Virtual Bail Court Scheme
Expression of Interest

EOI for Back Up Duty Scheme Practitioners

Legal Aid NSW is seeking expressions of interest from existing members of the **Back Up Duty Scheme (BUDS)** who wish to apply to undertake bail duty work through the new Virtual Bail Court via our Virtual Bail Court Scheme (VBCS).

With the passage of the Bail and Other Legislation Amendment (Domestic Violence) Act 2024, the Local Court has begun centralising Bail Courts to streamline bail matters previously handled by Registrars. To facilitate this transition, the Local Court has established a dedicated Bail Division to oversee all bail-related proceedings.

As the NSW Local Court has begun the transition to virtual courtrooms, Legal Aid NSW has undertaken a comprehensive review of its service delivery model. The Back Up Duty Scheme (BUDS) have played a crucial role in providing legal assistance, and this shift to a fully virtual format requires adjustments to the way these services are delivered.

We are asking interested solicitors to apply to be placed on new bail duty lists for their respective regional court hub. Since all bail proceedings will now be conducted virtually, solicitors interested in undertaking Bail Court work must have confidence in using technology to dial into virtual courtrooms, using chat functions and receiving and sending documents electronically are essential.

Before applying, please ensure you have read how the Centralised Bail Court will work. The new system differs significantly from current Bail Court processes.

To be eligible, practitioners must already be a BUDS Solicitor. This scheme will not impact current how BUDS offers are made for existing physical court locations.

Below are the virtual court hub locations and the Local Courts which they service that have been operational since July 2025 for weekday bail matters, and November 2025 for weekend bail matters. They are subject to change without notice. We expect all NSW courts to be centralised for all fresh bail matters by late-2026.

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Weekday Model - Court Locations - Statewide Model

Courtroom 1	Courtroom 2	Courtroom 3	Courtroom 4		Courtroom 5		Courtroom 6	Courtroom 7
Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers	Newcastle and Greater Hunter	Southern Highlands and South Coast	Western NSW		Riverina and New England		Central Coast	Sydney
Ballina Byron Bay Casino Coffs Harbour Forster Grafton Kempsey Kyogle Lismore Maclean Macksville Mullumbimby Murwillumbah Port Macquarie Taree Tweed Heads Wauchope	Belmont Broadmeadow Cessnock Dungog Gloucester Kurri Kurri Maitland Muswellbrook Newcastle Raymond Terrace Scone Singleton Toronto	Albion Park Batemans Bay Bega Cooma Eden Goulburn Kiama Milton Moruya Moss Vale Narooma Nowra Picton Port Kembla Queanbeyan Tumbarumba Wollongong Yass	Bathurst Blayney Bourke Brewarrina Broken Hill Cobar Condobolin Coonabarabran Coonamble Cowra Dubbo Forbes Gilgandra Katoomba Lightning Ridge Lithgow	Mudgee Narromine Nyngan Oberon Orange Parkes Rylstone Walgett Warren Wellington Wentworth Wilcannia	Albury Armidale Boggabilla Cootamundra Corowa Deniliquin Finley Glen Innes Griffith Gundagai Gunnedah Hay Hillston Holbrook Inverell Junee Lake Cargelligo Leeton	Moama Moree Mungindi Narrabri Narrandera Quirindi Tamworth Temora Tenterfield Tumut Walcha Wagga Wagga Wee Waa West Wyalong Young	Gosford Newtown Waverly Wyong	Downing Centre 4.1

Weekend Model - Court Locations - Statewide Model

Courtroom 1	Courtroom 2	Courtroom 3	Courtroom 4		Courtroom 5	
Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers	Newcastle and Greater Hunter	Southern Highlands and South Coast	Western NSW		Riverina and New England	
Ballina Bellingen Byron Bay Casino Coffs Harbour Forster Grafton Kempsey Kyogle Lismore Maclean Macksville Mullumbimby Murwillumbah Port Macquarie Taree Tweed Heads Wauchope	Belmont Broadmeadow Cessnock Dungog East Maitland Gloucester Kurri Kurri Maitland Muswellbrook Newcastle Raymond Terrace Scone Singleton Toronto	Albion Park Batemans Bay Bega Bombala Braidwood Cooma Eden Goulburn Kiama Milton Moruya Moss Vale Narooma Nowra Picton Port Kembla Queanbeyan Wollongong Yass	Bathurst Blayney Bourke Brewarrina Broken Hill Cobar Condobolin Coonabarabran Coonamble Cowra Dubbo Forbes Gilgandra Grenfell Gulgong Lightning Ridge Lithgow	Mudgee Narromine Nyngan Oberon Orange Parkes Peak Hill Rylstone Walgett Warren Wellington Wentworth Wilcannia	Albury Armidale Boggabilla Cootamundra Corowa Deniliquin Finley Glen Innes Griffith Gundagai Gunnedah Hay Hillston Holbrook Inverell Junee Lake Cargelligo Leeton Lockhart Manilla	Moama Moree Moulamein Mungindi Murrurundi Narrabri Narrandera Quirindi Tamworth Temora Tenterfield Tumut Walcha Warialda Wagga Wagga Wee Waa West Wyalong Young

Courtroom 6	Courtroom 7	Courtroom 8	Courtroom 9	Courtroom 10
Central Coast	Sydney	Metro	Metro	Metro
Gosford Woy Woy Wyong	Surry Hills CC (for Downing Centre Manly Wavery Newtown)	Amber Laurel CC (for Blacktown Penrith Mt Druitt Winsor Katoomba)	Amber Laurel CC (Parramatta Campbelltown Fairfield Liverpool)	Surry Hills CC (Bankstown Burwood Hornsby Sutherland)

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Application

Completed forms must be emailed to backupduty@legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Practitioners Name:	
Law Practice Name:	
Suburb of physical office location/ordinary place of work:	
Email:	

To be eligible to be appointed to the Virtual Bail Court Scheme (VBCS) practitioners must already be appointed to the Back Up Duty Scheme (BUDS).

