



THE ADVOCACY & SUPPORT CENTRE | IPSWICH

We provide free legal, advocacy & social services





TASC

TASC (formerly the Toowoomba Community Legal Service) was founded in 1982 as a small legal service for disadvantaged people.

Today TASC is known for its innovative delivery of legal, advocacy and social services across Toowoomba, Ipswich and the South West Region.

TASC operates both the Toowoomba Community Legal Service and the Ipswich Community Legal Service. With offices in both Toowoomba and Ipswich, we provide a range of collaborative legal, advocacy and social services to assist vulnerable Queenslanders and the most marginalised in our communities.

Our Mission Statement is Social Justice for All. TASC upholds principles of social justice and social activism in the delivery of all services.



Our Ipswich Journey

TASC Ipswich opened its doors on 22 April 2008. In the time that TASC has been operating in Ipswich, we have operated the Ipswich Community Legal Service and other legal and advocacy programs. We assist clients in the Ipswich community with a wide range of criminal, family and civil matters.

Our current Programs are:-

- » The Ipswich Community Legal Service
- » The Seniors Legal and Support Service
- » The Family Relationship Centre Ipswich Partnership
- » Forms Clinic
- » Regional Advocacy Services
- » The Queensland Criminal Justice Centre and
- » Community Legal Education.

TASC has a strong background of working collaboratively with other local organisations, often joining forces with community organisations and government departments to improve our service delivery. Our collaborative style of practice enables us to evolve and innovate - in the provision of a truly holistic approach to client service delivery.

Vulnerable or marginalised members of our community, subject to a general assessment criteria are eligible for our services. We also need to complete a conflict check to ensure that acting for each client will not create a conflict of interest. All TASC services are free.



Ipswich Community Legal Service

TASC Ipswich provides free legal consultation, advice and casework in most matters of Civil and Family Law. The service provides access to lawyers who can explain your legal rights and obligations, and who can outline various options and steps that you can take to solve your legal problem.

Areas of advice include the following:-

- » Neighbourhood disputes, fencing and tree disputes, noise and nuisance disputes
- » Debt disputes, including debts owed and owing
- » Refunds of bonds from tenancies and boarding houses
- » Contractual disputes
- » Motor vehicle accidents with property damage and insurance cases
- » Peace and Good Behaviour matters
- » Domestic Violence Protection Orders
- » Separation and Divorce, Family law disputes involving children
- » Parenting issues
- » Consumer disputes.



Seniors Legal & Support Service

TASC Ipswich provides free legal advice, casework and support services for seniors concerned about or affected by elder abuse, mistreatment or financial exploitation. The purpose of the service is to ensure seniors who might be at risk of elder abuse or financial exploitation are provided with the information and support that they need to enhance their safety, security and wellbeing.

Abuse takes many different forms – intimidation or threats against the elderly, some involving neglect, and others involving financial deception. Whether we are addressing physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or abandonment by caregivers, financial exploitation or healthcare fraud – TASC Ipswich is able to provide legal, advocacy and social services.

Areas of advice include the following:-

- » Preparation of Enduring Powers of Attorney and Advanced Health Directives
- » Legal information and advice
- » Advocacy
- » Counselling and referrals
- » Advice on protective strategies to manage assets and prevent or stop financial abuse
- » Advice on aged care facilities' entry contracts
- » Information on the role of the Office of the Public Guardian and Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal matters and hearings.



Family Relationships Centre Ipswich Partnership

TASC Ipswich works in partnership with South West Brisbane Community Legal Centre and the Family Relationship Centre in Ipswich to provide family law advice to people in the community who are participating in mediation through the Family Relationships Centre.

TASC Ipswich Lawyers attend the Centre to advise participants of their legal rights and obligations so that they can participate effectively in family dispute resolution and mediation.

Lawyers also provide a general overview of Divorce and Parenting Orders and also individual legal advice.



Forms Clinic

The Toowoomba Community Legal Service identified through its work the need to expand its service to incorporate a forms clinic. The forms clinic has provided a worthwhile service to the Toowoomba community since commencing operation in May 2014.

