

WA bushfires – legal advice and assistance

We understand that traumatic experiences such as being involved in a fire can be distressing and overwhelming. We realise that it may be a while before you can focus on legal matters, but we encourage you to seek legal help as soon as possible as limitation dates may apply which could affect the options available to you.

Legal Aid WA and its partner organisations are committed to ensuring all people affected by bushfires receive legal help.

If you experience any of the following legal issues, please contact Legal Aid WA for free legal advice and referrals.

Insurance issues, where:

- your insurance papers have been destroyed and you don't know who your insurer is
- you need help with lodging a claim
- you are unsure what your policy covers
- your house has been completely destroyed and your insurance company is requiring you to provide an itemised list of your home's contents
- you are underinsured, or
- you disagree with the valuation provided by the assessor or your claim has been refused.
- you have made an offer to buy a property but it was then destroyed or damaged
- your property was damaged or burnt down and you have now got an offer for it
- your destroyed property was used as security for your mortgage or loan on that (or another) property, or
- you owe tradespeople for work on the property.

Mortgage or debt issues including where:

- you are finding it difficult to meet your home or other loan repayments because of the bushfires
- you are seeking help to vary your loan contract due to hardship or financial difficulty
- court action is being threatened, or
- you are hoping to access your superannuation to help pay your debts.
- Property issues, where:
- you are renting and the house is unfit to live in or requires repairs
- you are insured and need help with accessing additional accommodation funding under your insurance policy, or
- you want help negotiating a rent reduction due to damage to the property.

Replacing important documents such as:

- Marriage certificates
- Birth certificates
- Motor vehicle drivers licences

What services can Legal Aid WA provide?

We provide free independent legal advice and referral to a private lawyer for free initial legal advice.

In some instances we may also be able to provide limited assistance to help resolve a legal problem. This help may include advocacy, negotiation, or help to lodge an application to the relevant Ombudsman, for example, the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman or Australian Financial Complaints Authority.

In addition, Legal Aid WA has several information sheets that may help with debt, insurance, renting and other issues if you have been affected directly by natural disasters such as floods. You can download the information sheets at www.legalaid.wa.gov.au.

For free legal advice and referrals contact Legal Aid WA's Infoline on 1300 650 579 or email naturaldisasters@legalaid.wa.gov.au.

LEGAL AID WA OFFICES



Infoline: 1300 650 579



Translating & Interpreting Service:
131 450



Website/InfoChat:
www.legalaid.wa.gov.au



National Relay Service: 133 677
(for hearing and speech impaired)

Perth Office

32 St Georges Terrace, Perth, WA
6000
1300 650 579
(08) 9261 6222

Midwest & Gascoyne Office

Unit 8, The Boardwalk, 273
Foreshore Drive,
Geraldton, WA 6530
(08) 9921 0200

West Kimberley Office

Upper Level, Woody's Arcade,
15-17 Dampier Terrace,
Broome, WA 6725
(08) 9195 5888

Great Southern Office

Unit 3, 43-47 Duke Street,
Albany, WA 6330
(08) 9892 9700

Goldfields Office

Suite 3, 120 Egan Street,
Kalgoorlie, WA 6430
(08) 9025 1300

East Kimberley Office

98 Konkerberry Drive,
Kununurra, WA 6743
(08) 9166 5800

Southwest Office

7th Floor, Bunbury Tower, 61
Victoria Street,
Bunbury, WA 6230
(08) 9721 2277

Pilbara Office

28 Throssell Road, South
Hedland,
WA 6722
(08) 9172 3733

Indian Ocean Office

Administration Building,
20 Jalan Pantai, Christmas Island,
Indian Ocean, WA 6798
(08) 9164 7529

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