

Horizons Community Legal Centre - Representation Policy

When assessing possible representation in disputes and court proceedings, Horizons Community Legal Centre will have regard to the following:

1. **Current availability of resources by Horizons Community Legal Centre.**
2. **Income.**
3. **Eligibility for legal aid or other *pro bono* or non-profit assistance.**
4. **Ability to afford private legal representation.**
5. **Circumstances of disadvantage**, including:
 - physical or mental illness;
 - family violence;
 - social disability (isolation, education, language, etc);
 - special need created by the legal problem being faced.
6. Whether the case involves **issues that are of significant public interest or general concern to disadvantaged groups in the community.**
7. Whether there have been **reasonable attempts to resolve the dispute** by direct discussions with the other party, mediation or negotiation.

OR

Whether there are any **circumstances which make direct discussions, mediation or negotiation inappropriate**, including:

- Domestic violence between the parties to the dispute;
 - A significant imbalance in bargaining power between the parties to the dispute;
 - Urgency, in particular:
 - Where a child has been removed from his or her usual residence or school without prior discussion or agreement;
 - Where there is an immediate and significant risk of harm to a child; or
 - Where court proceedings have already been commenced by the other party.
8. Preference is given to cases involving:
 - Significant parenting disputes;
 - Significant criminal and traffic offences;
 - Domestic violence (including claims for victims compensation arising from domestic violence);
 - Clients with significant factors of disadvantage.
 9. Representation is not available for:
 - Commercial or business disputes;
 - Taxation issues;
 - Property settlements (family law);
 - Buying and selling land;
 - Making Wills or Powers of Attorney;
 - Disputed Estates;
 - Immigration;
 - Personal injuries claims (other than claims by victims of violent crime);
 - Workers compensation claims.

10. **Assessment of eligibility is at the sole discretion of Horizons Community Legal Centre.**