

Strategic Plan 2021-2024



Legal Services
Commission South Australia

**The Legal Services
Commission is passionate
about ensuring justice is
available and accessible
for all South Australians.**

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Our story

The Legal Services Commission is passionate about ensuring justice is available and accessible for all South Australians.

Independent of government, the Commission is one of the largest law practices in the state. With 190 staff, we provide advice and representation to individuals and legal education to the community. Working with over 500 external panel lawyers to deliver legal aid, we provide essential front-line justice solutions across our State and contribute to justice policy nationally.

Each year over 100,000 clients and members of the community benefit from our services, many who may otherwise have found it impossible to find their way through the legal system.

Our purpose

We ensure that South Australians have access to a trusted lawyer when they need help to be heard, easy ways to learn about their rights and responsibilities and to find answers to legal questions.

Our legislation sets out the functions we undertake day to day.

Our beliefs and values

We believe that every interaction with every client and community member can make a difference to that person. We will deliver our services to meet that aim.

We all adopt the values of service, professionalism, trust, respect, collaboration and engagement, honesty and integrity, courage and tenacity and sustainability.

A strategic plan for our times

This strategic plan sets our direction for the next three years as we navigate through challenging times and respond to the changing needs and expectations of our clients and community.

Our focus on client service, and an unwavering commitment to our people and community, will continue to be fundamental to everything we do.

We have four strategic goals. For each goal we have developed an implementation plan and a set of indicators to monitor and measure our progress.

- 01 **Be connected with and responsive to clients and community**
- 02 **Increase access to services while reducing the cost of justice**
- 03 **Develop partnerships to create better solutions**
- 04 **To be a model legal aid service**

Be connected with and responsive to clients and community



Why this goal?

As a legal aid organisation, we apply public money to achieve justice for our clients. This can only be done with a deep understanding of the issues facing our clients, and empathy as we help find solutions.

To achieve this goal we will

Meet the diverse needs of our clients

We create a safe place for clients and community members that values and respects their diversity.

Ensure our work is responsive to the changing and complex needs of our clients and community

We look for new ways to hear their voices. We will provide services where, when and in the manner they are needed.

Champion the protection and advancement of our clients

We seek to understand the context for each client and actively pursue the best possible outcome.

Develop and monitor service quality

We will work with staff and private providers to ensure consistent quality of services for our clients and community.

Increase access to services while reducing the cost of justice

Why this goal?

Because this will result in more services for more people.

To achieve this goal we will

Make it easier for people to find legal solutions

We are responsible for providing accessible legal support. This challenges us to be creative in the way we design and use our resources.

Match the service level to the need

We will aim to deliver a service that is the right size and quality for the issue we seek to remedy.

Promote and utilise alternative dispute resolution

We will encourage clients to use timely and effective dispute resolution options.

Continue to make our services accessible and easy to use and understand

In continuing to improve the way we deliver services, we will be guided by feedback from our clients and community. Contemporary technology and communications will be fundamental to this work. Its use should allow for innovation without alienation.

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Develop partnerships to create better solutions



Why this goal?

Because complex situations are improved by people who collaborate with skill, intention and influence.

To achieve this goal we will

Bring the right people together to work on complex policy and systems

Informed by our independence and depth of knowledge in critical areas, we will actively participate with our partners and bring the right people to the task when we identify an emerging need.

Develop an engagement strategy

We have an excellent track record in building working relationships with partners. We will focus our efforts on relationships and engagement that will have the greatest impact for our clients and community.

Communicate effectively to do our job well

We will strengthen relationships throughout the Commission by improving communication and information flow.

Collaborate with our legal partners

We will implement excellent systems and processes to deliver quality services.

To be a model legal aid service

Why this goal?

Because we owe it to our clients and community to excel in the way we deliver services.

To achieve this goal we will

Create the culture we need to deliver quality services

We will develop our work culture that is aligned with our beliefs and values and will engage with and commit to the wider team of the Commission.

Be accountable

Using public funds requires us to be accountable for our processes and our outcomes.

Provide staff with development opportunities and career paths

This commitment will help us attract, retain and gain the best from our people.

Support staff wellbeing

Covid-19 demonstrated our resilience and we commit to monitor and support wellbeing.

Employ and retain the best people

We will have creative and streamlined recruitment and retention practices.

Develop and provide the tools and support needed by staff

We will be equipped with the tools of trade and ensure contemporary ways of working serve both clients and staff.



Implementation plan

Be connected with and responsive to clients and community	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Conduct Cultural Competence Training to increase awareness of the history and experience of First Nations peoples.			
Enhance service provision for clients with disabilities including mental illness through increased training and consideration of alternative modes of service delivery.			
Undertake a client correspondence review to ensure that information provided to clients is clear and accessible.			
Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan to support our work to develop respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities for First Nations peoples.			
Undertake client surveys to improve client satisfaction with our services.			

Increase access to services while reducing the cost of justice	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Engage our staff in consideration of further innovative service delivery opportunities.			
Investigate the use of technologies such as amica to empower people in priority areas of law.			
Investigate opportunities for online Alternative Dispute Resolution, including the capacity and range of matters assisted through Family Dispute Resolution Conferencing.			
Investigate a program for arbitration of property matters to produce a binding decision in Family Law matters.			

Develop partnerships to create better solutions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Engage in on-going collaborative service planning with the legal assistance sector to improve outcomes for our clients.			
Develop a stakeholder engagement strategy by focusing our efforts on relationships and engagements that will have the greatest impact for our clients and community.			
Develop an internal communication plan and consult on strengthening relationships within our teams.			
Evaluate our model for client engagement.			
Investigate models for closer connection with panel practitioners.			

To be a model legal aid service	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Further develop our data & reporting capability to inform service delivery.			
Consult with staff and conduct training to ensure that the client is at the centre of our strategy, operations and activity.			
Communicate our values and align all aspects of workplace performance with those values.			
Implement the WHS Action Plan.			
Implement new MyCareer Human Resource Platform to modernise the delivery of recruitment, performance development and delivery of online training.			
Review our Complaints Policy to align with the Australian Standard for Complaint Handling.			
Create opportunities in the workplace for staff to participate in projects that will enhance their skills and experience.			
Development of the new Grants and Practice Management Systems to streamline business processes, reduce complexity and support digital file management.			
Meet our obligations under National Legal Assistance Partnership including aligning our services to meet the needs of national priority client groups. ¹			

¹ National Legal Aid Partnership Priority Groups. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; children and young people; older people; people experiencing, or at risk of, family violence; people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness; people in custody and/or prisoners; people residing in rural or remote areas; people who are culturally and linguistically diverse; people with a disability or mental illness; people with low education levels; and single parents.

