

## EXPECTATIONS

### WHAT DOES CENTRE EXPECT OF CLIENTS?

The Centre expects clients to disclose all information which may be relevant to their case, and promptly advise of any relevant changes such as change of address or telephone number.

### WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN AT AN APPOINTMENT?

You should be told whether the Centre can act for you and who might be able to if we can't. If we can't act you should be told why not. You should be told what sort of legal solutions may be open to you, their cost and likely timeframe and any risks involved.

Sometimes the solicitor will need to do some research and get back to you about some of these matters.

## STATEMENT OF RIGHTS OF CLIENT

1. All persons have the right to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of their gender, race, sexuality, ethnic origin, class, religion, political belief, philosophy and other personal beliefs, attitudes and rights.
2. All persons have the right to an interpreter and to have the information/advice in a language that they understand.
3. All persons have the right to seek information and advice from other sources.
4. All persons have the right to apply to become a member of the the Mental Health Legal Centre Inc.
5. All members have the right to apply to become a member of the Committee of Management.
6. All persons have the right to complain about the service.
7. Persons have the right to confidentiality.
8. All persons have the right to be seen in a private and safe environment.
9. All persons have the right to have a friend, family member, advocate or interpreter accompany them.

## MENTAL HEALTH LEGAL CENTRE INC.

## CLIENT COMPLAINT POLICY & PROCEDURE



**Mental Health Legal Centre**  
P.O BOX 12365  
A'Beckett Street  
Melbourne VIC 8006

Tel: 9629 4422  
or 1800 555 887 (country callers)

## **EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINTS**

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Confidentiality has not been maintained by a member of the staff;

Services have not been provided at the professional standard required. However, if the services complained of are of a legal nature the Law Institute or Professional Indemnity Insurer procedures may be applicable;

Personal rights have in some way been invaded;

Actions have been taken that constitute some form of discrimination;

A conflict has arisen through lack of communication or misunderstanding

A client has a complaint about a policy or a service;

A client has a complaint about an action or piece of information produced by the Centre;

A client has a complaint about the services they have received from the Centre.

## **HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT**

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You can make a verbal complaint, and whoever you complain to will put it in writing and read it back to you. To make a written complaint, request a Client Complaint Form. You may be contacted for clarifications of details and you will be asked what action/response you require from the Centre. You will be given a copy of the complaint.

All complaints will be dealt with:

- Seriously
- Quickly
- Confidentially
- Without stopping your right to get more legal help from the Centre.
- In accordance with the principles of natural justice.

## **WHO TO CONTACT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT**

Clients may make a complaint in either written or verbal form to:

The solicitor or staff member they are complaining about

The Coordinator

The Management Committee

The relevant outside body—eg Mental Health Complaints Commissioner,

## **HOW MENTAL HEALTH LEGAL CENTRE WILL DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS**

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If your complaint is not resolved with the individual/s concerned or the Co-ordinator, the Management Committee will set up a complaints committee with a Management Committee member and the Co-ordinator (or two Committee members if the complaint is about the Co-ordinator. Within 7 days the complaint will be looked at, you will be told of the next steps and you may be asked for more information. You can have an advocate present at all stages and will be provided with assistance required such as an interpreter.

All complaints will be considered each year as part of the Centre planning process.

## **HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT TO AN EXTERNAL BODY**

For a complaints form for the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner: <http://www.mhcc.vic.gov.au/resources.htm>