

## JUNE 2015

*Legal Aid News* is your official regular communication from Legal Aid Services on all matters related to legal aid. *Legal Aid News* is generally published in the last week of every month.

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### The Children's Action Plan

The Children's Action Plan has a national children's workforce development programme underway, including standard safety checks of people who work with children.

The safety check will make it easier to identify those people who are a risk to children and today we have achieved a major milestone towards that goal.

The new Vulnerable Children (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015 have been published. They describe the safety checking requirements for State-funded organisations that employ children's workers.

From 1 July 2015, all State-funded core children's workers starting a new job will have to be safety checked according to the new regulations before they begin work. By 1 July 2019, all 280,000 central government funded children's workers will need to have been safety checked. More information on the Children's Action Plan can be found [here](#).

The civil legal aid fee schedule and disbursement list for appeals against the decision to deny or revoke children's workers exemptions can be found [here](#).

All legal aid applications for children's workers exemptions appeals will be managed in the Wellington legal aid office.

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## Criminal legal aid service survey

In March this year we conducted a telephone survey of legal aid clients to gauge the overall level of client satisfaction with private criminal providers and Legal Aid Services. The survey findings were very positive and the great majority of legal aid clients were satisfied.

These high levels of satisfaction are similar to the results of the PDS survey conducted in September 2014. Overall, these results show that people accessing criminal legal aid services in New Zealand are reporting high levels of satisfaction with those services, whether delivered by PDS or private firms.

A similar survey will be run in 2015-16 to assess service delivery quality for customers who accessed family legal aid.

The summary of the criminal legal aid service survey findings can be found [here](#).

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## Audit and Monitoring Policy and Complaints Management Policy

In April this year, we sought feedback on proposed changes to our legal aid provider Auditing and Monitoring Policy (Audit Policy), Audit Terms of Reference, and Complaints Managements Policy (Complaints Policy). The proposed changes were designed to improve the transparency and administration of legal aid provider auditing and complaints management processes.

The proposed changes were circulated to the New Zealand Law Society (NZLS), the New Zealand Bar Association (NZBA), the Criminal Bar Association (CBA), and the Auckland District Law Society Inc (ADLS). The NZLS published the consultation documents in Law Points. Responses were received from the NZLS, NZBA, CBA, and one law firm.

We wish to thank those who responded for their feedback. Your comments were much appreciated and assisted in clarifying and finalising the policies.

The consultation feedback document and updated polices have now been finalised and can be viewed on the below links.

The consultation feedback document can be found [here](#)

The updated Audit and Monitoring policy can be found [here](#)

The updated Audit Terms of Reference can be found [here](#)

The updated Complaints policy can be found [here](#)

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## Non-GST registered suppliers

In the May issue of the Legal Aid News we advised a change in policy around non-GST registered third party suppliers (eg some interpreters). As from 1 July 2015 legal aid providers should not levy GST on claims for reimbursement where a third party supplier is not GST registered. This is because services are acquired from third parties by legal aid providers, as agents on our behalf.

This change will be implemented from **1 July 2015**. Invoices received on or after that date where supporting documents show that GST has been added to a non-GST registered third party supplier will be returned for correction.

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### Queries?

If you have queries about any article in this newsletter, please contact [legalaidnews@justice.govt.nz](mailto:legalaidnews@justice.govt.nz).

New Zealand Government