



Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service-Client Charter

Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service (BGCLS) is committed to providing legal services in a fair and accessible manner. This client charter explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you when using our service.

Your rights as a client of our service

As a client of Ballarat Grampians Community Legal Service you have the right to:

- Have your information treated with confidentiality
- Be given honest and accurate legal advice
- Be given legal advice by a lawyer who is not conflicted and is able to act in your best interests
- Have legal advice provided to you in a way you can understand
- Be kept informed of the progress of your legal matter
- Be treated with respect and courtesy
- Not be judged and not be discriminated against.

Your responsibilities

In using our services, you have a responsibility to:

- Treat all staff with respect
- Act in a way that does not threaten the safety of staff
- Provide accurate and clear instructions to your lawyer
- Provide information requested of you by the date required by our lawyer and the court
- Remain in contact with your lawyer during the course of your legal matter
- Advise your lawyer of any change of address or phone number
- Advise your lawyer of any changes in your circumstances relevant to your legal problem
- Attend appointments on time or advise if you are unable to make an appointment
- Provide any further information or documents requested of you by your lawyer in a timely manner.



When we will cease acting in your legal matter

Our legal service will cease acting in your matter if:

- If you request your lawyer to stop acting for you
- If you act in a way that threatens the safety of your lawyer or any staff member
- Your instructions contradict the advice of your lawyer or go against our overriding statutory and common law duties to the courts
- You instruct your lawyer to do something illegal or that is against our professional responsibilities
- Our assessment of the merits of your case changes
- You fail to provide information on time and that we have asked for
- you don't provide adequate instructions or you provide conflicting instructions
- A conflict of interest arises for the lawyer or the legal service in your matter
- In any other circumstances in which it would be fair and reasonable to do so.

Your file

After we cease acting for you and close your file, the Legal Profession Uniform Law requires that we must keep all legal files for 7 years or longer in some cases. After the 7 years we will destroy your file. You can request access to some of the documents in your file before the 7 year period, but if you don't these will be destroyed.

ZERO Tolerance to Violence

BGCLS is committed to providing a safe, secure and respectful workplace through the prevention of violent, abusive and aggressive behaviour.

BGCLS can refuse to see you, and you will be asked to leave the premises. If you refuse to leave the Police will be called.

Suggestions and Complaints

Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service works hard to deliver a respectful and professional service. If we haven't, please let us know. Your comments and suggestions help us to review how we provide our services.

Complaints are managed within our Privacy and Confidentiality and Complaints policies.



Lodging a suggestion or complaint

If you would like to lodge a complaint or make a suggestion, please complete our Complaints form or visit our website to complete a feedback survey. Forms can be provided by staff upon request or downloaded and printed from our website at: www.bgcls.org.au

Written complaints can be sent to PO Box 547, Ballarat, Vic 3353 marked “confidential”. Or sent by email to reception@bgcls.org.au.

Your complaint will be investigated, and you will be advised, in writing, of the outcome of your complaint. It may take up to 28 days for you to be advised of the outcome.

If the investigation takes longer than 28 days, you will be advised of the delay.

If you are dissatisfied with this process:

Complaints about Legal Services can be made directly to:

The Legal Services Commissioner

Mail: GPO Box 492, Melbourne, Vic, 3001

Telephone: 1300 796 344 (local call within Victoria)



Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service ABN 64 680 414 789
5 Chancery Lane, Ballarat Vic 3350 • PO Box 547 Ballarat Vic 3353
T 03 5331 5999 • F 03 5331 8239 • E: reception@bgcls.org.au • www.bgcls.org.au

