

If you think you may be eligible, you can **call Law Access on 1300 888 529** for further information about how to apply.

OR visit the Legal Aid website at www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

OR speak to your solicitor.

**Remember that you will need to provide full information about the financial history of your relationship, including supporting documentation.*

Solicitors

You can now apply for the new property program funding via Grants online.