The purpose of the Forms Clinic is to assist those members of the community who require assistance filling in forms such as QCAT Applications, Superannuation forms, Right to Information forms, Work Cover forms, Criminal History and Yellow Card forms, Centrelink, Electricity rebates, Public Trustee and Disability Support Pension Application.

Our legal clinics and advocacy services are available for clients requiring legal advice, assistance or advocacy support. Referrals to these services can be made from the Forms Clinic if extra assistance is required.

We have now commenced a Forms Clinic in Ipswich that operates every Tuesday between 9.00am and 11pm.



Regional Advocacy

TASC Ipswich Advocacy addresses requests for support from many various areas of the community – for the provision of mental health services or support, addressing issues resulting in criminal offences, guardianship matters, consumer complaints, housing and accommodation stresses and specific issues. Our Advocates provide support to individuals with a physical or intellectual disability, mental illness or those marginalised in our community.

We provide support to people engaged with the criminal justice system through working as an Advocate with the TASC Lawyer in the Disability Law Project. We advocate by considering our client’s social circumstances and putting in place supports for our client to minimise the chance of re-offending in the future – e.g. reconnection with personal networks, securing accommodation, employment opportunities, medication reviews, funding applications, access to services or other informal supports. This includes support at court during the hearing and engaging with the client’s support network.

Other areas where TASC provides advocacy assistance include:-

- » Access to Centrelink payments or other government assistance
- » Access to employment services
- » Assistance in liaising with Disability Services in relation to registration of need, assessment, funding, service provision and representation at meetings
- » Attendance at stakeholder meetings for clients with complex needs
- » Assisting clients to make complaints to appeal/review matters to either government departments or other appropriate agencies
- » Advocacy support at Queensland Civil and Administrative Appeal tribunal hearings, including application and representation for Guardianship and Administration matters
- » Liaison with the Public Trustee of Queensland including access to information, representation at budget meetings and tribunal hearings, assistance and information for reviews.



Queensland Criminal Justice Centre

Sometimes people do not receive access to justice when in contact with the Criminal Justice System.

The QCJC is a web based resource and practical guide for lawyers, support workers, families and for all persons working with vulnerable people with mental health disorders and cognitive disabilities facing the criminal justice system. It includes regular articles and reviews of the activities and engagements of our TASC lawyers and advocates in the disability sector; engagement with the community through social media and the integration of social media across all TASC programs supporting our disabled clients.

TASC is a referral agency to SupportLink – the Queensland Police Service pathway to refer people with disabilities to appropriate assistance at the time of their first interaction with police. A referral through SupportLink enables the person involved to access an Advocate or Lawyer for early intervention action that might not otherwise be the case if the person was charged or sent to court.

TASC also accepts referrals from the Police where matters involve suspected Elder Abuse (financial, physical or emotional).

TASC also provides training to Court Support Network volunteers about how to identify matters appropriate for referral to TASC for those people with disabilities who do appear at Court. We provide a Resource Kit where people present at the Courthouse seeking access to e.g. accommodation, food, domestic violence assistance, drug, rehabilitation or other community services in order to give people more immediate access to necessary support services.

TASC provides training to First year Constables of the Queensland Police Service.

This training highlights the benefits to the police in referring to TASC those people engaging with the police who might benefit from access to more appropriate supports.

Often early engagement with our services is a better outcome compared to Police proceeding with legal charges through the Court process.



Community Legal Education

TASC, in partnership with Legal Aid Queensland, manages a growing demand for community education primarily around the legal consequences of social media and the topic of cyber bullying.

Our cyber bullying campaign was, at first instance, developed into a booklet for student and teacher distribution together with a power point presentation containing two DVD presentations.

The booklet has now been developed into a state-wide resource accessible from both the TASC and Legal Aid Queensland's respective websites. Presentations are delivered to students throughout the South West Region and separately, to parents and community members in evening sessions.

Privacy Policy

TASC is committed to protecting and upholding the right to privacy of clients, staff, volunteers, Management Committee members and representatives of agencies with which we deal. In particular, TASC is committed to protecting and upholding the rights of our clients to privacy in the way we collect, store and use information about them, their needs and the services we provide to them.