Are you currently appointed to the Back Up Duty Scheme?

☐ Yes
☐ No – if you have selected this option, unfortunately, you are not eligible for this EOI.

If you are a Duty Solicitor Scheme (DSS) Lawyer, you need to complete the expression of interest form for solicitors on the Duty Solicitor Scheme instead.

Which virtual bail court hub are you applying to assist Legal Aid NSW in release applications for? If you are unsure which hub applies to you, please refer to the Court locations for each hub above.

☐ Mid North Coast & Northern Rivers Virtual Bail Court
☐ Newcastle & Greater Hunter Virtual Bail Court
☐ Southern Highlands & South Coast Virtual Bail Court
☐ Western NSW Virtual Bail Court
☐ Riverina & New England Virtual Bail Court
☐ Central Coast Virtual Bail Court
☐ Sydney Virtual Bail Court
☐ Metro Virtual Bail Court (courts 8, 9, and 10 are currently only operating on weekends)

To ensure coverage, especially in regional areas, an additional statewide bail list will be created. If a local solicitor within the hub is unavailable, the work offer can be made to the statewide list, this means you can pick up work outside your local hub. All successful applicants from our regional areas will automatically be included to the Statewide Virtual Bail Court List unless you choose to opt out below:

☐ I would like to **opt out** and not be included in the Statewide Virtual Bail Court List.

The hub options selected above are applicable for weekday and weekend bail. We are also seeking practitioners who wish to be considered for w*eekend* or public holiday work when shifts become available. If you would like to 'opt in' to receive offers of weekend or public holiday bail

☐ I would like to receive offers of **weekend or public holiday** Virtual Bail Court work, in addition to offers of work for weekdays
☐ I only wish to receive offers of **weekday** Virtual Bail Court work
☐ I only wish to receive offers of **weekend** Virtual Bail Court work

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Selection Criteria

The following selection criteria must be addressed in support of your expression of interest to the appointment Legal Aid NSW Bail List/s. Please select all the statements below that apply to you.

Technology Skills

As Bail Court will be conducted 100% virtually, solicitors must be proficient in using digital tools.

- ☐ I have a workspace (home or office) that will support a virtual working model. (Please note you are not permitted to use Legal Aid Offices to conduct this work)
- ☐ I have a fully functional computer to participate in conferences and court proceedings, with an internet connection.
- ☐ I have necessary accessories, such as a headset, to participate in conferences and court proceedings with clear audio and video quality.
- ☐ I am confident in using technology applications (computer, Microsoft Teams, Webex, digital forms).
- ☐ I am comfortable navigating and following digital workflows.
- ☐ I can troubleshoot basic technical issues.
- ☐ I have Microsoft Teams and understand it will be used as the main communication platform for Centralised Bail Court.
- ☐ I have Webex and understand it will be used for defendant conferences and court appearances.
- ☐ I am confident in facilitating conference calls using technology, including incorporating the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) when required.
- ☐ I can complete and submit the Legal Aid NSW Digital Duty Form efficiently.
- ☐ I have stable or reliable internet connection.

Working Arrangements

- ☐ I understand weekday bail court work offers will be sent through Legal Aid NSW's Back Up Duty Allocation System (BUDSAS), and I will receive offers via SMS with the court location listed as "Virtual Bail Court".
- ☐ I understand weekend bail court work offers will be sent through Legal Aid NSW's RosterLab platform and I will receive offers via email with the Hub region listed.
- ☐ I am willing to work 100% virtually, including use of my own computer, internet connection and equipment necessary to dial into courtrooms, receive and mark up paperwork electronically (or print it at my own expense) and send paperwork electronically.
- ☐ I confirm that I am able to conference defendants via Audio Visual Link (AVL).
- ☐ I understand that when I undertake a virtual bail shift, I will work collaboratively with other solicitors in a hub, handling matters beyond my local area if required.
- ☐ I understand that when rostered for a bail shift, I am being rostered for the day and not permitted to undertake other work, including other Legal Aid NSW matters or physical appearance in any other court.

Administration & Training

- ☐ I agree to complete administration tasks and follow processes as set out by Legal Aid NSW.
- ☐ I agree to undertake Centralised Bail Court training, which will be provided by Legal Aid NSW.
- ☐ I understand where a digital duty practitioner fails to meet the working arrangements required to the digital duty service, Legal Aid NSW may require a practitioner to undertake training, be subject to supervision, be provided with support in a manner Legal Aid NSW Crime Executive deem appropriate or may result in your removal from this scheme.

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I have reviewed the following documents before submitting this application

- ☐ The Virtual Bail Court Scheme Guidelines
- ☐ The Legal Aid NSW Quality Standards
- ☐ The Service Agreement
- ☐ Eligibility test for grants of Legal Aid

Declaration

By signing this application, I acknowledge and authorise that Legal Aid NSW may, to the extent it is reasonably necessary:

- Collect and use my personal information contained in this application, or contained in any audit or investigation, to assess my eligibility for appointment or ongoing inclusion on BUDS or any other panel, list or duty scheme and
- Disclose for any of the above purposes my personal information collected from this application, or collected from any audit or investigation of the practitioner to any selection committee, which may include representative of the Law Society of New South Wales and the New South Wales Bar Association.

I also acknowledge that although any personal information provided in this application is voluntary, my application is unlikely to be successful if information requested is not provided.

I may contact Legal Aid NSW if I seek to access or amend my personal information.

Signature	Date