

## What can I do if I do not get Legal Aid?

- You can write a letter of appeal to the Chairperson of the Legal Aid Commission.
- This must be done within 3 months from the date your application was refused.
- You must inform the Court that you are appealing the decision of the Director of Legal Aid Commission.

## Legal Aid Commission

### Head Office: Suva

Legal Aid Fiji Building  
41 Loftus Street  
Private Mail Bag  
Government Buildings  
Ph: 331 1195 Fax: 330 3023

### Nausori

Level 1 Y.M.Haniff Arcade  
Lot 10, Main Street  
P.O.Box 3495  
Ph: 347 0003 Fax: 347 0005

### Lautoka

Level 1  
Magistrates' Court Complex  
Tavewa Avenue  
Private Mail Bag  
Ph: 665 0011 Fax: 665 1788

### Labasa

Ground Floor  
New Court Complex  
Katonivere House  
P.O.Box 1241  
Ph: 881 5118 Fax: 881 7322

### Ba

Magistrates' Court Complex  
P.O.Box 433  
Ph: 667 8000 Fax: 667 8426

Email: [info@legalaid.org.fj](mailto:info@legalaid.org.fj)

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LEGAL AID  
COMMISSION

GUIDE TO LEGAL AID  
IN FAMILY MATTERS

### What is Legal Aid?

- If you have a legal problem and cannot pay for a lawyer, we may be able to help you by giving you a lawyer or free legal advice or making enquiries for you.
- We can help you decide what to do if you have a legal problem.

### How to find Legal Aid Office?

- If you stay somewhere between Tailevu and Navua you can visit us at our Suva Office at Level 3, Government Buildings.
- If you stay between Rakiraki and Ba you can visit us at our Ba Office which is next to Ba Magistrate Court house.
- If you stay between Lautoka to Sigatoka you can visit our Lautoka Office at New Magistrate Court complex.

### Who can apply for Legal Aid?

- Any person who has a legal problem especially in family and criminal cases and cannot afford a lawyer.
- Your net income should be less than \$15,000 per year.

### Do I have to pay anything?

- If your net income is less than \$15,000 per year you will not have to pay any money.

### How do I apply for Legal Aid?

- Fill out a Legal Aid Application Form.

- Bring your Family Court application form which you must have already filed in court before applying for Legal Aid.
- Any other papers showing your income and expenses.
- You may also attach a letter explaining your problem.

### What do I need in order to apply for Legal Aid?

- A Legal Aid Application Form.
- Marriage Certificate and Birth Certificates of any child(ren) who are under the age of 18 years old.
- Your Family Court Application Form which has already been filed and a date given to appear in court.
- Bills, pay slip, bank statements and any other documents showing your income and expenses.

### What does Legal Aid cover in Family Matters?

- Dissolution of marriage
- Nullity of Marriage
- Maintenance, Variation and Paternity
- Contact/Residence and Variation orders
- Property Settlement
- Urgent Application on custody or maintenance related matters
- Child(ren) Representation when ordered by the court
- Injunction Order (such as Restraining Order or Non Molestation Order)
- Adoption
- Appeals to High Court

### What can Legal Aid do?

- Provide you with a **lawyer for free** if your application for legal aid is approved, or
- We offer free legal advice and help fill out your Family Court Application Form.
- For **urgent application** we can help you by appearing in court as a *Duty Solicitor*.

### What is a *Duty Solicitor*?

- This is when a lawyer from Legal Aid appears for you in Court even though you have not applied for Legal Aid.
- This type of assistance is only given where there is an **urgent** need for your case to be heard.
- The lawyer will only appear once and after that you **MUST** apply for Legal Aid Assistance if you want Legal Aid to continue representing you.
- You do not have to pay the lawyer who appears as *Duty Solicitor*.

### How can I find a *Duty Solicitor* lawyer?

- If you are in Court and need legal help, you can look for one Legal Aid lawyer that may be in Court.
- If you cannot find one in Court visit the Legal Aid Commission Office nearest you.
- Sometimes the Court will tell you to go and see a Legal Aid lawyer to help you with your case.