

Horizons Community Legal Centre - Representation Policy

There is no cost for any initial discussion with us by telephone, regardless of duration.

If ongoing help is required, some non-profit charges apply. Full details of charges will be given before any work is performed. The client will need to cover expenses involved in doing the work (such as court filing fees).

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 that 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.**