



# Care of children: Getting advice on the law when going through a change in family life



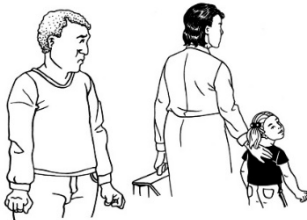
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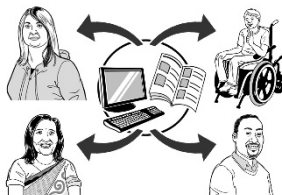
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## What this Easy Read is about



This Easy Read document has been written by the Ministry of Justice.



This Easy Read document has information about advice and support for people going through a change in their family life.



You can find more Easy Read information about the care of children and the Family Court on this website:

**[www.justice.govt.nz/care-of-children/resources](http://www.justice.govt.nz/care-of-children/resources)**

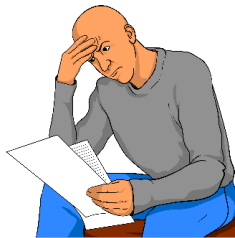


This is a long Easy Read document.



Some things you can do to make reading it easier are:

- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



While this document has been written in Easy Read there is still a lot of complex information.



It is a good idea to get further advice.



If you or someone you know does not feel safe right now you can:

- phone the police on **111**
- contact **Are You OK** on:



**phone: 0800 456 450**

**website: [www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz)**

**Are You OK** is an information service that can help you if you:

- are being hurt by someone
- see someone being hurt
- want to stop hurting someone.

family violence

**it's not ok**



You can also find more information on the Ministry of Justice **website:**

**[www.justice.govt.nz/family-violence](http://www.justice.govt.nz/family-violence)**



There are lots of phone numbers in this Easy Read document.



If you find it hard to use the phone the **New Zealand Relay** service is for people who are:

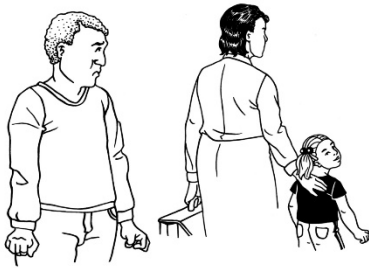
- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.



You can find out more about the New Zealand Relay service at:

**[www.nzrelay.co.nz](http://www.nzrelay.co.nz)**

## Changes to whānau / family life



If you are going through a change in family situation it may be helpful to get some legal advice.



A change in family situation could mean:

- people decide to no longer live together
- it is best for the child / children to live with someone that is not their parents
- a disagreement about how to raise the child / children.





# Getting legal advice



**Legal advice** is when you ask a lawyer for information about the law.



You can get legal advice at any time.



If you are not sure where to start you can visit your Community Law Centre.



The Community Law Centre offers legal advice that is:

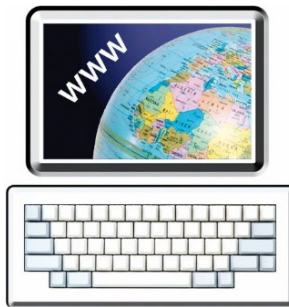
- free / no cost
- 1 on 1 meetings to talk about what you need
- **confidential.**







**Confidential** means the things you talk about with the lawyer will not be shared with other people without your permission.



You can use this **website** to find out where your closest Community Law Centre is:

