

Checklist - Warning Signs of Urgent Legal Issues

Urgent Legal Issue

If your client tells you about:

- ☐ Document from a Court/Tribunal
- ☐ Letter from lawyer, law firm, a debt collector or a government agency (Fines Victoria or Services Australia/Centrelink) that demands payment of money
- ☐ Told they need to attend Court or a Tribunal
- ☐ Told they must attend an interview or make a statement with Victoria Police
- ☐ Threatened with legal proceedings
- ☐ Investigations that involve them or their children (i.e. investigations by Victoria Police or Child Protection)

It is likely the legal issue is urgent and there will be consequences for ignoring it.

Wider Impact

If the legal issue involves:

- ☐ A licence or permit (i.e. vehicle, firearm, licenced occupation)
- ☐ Identity documents needed to qualify for other services
- ☐ Possibility of a criminal record
- ☐ Impact on a Working With Children Check
- ☐ Debt or compensation to a landlord which may affect future housing
- ☐ Loan or debt with may affect credit report
- ☐ Safety risk or allegation of abuse of children – may be reported to Child Protection
- ☐ Loss of income
- ☐ An impact on any Visa
- ☐ A serious injury that affects work capacity

You should find out what impact it is having on their life right now, what impact it might have in the future, and whether it needs to be a priority for your client.

Information to Clarify

You may need to find out:

- ☐ Exact dates of any Court Hearings,
- ☐ Any due date to reply to a letter or Court document
- ☐ Previous issues that have happened to your client that are similar to this one
- ☐ How to secure, save or record evidence
- ☐ Any other legal names or identities of your client
- ☐ Guardianship or Powers of Attorney for your client
- ☐ If your client has legal capacity to make decisions

You may have other ideas as well about what you need to know. The more information you have the better your referral to a legal service will be and the more likely they can quickly understand the issues and assist your client.

