



Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service

Specialist Family Violence Court (SFVC) Project Guidelines

Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service (BGCLS) is a not-for-profit Community Legal Service (CLS) which provides free and accessible legal assistance to people in the Central Highlands and Wimmera regions of Victoria in accordance with these guidelines.

The SFVC Project is funded to provide legal assistance to **individuals impacted by family violence living in the Ballarat region or who have family violence matters listed in the Ballarat Magistrates' Court.**

Service provision for the SFVC Project is guided by the Practice Model, created in consultation with Victoria Legal Aid, Courts, CLC's and other relevant stakeholders.

The Practice Model provides that clients who are experiencing family violence should receive holistic legal services from the one service provider where possible. It is the intention of BGCLS to provide a service to these clients where they are assisted by one lawyer for all their legal matters.

The below list outlines the areas of law and scope of services available to clients as part of the SFVC Project.

For ongoing casework clients will need to meet guidelines as set by the National Partnership Agreement (NPA). The NPA places emphasis on assisting priority clients, being those whose capacity to resolve legal problems may be compromised by circumstances of vulnerability and/or disadvantage.

Priority Clients:

- Children and young people;
- Indigenous Australians;
- Older people (aged over 65);
- People experiencing, or at risk of, family violence;
- People experience, or at risk of, homelessness;
- Prisoners;
- People residing in rural or remote areas;
- People who are culturally and linguistically diverse;
- People with a disability or mental illness;
- People with low education levels; and
- Single parents

This list of priority clients is for guidance only and is not exhaustive. The NPA also provides a benchmark of 90% of casework being for clients who experience financial disadvantage.

Clients who qualify for legal aid or have the means to pay will be referred to private solicitors after the first interview. If a client does not have means to pay or qualify for legal aid, as above, BGCLS will if possible, assist the client.

BGCLS should consider whether other services (legal as well as non-legal) may be relevant to a client's needs and make referrals to these services where appropriate.

BGCLS should deliver timely intervention services to resolve clients' legal problems sooner or prevent them from arising altogether.

PROBLEM TYPE	ASSISTANCE PROVIDED	WHERE TO REFER
<i>Adoption</i>	Referral	Private Lawyer Child & Family Services
<i>Bankruptcy</i>	Legal advice and referral	Private Lawyer Financial Counsellor Justice Connect
<i>Crime</i>	Advice and Representation	Victoria Legal Aid Private Lawyer
<i>Commercial/Business Contracts etc</i>	Referral	Private Lawyer
<i>Consumer Law/Consumer Credit</i>	Advice and Representation	Consumer Action law Centre Private Lawyer Consumer Affairs Justice Connect Other CLC
<i>Centrelink</i>	Advice and Representation	Social Security Rights Victoria Victoria Legal Aid Private Lawyer Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Justice Connect Other CLC
<i>Change of Name</i>	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer
<i>Child Protection</i>	Legal advice and referral	Victoria Legal Aid Private Lawyer Other CLC

Child Support	Legal advice and referral	Child Support Agency Victoria Legal Aid Private Lawyer Other CLC
Commercial Law	Referral	Private Lawyer
Community Organisations/Clubs	Legal advice and referral	Private Lawyer Consumer Affairs Victoria ACNC Other CLC
Conveyancing	Referral	Private Lawyer
Discrimination	Advice and Representation	Victorian Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Other CLC Private Lawyer Justice Connect
Debt	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer Financial Counsellor Justice Connect
Employment	Advice and Representation	Young Workers Centre (up to 30 yrs.) Job watch Private Lawyer Justice Connect Fair Work Ombudsman Other CLC
Estates	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer Magistrates' Court (small estates)
Family Law - Children	Advice and Representation	Victoria Legal Aid Family Relationship Centre Relationships Australia Private Lawyer Other CLC
Family Law - Property	Advice and Representation.	Family Relationship Centre Relationships Australia Private Lawyer Other CLC
Family Law – Divorce/Separation	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer Federal Circuit Court website (DIY) Other CLC
Family Violence	Advice and Representation and duty lawyer service	Victoria Legal Aid Private Lawyer WRISC Berry Street Other CLC

<i>Fines</i>	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer Victoria Legal Aid Other CLC
<i>Freedom of Information</i>	Advice and Representation	Freedom of Information (VIC) Other CLC
<i>Guardianship & Administration</i>	Advice and Representation	Victoria Legal Aid VCAT Private Lawyer Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service State Trustees Office of the Public Advocate Other CLC
<i>Immigration</i>	Referral	Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre Immigration Lawyer Registered Migration Agent Victoria Legal Aid
<i>Insurance</i>	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer AFCA Other CLC
<i>Lawyers - complaints against</i>	Information Referral	Legal Services Board
<i>Mental Health</i>	Referral	Victoria Legal Aid Private Lawyer Mental health Complaints Commissioner Other CLC
<i>Motor Vehicle Accidents</i>	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer
<i>Neighbourhood Disputes</i>	Advice and representation	Private Lawyer Dispute Settlement Centre
<i>Personal Injury</i>	Referral	Private Lawyer
<i>Police-complaints against</i>	Legal advice and referral	Flemington Kensington CLC Vic Police– Professional Standards Command IBAC
<i>Powers of Attorney</i>	Legal advice and representation	Private Lawyer State Trustees VCAT Office of the Public Advocate Other CLC
<i>Probate</i>	Legal advice and representation	Private Lawyer

<i>Property Law - adverse possession, property subdivision, caveats</i>	Referral	Private Lawyer
<i>Tenancy</i>	Advice and Representation	CAFS Tenants Union of Victoria Other CLC
<i>Victims of Crime (VOCAT)</i>	Advice and Representation	Private Lawyer Victims Assistance program-Centacare Other CLC
<i>Wills</i>	Referral	Private Lawyer