**[www.communitylaw.org.nz](http://www.communitylaw.org.nz)**

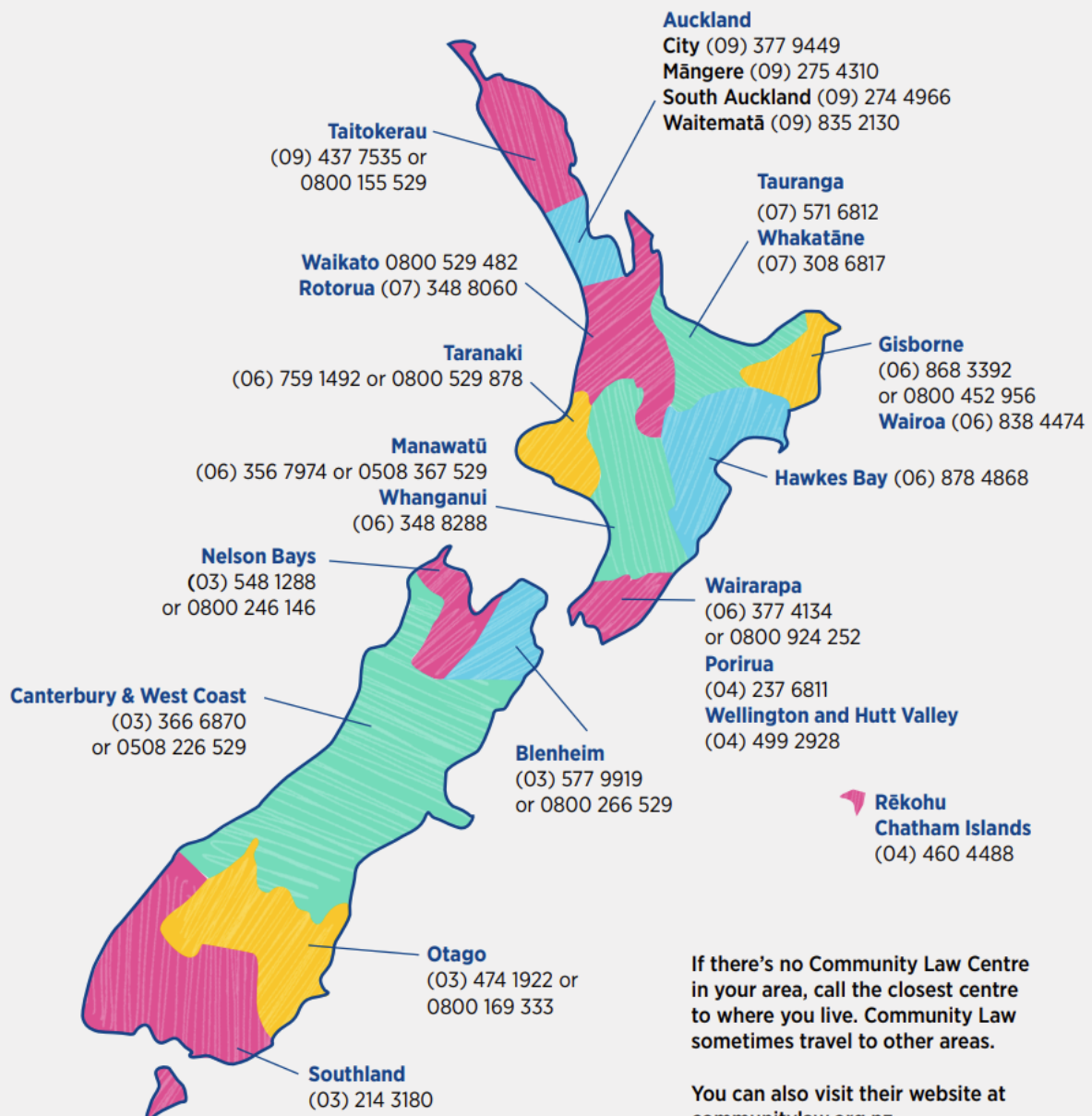


There is a map on the next page that shows:

- where the Community Law Centres are in New Zealand
- the phone numbers for each Community Law Centre.



## Contact your local Community Law Centre:



# 1. Family Legal Advice Service



The Family Legal Advice Service can help you:

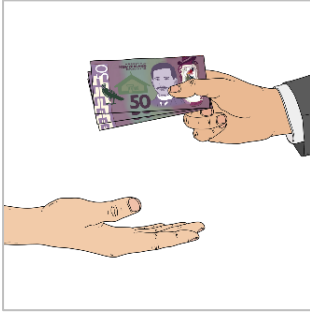
- meet with a lawyer when you are first trying to work through a **parenting disagreement**
- filling out court forms
- filling out forms asking to pay for legal services.



