

LawRight will only ask our member law firms and barristers to provide you with pro bono (free) legal assistance if you meet our eligibility criteria. Once we receive your application for assistance, we will begin our assessment and determine the appropriate next steps. As we receive many applications each day and we have limited resources, assessing your application may take some time, particularly if it involves complex issues of law and fact.

### **Our assessment process**

We will assess your application based on the information you provide. We cannot see you in person. If we need more information, we will contact you. Please do not contact us repeatedly as it only slows down our ability to assess your matter.

If your matter is eligible for referral, we will send a referral request outlining details of your matter to our members. Our members are not obliged to accept a referral so even if we send a referral request there is no guarantee that a member will offer to help you.

If your matter is ineligible for referral or your matter is not taken up by one of our members, we will write to you explaining why we were unable to refer your matter. In many cases, we will also provide you with practical information regarding your options and suggest other agencies you could contact for assistance. If you have any questions about why we cannot help you, we can offer you one phone call to discuss this, but due to our limited resources as a community legal centre we will not discuss the matter further after this phone call.

### **Our eligibility criteria**

In order to be eligible for referral through Pro Bono Connect, you must meet the following criteria:

- Your matter concerns civil law (not family or criminal law).
- You cannot obtain legal aid.
- You cannot afford a lawyer. If you already have a lawyer, you should continue to engage them if you feel you are in a position to afford their services. In this case, we would be unable to refer your matter. Alternatively, if you can no longer afford their services, you should complete a Notice that Party is Acting in Person (for litigious matters) or advise your lawyer that you are terminating your retainer (for non-litigious matters). We are unable to assess your application until this step is taken. However, taking this step does not guarantee your eligibility for referral.
- You cannot obtain “no win, no fee” legal assistance (often available in personal injury claims).
- On balancing the prospects of success, the outcome being sought and the cost of running your case, your matter justifies pro bono legal assistance.

In certain circumstances, we will also consider whether your matter is “in the public interest,” which includes cases that affect a significant number of people, raise matters of broad public concern, or impact on particularly vulnerable or disadvantaged people.

### **When LawRight cannot help**

We can only refer civil law matters. We do not refer:

- Family law matters.
- Criminal law matters.
- Building disputes or complex commercial disputes or business matters, unless in our view the circumstances warrant pro bono assistance and the matter otherwise meets our eligibility criteria.
- Native title claims.
- Matters that are so urgent that we could not complete a sufficient assessment or reasonably ask our members to accept a referral.
- Matters which do not apply Queensland law or which are not otherwise connected to Queensland. We will consider assisting applicants who live in Queensland even if their matter relates to interstate law (for example, a matter being heard in a court outside of Queensland).

### **LawRight Self Representation Service**

If we are unable to refer your matter or assist you through our direct advice clinics, we may be able to provide discrete task assistance through our Self Representation Service. The Service operates in the Queensland Courts and in some areas of law in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), Federal Court of Australia and Federal Circuit Court of Australia. For more information about the Service, please see our website:

<http://www.lawright.org.au/cms/page.asp?ID=60872>. We will ask you before referring you to the Service.