

Commission Clients

*Every member of the South
Australian public is entitled to
receive free legal information and
advice from the Commission.*

*Some people are also able to
access legal representation.
These people are among the most
disadvantaged in our community.*

Commission Clients 2016-17

*In 2016-17 the Commission provided **123 956** individual services (excluding education services) to clients. **25 954** clients received a grant of legal assistance, an advice appointment or a duty lawyer service. These clients came within the following priority client groups.*

% of clients within each client group

Priority client group	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	7.90%	8.77%	8.52%
Culturally and linguistically diverse	15.86%	15.27%	16.78%
Disability or mental illness	12.21%	13.8%	15.44%
Under 18	5.63%	5.92%	6.25%
65 or over	6.3%	6.12%	6.05%
Receives a government benefit	49.42%	51.79%	59.7%
Lives in regional or remote South Australia	14.7%	14.12%	13.79%
Requires an interpreter	3.78%	3.81%	4.48%
In custody	7.90%	9.68%	10.73%

Services provided to each client group 2016-17

Priority client group	Grant of Aid	Advice Apptmt	Duty Lawyer Service	Total
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	2 644	566	1 922	5 132
Culturally and linguistically diverse	1 312	6 779	1 795	9 886
Disability or mental illness	4 338	1 682	3 322	9 342
Under 18	1 605	176	1 013	2 794
65 or over	154	2 290	273	2 717
Receives a government benefit	12 888	10 132	9 779	32 799
Lives in regional or remote SA	2 761	1 945	2 152	6 858
Requires an interpreter	504	2 694	473	3 671
In custody	4 604	943	3 588	9 135

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Strategies to improve services and access for people who fall within a priority group are regularly reviewed. In particular, the Commission provides—

- interpreters;
- a telephone typewriter service;
- advice appointments by telephone so as not to disadvantage regional or remote clients or those with mobility issues;
- Readspeak on the Commission website for clients who are visually impaired or prefer spoken language;
- regional offices;
- prison visits;
- video conferencing appointments;
- written advice available in community languages, including Braille;
- video information in Auslan.

During the financial year the Commission undertook a client survey to ensure services meet clients' legal needs and capability levels. The results were overwhelmingly positive. Of those surveyed—

- 94% agreed it was easy to contact the Commission when help was first needed;
- 89% agreed they were listened to in relation to their legal problem;
- 83% agreed they were helped to understand how to deal with their legal problem;
- 90% agreed they knew where to get help if they have another legal problem in the future;
- 74% agreed their specific personal or cultural needs were met (this was only relevant for 12% of those surveyed);
- 89% agreed they were treated fairly;
- 90% agreed they were informed of what they had to do to get the service;
- 90% agreed staff were knowledgeable and competent;
- 78% agreed staff went that extra mile to ensure the client got what they needed;
- 91% agreed they were dealt with professionally; and
- 87% agreed that they would recommend the service to other people.

Commission Clients 2016-17

Clients dealing with a Commission lawyer expressed greater satisfaction with the service than clients assigned an external practitioner, with–

- 93% agreeing their legal problem was listened to (83% external);
- 87% agreeing the service provider helped them to understand how to deal with their legal problem (74% external);
- 94% agreeing they know where to get help if they have another legal problem in the future (84% external);
- 90% agreeing specific needs were met (47% external);
- 93% agreeing they were treated fairly (82% external);
- 95% agreeing they were informed of what to do to get the service (82% external);
- 92% agreeing staff were knowledgeable and competent (86% external);
- 84% agreeing staff went that extra mile to make sure they got what was needed (67% external);
- 94% agreeing the service was professional in dealings with the client (86% external);
- 93% agreeing they would recommend the legal service to other people (78% external).

Unsurprisingly, respondents who had their criminal law or family law applications for aid refused expressed the highest level of dissatisfaction with the service.