A **parenting disagreement** is when parents cannot agree on the best way to look after their child / children.



You will have 1 to 2 meetings with the Family Legal Advice Service to get things set up.



You may be able to get **funding** to use this legal advice.

**Funding** is money used to pay for your legal costs.



Getting funding is based on how much money you have.



To find out if you can get help from Family Legal Advice Service you can **phone**:

**0800 224 733**



You can also find more information on this **website**:

**[www.justice.govt.nz/get-legal-advice-and-support](http://www.justice.govt.nz/get-legal-advice-and-support)**



## 2. Legal Aid

Legal Aid is money that you may be able to get to help pay for your legal costs.

The money from Legal Aid is a **loan**.



A **loan** is money that you will need to pay back to Legal Aid.



To apply for legal aid you do not need to be a:

- New Zealand **citizen**
- New Zealand **resident**.





A New Zealand **citizen** is someone who can get a New Zealand passport.

Many New Zealand citizens are born in New Zealand.



Some people who come to live in New Zealand from overseas also become New Zealand citizens.



A New Zealand **resident** is someone the government says is allowed to live in New Zealand.



To find out if you can get legal aid you first need to find a legal aid lawyer who you want to work with.



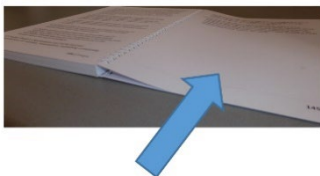
To find a legal aid lawyer you can go to the Ministry Justice **website**:

**[www.justice.govt.nz/  
legal-advice-and-support](http://www.justice.govt.nz/legal-advice-and-support)**



You can also ask for a list of legal aid lawyers from your:

- Citizen Advice Bureau
- Community Law Centre.



You can find information about the Citizen Advice Bureau on **page 23**.





To find more information about legal aid you can **phone** the Legal Aid program at Ministry of Justice:

**0800 253 425**

### 3. Auckland Disability Law



Auckland Disability Law has free legal services for:

- disabled people
- Deaf / deaf people.



You can find more information about Auckland Disability Law on their **website:**

**[www.aucklanddisabilitylaw.org.nz](http://www.aucklanddisabilitylaw.org.nz)**



You can also:

- **phone: 09 257 5140**
- **email: [info@adl.org.nz](mailto:info@adl.org.nz)**
- **text: 027 457 5140**



## 4. Youth Law



Youth Law offers free legal advice to people aged 25 and under.



You can find more information about Youth Law on their **website**:

**[www.youthlaw.co.nz](http://www.youthlaw.co.nz)**



You can also **phone**:

**0800 884 529**

## Going to court without a lawyer



If you decide to go to court without a lawyer you will need to do a lot of **research**.



**Research** means looking into things closely so you know what will happen.



If you **do not** have a lawyer you will need to:

- understand all the legal rules around what happens in court
- speak for yourself about the parenting disagreement.





All people who are part of the parenting disagreement can still have their own lawyer.



If you decide to represent / speak for yourself without a lawyer it may be a good idea to get some ideas from your Community Law Centre about what you need to do.



It is important to tell the Family Court if you change your:

- address
- phone number
- email.



# Going to court with a private lawyer



A **private lawyer** is a lawyer that you pay for using your own money.



You can find your own private lawyer.

You can also ask for a list of private lawyers from your:



- Citizen Advice Bureau



- Community Law Centre.

# More places where you can get support



## 1. Family Court

The Family Court has **staff** that can assist people with the forms needed and next steps.

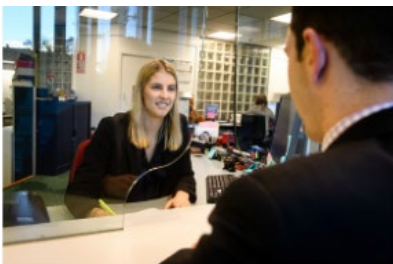


**Staff** are people who work at the Family Court.



Staff include:

- Kaiārahi / Family Court Navigators
- Family Court Co-ordinators
- Front counter staff.







