

Civil Law Cost Scale

(Operative from 1 October 2025)

All grants of aid and extensions of existing grants approved on and after 1 October 2025 will be made in accordance with the following scale.

See also the Explanatory Notes.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	FEE PAYABLE
TRIBUNAL & Magistrates Court		
1.	Hourly rate – solicitor	\$164
2.	Hourly rate – solicitor	\$164
3.	Initial preparation – solicitor (7 hours)	\$1,148
4.	Trial extension – solicitor (6 hours)	\$984
5.	Complex trial extension – solicitor (11 hours)	\$1,804
6.	Fee on brief and first day – counsel	\$1,312
7.	Subsequent days – counsel	\$984
8.	Counsel hourly rate	\$164
District Court, Supreme Court and FCFCOA		
9.	Hourly rate – solicitor	\$194
10.	Initial preparation – solicitor (7 hours)	\$1,358
11.	Trial extension – solicitor (6 hours)	\$1,164
12.	Complex trial extension – solicitor (11 hours)	\$2,134
13.	Fee on brief and first day – counsel	\$2,240
14.	Subsequent days – counsel	\$1,344
15.	Counsel hourly rate	\$224

EXPLANATORY NOTES

A legal practitioner who undertakes legal aid civil law assignments must be a member of the Legal Services Commission General Panel of practitioners.

Please see Legal Practitioner Panels on the Legal Services Commission website at http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au/cb_pages/practitioners.php

Matters finalised before the lump sum allowance of fees is exhausted.

If a matter concludes before the number of hours allowed for initial preparation, subsequent extension or complex extension have been exhausted, the Commission would expect the practitioner to forward an account for less than the maximum fees allowed.

Accounting procedures

The following practices apply in certifying solicitors' accounts for payment:

- a) **Photocopying**, if approved, is paid at the rate of 5 cents per page.
- b) **No disbursement allowance** will be made
 - For postage or for telephone calls, or
 - For general office expenses or "petties" or
 - For correspondence with or attendances on the Legal Services Commission or

For the cost of transcript (except in special circumstances where prior authority has been obtained) or

For travelling time, mileage, or waiting time.

Payment for authorised work only

Commitment certificates/Tax Invoices will be issued by the Commission for all work authorised. All commitment certificates/tax Invoices aggregate to form the total amount of funding approved for the matter by the Commission. The maximum amounts specified in each commitment certificate aggregate to form the maximum fees payable in relation to a particular grant.

Practitioners should read the terms of grants letters and Commitment Certificates/Tax Invoices carefully.

No payment will be made for work which has not been authorised and for which no commitment certificate/Tax Invoice has been issued by the Commission.

Further authorisation must be sought before:

- the authorised costs can be exceeded, and or
- any work is performed which is outside the terms of a grant.

Additional funding may be granted by the Commission and where granted, additional commitment certificates will be issued at scale. Additional funding will only be provided where the amount of preparation or degree of difficulty involved in the matter is exceptional and in the view of the Commission, not reasonably included in the lump sum amounts

Where legal aid is granted, the assignment of aid normally commences from the date of receipt by the Commission of the application for Legal Aid, except where urgent telephone or email approval has been granted.

Applications for extensions to be in writing

Extension of existing grants should be requested in writing in advance of the work being undertaken.

Reading Time

Ordinarily reading time is included in the lump sum fees, and additional fees will only be allowed by the Commission, where the case is pre-certified as complex or special, and an allowance made, prior to the incurring of such fees.

Contested applications

Solicitor's proportion

The fee for a contested application includes all attendances upon client and preparatory work including preparation of brief. Please note that where commitment has been raised previously in the matter for an uncontested application, the amount for this item which will appear on the certificate aggregates with the previous certificate to the full lump sum fee for contested matters.

Pre-trial conference

The fee for a pre-trial conference includes all attendances to take instructions and all attendances at Court.

Counsel's proportion - fee on brief and first day

The fee on brief includes all preparation, reading, conferences and first day in court.

Counsel's proportion - subsequent days (refreshers)

The fee for refresher includes any reading or conferences during the hearing and time spent in court.

Half day hearing - counsel's proportion

The fee on brief includes all preparation, reading, conferences and half day in court.