TASC follows the guidelines of the Australian Privacy Principles in its information management practices. TASC will ensure that:-

- » It meets its legal and ethical obligations as an employer and service provider in relation to protecting the privacy of clients and organisational personnel
- » Clients are provided with information about their rights regarding privacy
- » Clients and organisational personnel are provided with privacy when they are being interviewed or discussing matters of a personal or sensitive nature
- » All staff, Management Committee members and volunteers understand what is required in meeting these obligations.

This policy conforms to the Federal Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles that govern the collection and storage of personal information. The Privacy Contact Officer is the Chief Executive Officer.

Privacy Information for Clients

At initial interview, clients will be told what information is being collected, how their privacy will be protected and their rights in relation to the information.

Privacy for interviews and personal discussions

To ensure privacy for clients or staff when discussing sensitive or personal matters, TASC will:

- » Meet the clients in private interview space
- » Ensure that private information addressed in oral discussion or phone calls is done with discretion and in a quiet manner
- » Ensure material contained on computer screens is shielded from public view
- » Ensure that home visits are conducted with minimal disruption to the occupant's home or private space.

TASC Client Charter

What you can expect from us:

We will:-

- » Contact you promptly
- » Treat you with respect
- » Provide fair and equitable service
- » Be accountable for our actions
- » Treat your personal and confidential information carefully
- » Act in your best interests
- » Arrange for an interpreter to assist you in required.

We will not:-

- » Discriminate against you in any way

How you can assist us - You can help us to understand your needs by:

- » Talking with our staff
- » Telling us about changes we should know about - for example changes to your circumstances or contact details
- » Working with the service to have your needs met and taking an active part in making decisions about your life
- » Giving us feedback about our service.

Compliments and Complaints

- » You can fill out our Client Service Form
- » You can make a complaint or a compliment about our service or our staff.

Making a complaint

A person wishing to make a complaint may do so in writing or verbally to:

- » The staff member they were dealing with at the time
- » The Coordinator of that staff member
- » The Chief Executive Officer
- » The President of the Management Committee;

Or

If the complaint is about:

- » A staff member, the complaint will normally be dealt with by the staff member's Coordinator or another TASC Coordinator as deemed appropriate
- » A Coordinator, the complaint will normally be dealt with by the Chief Executive officer
- » A Lawyer, the Chief Executive Officer /Principal Lawyer who will determine whether the complaint is to be referred to the Queensland Law Society in accordance with TASC professional indemnity insurance requirements and the Federal CLC PII scheme representative
- » The Chief Executive Officer, the President of the Management Committee
- » Written complaints may be sent to TASC's postal or email address. The Office Manager will be responsible for receiving this correspondence and directing it to the appropriate person.

Lodging an Appeal

Staff or clients may lodge an appeal if they disagree with a decision made by the organisation, or by a staff member, related to issues of law or proper process only.

An appeal should be made in writing with no specific form or format required, and submitted to the Office Manager.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can:

- » Request mediation with the person in the complaint
- » Refer the matter to the President of the Management Committee: PO Box 594, Toowoomba QLD 4350

Take your complaint to a third party such as the:

- » Australian Human Rights Commission
PH: 1300 369 711
TTY: 1800 620 241
Email: infoservice@humanrights.gov.au

Anti-Discrimination Commission

- » PH: 1300 130 670
TTY: 1300 130 680
General Email: info@adcq.qld.gov.au
Complaints Email: enquiries@adcq.qld.gov.au

Office of the Ombudsman

- » PH: 07 3005 7000
Toll Free: 1800 068 908
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au

Disability Services Queensland

- » PH: 13 QGOV (13 7468)
TTY: 133 677
General Email: disabilityinfo@disability.qld.gov.au
Complaints Email: feedback@disability.qld.gov.au

You can take these actions at any time even while your complaint is being managed at TASC.

The TASC Complaints Policy can be found at the TASC website at www.tascinc.org.au





IPSWICH

For further information or to make an appointment

Ipswich
60 South Street
Po Box 38
Ipswich QLD 4350

Ph: 07 3812 7000
Fax: 07 3812 7700
reception@tascinc.org.au