



About IDRS Legal Services

The Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS) is a disability advocacy service and a community legal centre providing free legal assistance to people with intellectual disability throughout NSW.

Who do we help?

Our services are to help people with intellectual disability.

Court in criminal matters for orders under s32 of the *Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Act 1990 (NSW)*.

Who can ask for IDRS legal services?

- People with intellectual disability can contact us directly to get legal help
- Family members, friends, carers, disability service providers and advocates can contact us to get help for a person with intellectual disability. It is preferred that the person with intellectual disability is available to talk to the IDRS lawyer, failing which, the person obtaining legal advice must have the client's consent to talk to IDRS on the client's behalf
- Lawyers can contact IDRS lawyers for consultation and referrals. Our lawyers can share their experience of dealing with issues such as how to communicate effectively with a client with intellectual disability; the legal capacity of clients with intellectual disability; and making applications to the Local

Types of legal issues we can help with

- administrative law matters
- AVOs (Apprehended Violence Orders)
- care and protection matters
- complaints about services, police, government departments, accommodation services or group homes
- consumer rights
- credit and debt issues
- criminal matters
- discrimination
- employment
- fines
- guardianship and financial management matters
- housing issues
- neglect, abuse and exploitation
- neighbour disputes
- social security
- rights of victims of crime
- wills, estates and future planning

How do we help?

- Free legal advice
- Help drafting letters about legal matters
- Some on-going legal casework
- Some representation in courts or tribunals
- Referrals to support services
- Referrals to specialist legal services, and private lawyers (who sometimes charge no fees)
- Consultation about how to improve outcomes in legal matters for clients with intellectual disability
- Training for solicitors, disability advocates and others about assisting clients with intellectual disability to resolve their legal issues

Getting legal advice

Legal advice is usually provided by appointment over the phone, but can be provided by appointment at the IDRS office in Redfern, NSW.

Making an appointment

IDRS can be contacted on (02) 9318 0144, 9:00AM-5:00PM, Monday to Friday (excludes public holidays and IDRS special events dates) to make an appointment to talk to a lawyer

Appointment times

Appointment times are usually at 2:00PM, 3:00PM and 4:00PM (Monday – Friday.)

A person with intellectual disability who has been arrested can call 1300 665 908 to get support and legal advice at the police station, 9 AM–10 PM, 7 days a week.

Information we require to make an appointment

- Information about the client - complete name and aliases, date of birth, address, contact details, details of others IDRS can contact who can help and information about the client's disability or other needs- for example, if an interpreter is required
- Information about the legal problem faced by the client, including complete list of names of people and organisations involved in the issue
- Client consent is required if the person with intellectual disability cannot be available to talk to the IDRS lawyer to get legal advice, UNLESS the person with intellectual disability lacks the capacity to give instructions.

Cancelling or postponing appointments

If an appointment needs to be postponed or cancelled, please contact IDRS as soon as possible on (02) 9318 0144.

IDRS is funded by NSW Family and Community Services, Ageing Disability and Home Care and the Australian Government Department of Social Services.