Staff at the Family Court **cannot** give you legal advice.

You can talk to Court staff by:



- visiting the Family Court closest to you
- emailing:

**[kaiarahi@justice.govt.nz](mailto:kaiarahi@justice.govt.nz)**



- calling the Ministry of Justice on:

**0800 224 733**

## 2. Citizens Advice Bureau

Citizens Advice Bureau is also sometimes called **CAB**.



CAB can assist you to:

- understand your rights
- fill out forms.



To find out more information about CAB you can:

- go to this website:

**[www.cab.org.nz](http://www.cab.org.nz)**

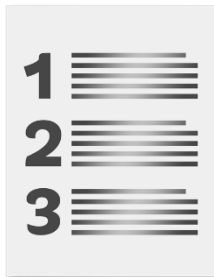


- call this phone number:

**0800 367 222**

### 3. Family Services Directory

The Family Services Directory:



- has a list of support services that can assist whānau / family across Aotearoa New Zealand

- is an information service about all kinds of services such as:



- counselling
- housing / somewhere to live
- help with the cost of living such as food



- disability support
- transport.





To find out more information about Family Services Directory you can:

- visit their website:

**[www.familyservices.govt.nz](http://www.familyservices.govt.nz)**

- call this phone number:

**0800 211 211**





## 4. CCS Disability Action

CCS Disability Action provides information and support to:



- disabled people
- their whānau / family.

To find out more information about CCS Disability Action you can:



- visit this website:

**[www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz](http://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz)**

- email:

**[info@ccsDisabilityAction.org.nz](mailto:info@ccsDisabilityAction.org.nz)**

- phone:

**0800 227 200**



NEED TO TALK?



free call or text  
any time



## 5. 1737: Need to Talk

At 1737: Need to Talk you can talk to a counsellor by:

- calling: **1737**
- texting: **1737**



1737: Need to Talk is open all day / night.



If the 1737 number does not work on your phone you can call this number:

**0800 1737 1737**



You can find out more about 1737: Need to Talk on this **website**:

**[www.1737.org.nz](http://www.1737.org.nz)**



## 6. Lifeline Aotearoa

At Lifeline you can talk to a trained counsellor by:



- calling: **0800 543 354**
- texting: **4357**



Lifeline is open all day / night.



You can find more information about Lifeline on their website:

**[www.lifeline.org.nz](http://www.lifeline.org.nz)**





## 7. Skylight

At Skylight you can talk to a trained counsellor.



You can talk to a counsellor if you are going through a difficult time.



You can phone:

**0800 299 100**



You can find more information about Skylight on their website:

**[www.skylight.org.nz](http://www.skylight.org.nz)**



## 8. 0800 What's Up

0800 What's Up is a counselling service for:



- tamariki / children
- rangatahi / young people.



Children and young people can:

- phone:

**0800 942 8787**

- chat online at:

**[www.whatsup.co.nz](http://www.whatsup.co.nz)**



You can find more information about 0800 What's Up on their **website**:

**[www.whatsup.co.nz](http://www.whatsup.co.nz)**



## 9. Youthline

Youthline is a counselling service for:



- tamariki / children
- rangatahi / young people.



Children and young people can:

- phone: **0800 376 633**
- text: **234**
- chat online:



**[www.youthline.co.nz](http://www.youthline.co.nz)**



You can find more information about Youthline on their website:

**[www.youthline.co.nz](http://www.youthline.co.nz)**

## Where to find more information



The Ministry of Justice has more information about parenting arrangements on their website:

**[www.justice.govt.nz/care-of-children](http://www.justice.govt.nz/care-of-children)**



You can also talk to someone at the Ministry of Justice by calling:

**0800 224 733**



**Make it Easy**  
Kia Māmā Mai



**People First NZ**  
Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi



**PHOTO SYMBOLS®**



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