

# Legal Aid News for Lawyers

## Information for Family Legal Advice Service (FLAS) providers

### Updated website

We've added a new section to our website for [FLAS providers](#). This includes information about how to apply for approval, the Resolution Management System (RMS), the Funding Eligibility test and where to go for help. We've also included links to the Operational Policy along with answers to questions raised during the FLAS, Family Legal Aid Changes and Review of Family Fixed Fees Webinar.

The FLAS went live on 31 March 2014. Since then, more than 230 claims have been paid to FLAS providers.

### Eligibility compliance checks

We'll shortly be starting compliance checks on groups of FLAS providers. The aim is to check that only eligible clients are receiving the funded service and that any issues providers have are identified and resolved. If any compliance issues are identified we will provide additional training and/or tools to help you administer the test correctly.

If you are chosen for a check we will send you a written request for funding eligibility information for specified clients, including:

- a copy of the Funding Eligibility form
- a copy of the client's proof of financial eligibility
- a copy of the client's proof of identity
- any other information relevant to assessing whether the client is eligible to access funded out of court services.

You can send this information in hard-copy or electronic format. Once we have completed the check, we'll write to you with the outcome and advise if future guidance if necessary.

### Tips for using the records management system (RMS)

We've been looking at how providers use RMS to record disputes and claims and have noticed some common errors. Here are some pointers to help you address them:

- The provider listed in RMS must be a FLAS (lead) provider.
- Before you set-up a party or dispute record, you should search for your client in RMS to avoid creating duplicates.
- Clients' names must be entered with the first letter of their name capitalised and the rest of their name in lower case in order to show up in the search results.
- Children's names should not be included in the dispute "name".
- Please use "and" rather than "v" when naming a dispute.
- Please enter the clients' names rather than just their surname or initials and their surname, for example, Jesse James and Daisy Dukes.

- FLAS comprises two funded Activities. FLAS Activity 1 (Initial Legal Advice) can be provided at any time while FLAS Activity 2 (assistance with Court entry forms) should be provided when your client is ready to enter the Court. Unless your client is exempt, this will generally be after they have attended Family Dispute Resolution and Parenting Through Separation.

## Legacy email addresses

Some providers may inadvertently be sending emails to long serving legal aid staff using a [firstname.surname@lsa.govt.nz](mailto:firstname.surname@lsa.govt.nz) email address, particularly if your email system has been set up to autofill email addresses without showing the full detail of the address. The correct form of a legal aid email address is [firstname.surname@justice.govt.nz](mailto:firstname.surname@justice.govt.nz).

From 30 May the old lsa.govt.nz email domain will be closed down and you will receive an automatic “cannot deliver” email response.

Please ensure that you have checked your email Address Book to ensure that there are no lsa.govt.nz email addresses. Changing the “lsa” section of the email address to “justice” will ensure that email continue to be received by the intended recipient.

Please note too that all correspondence from legal aid staff includes their correct email address.

## Restorative justice

A recent Ministry study reconfirmed the contribution restorative justice conferences make in reducing recidivism rates. See Minister Collins’ [media release](#) for a summary of the results.

Following a cash injection of \$4.4m last year, restorative justice services have been rolled out in all New Zealand courts. We’d like to remind all legal aid lawyers that the fixed fees schedules include a rate for making restorative justice referrals.