



LEGAL AID ONTARIO
AIDE JURIDIQUE ONTARIO

Can I Get A Legal Aid Certificate?

Your Questions Answered

- How do I apply for legal aid?
- Can I get a lawyer?
- Is my case covered?



Does legal aid cost anything?

Legal aid is free for people with little income and few resources. If you have a little money or own a house or other property, you may have to pay some money back to legal aid.

You will probably have to repay some or all costs of your legal aid if you receive money as a result of a settlement or judgment.

How do I find a lawyer?

Not all lawyers accept legal aid work, so you need to find a lawyer who takes legal aid cases.

- Ask the legal aid office if there is a legal aid law office in your city. Legal aid lawyers may be able to take your case and represent you in court.
- Ask the legal aid office to give you a list of lawyers who deal with cases like yours.
- Speak to family or friends. Can they recommend a lawyer?
- Call the Lawyer Referral Service. A \$6.00 fee applies, from Metro Toronto, call 416-947-3330. From anywhere else in Ontario, call 1-900-565-4577.

Make sure you are comfortable with the lawyer you choose. It is unlikely that you will be allowed to change lawyers.

Where is the nearest legal aid office?

Check your phone book's white or yellow pages under "Legal Aid" for the address of the legal aid office nearest you.



LEGAL AID ONTARIO
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375 University Avenue
Toronto ON M5G 2G1
Telephone: Toronto: 416-979-1446
Elsewhere in Ontario: 1-800-668-8258.

www.legalaid.on.ca

*Legal Aid Ontario receives financial support
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Ce dépliant est disponible en français



Can I get legal aid?

The purpose of legal aid is to make sure that people who do not have money to pay a lawyer can still get the legal help they need.

Legal aid will pay for a lawyer if:

- You have little or no money left after you pay for basic necessities, like food and housing, and
- Your legal problem is one that legal aid covers.

If you do not qualify for a certificate, you may be able to get other kinds of legal aid. Make sure to ask about other kinds of help available.

People with no income or on social assistance almost always qualify financially for legal aid. But you may be able to get legal aid even if you have a job and own a house.

What kinds of cases are covered?

If you financially qualify for a legal aid certificate, legal aid may be able to pay your lawyer for some of these things. This is not a complete list. Please talk to your local legal aid office about your specific case.

For criminal charges:

- an offence which would likely result in jail time (eg: assault, impaired driving causing bodily harm, robbery, welfare fraud, break and enter).

In family matters:

- To get custody of your children
- To help you deal with the Children's Aid Society
- To get access for you to see your children
- To help you if your partner denies you access to your children
- To set up child or spousal support payments
- To stop your partner from selling or destroying your property
- To negotiate ownership of things like RRSPs or pensions that could provide you with some income.

In immigration and refugee matters:

- Refugee hearings before the Immigration and Refugee Board
- Sponsorship and deportation appeals
- Detention reviews.

For some civil cases and final appeals:

- Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal
- Social Benefits Tribunal matters
- Employment Insurance appeals
- Mental health hearings and appeals.

What do I need to bring with me?

When you go to the legal aid office, you should take as much information with you as possible. For example:

- Some form of identification (social insurance card, driver's license, health card or landed immigrant papers)
- Any documents relating to your case, such as court orders, separation agreements, a copy of the crown screening form (for criminal charges)
- Proof of your current income if you have any (3-4 recent pay stubs, welfare cheque stubs or Employment Insurance statements)
- Up to date bank book or bank statements
- Proof of monthly expenses and bills (rent receipt or mortgage payment, hydro, gas, car payment receipts, credit card statements, car insurance bill)
- Deed for your house
- Proof of any unusual expenses, such as medical costs.

How long does it take?

The staff will help you fill out an application and may be able to tell you right away whether you can get legal aid. Make sure to tell legal aid staff if your situation is an emergency and they will get help right away.