



Questions you should ask your lawyer

Is my first appointment free?

Some lawyers provide the first appointment free. Ask about this when you make an appointment.

Is your lawyer experienced in this area of work?

After you have explained your problem, ask your lawyer what experience they have had with this type of problem. Many lawyers specialise in particular areas of law. Also find out who will actually be doing the work. Ask to be told if your work is referred to another lawyer in the firm.

What are my options?

Ask your lawyer, after you have explained your problem, to outline your options and how your problem can be solved. If you don't understand something ask the lawyer to explain. Ask about ways to solve your problem without going to court.

What are my chances of success?

Ask your lawyer about your chances of success. Discuss what you consider to be a successful result. Take time to think things over.

What work will your lawyer be doing?

Make sure your lawyer understands what you want to achieve. Ask your lawyer how the work will be done and to explain the steps involved. Also ask your lawyer about how you will be informed about the progress of your case.

How long will it take?

Ask if anything can be done to speed things up. Ask if there might be delays and how they can be avoided.

Is legal aid available?

You may be able to get legal aid if you are on a low income. Contact LawAccess NSW for more information on 1300 888 529 or 1300 889 529 TTY.

How much will it cost?

Shop around and remember, you can negotiate. Cost is not the only factor in choosing a lawyer. In most cases your lawyer must advise you in writing how much the work will cost or, if that is not possible, how costs will be calculated. Ask if they will take the case on a 'no win, no fee basis', and if so, what this means. Ask what else you might have to pay and if you have to pay anyone else's legal costs if you lose the case. Don't sign any agreement about fees unless you understand it and are happy with it. Tell your lawyer you want to be kept informed about costs as the case progresses.

When do I have to pay?

In most cases your lawyer must advise you in advance and in writing how and when you will have to pay. You are entitled to receive a detailed bill before you pay. Some lawyers will agree to wait until the matter ends before you pay them. Remember how and when you pay can always be negotiated.

What if I have a problem with my bill or my lawyer?

You should first try and resolve the problem with your lawyer. You are entitled to have your bill reviewed if you are not happy with it. Contact the Legal Services Commissioner for advice about this or any other problems you are having with your lawyer.

Need general information?

LawAccess NSW 1300 888 529 or 1300 889 529 TTY

Looking for a lawyer?

Law Society of NSW Community Referral Service 9926 0300 or 1800 422 713 (country callers only)

Email: ereferral@lawsocnsw.asn.au

Do you have a complaint?

NSW Legal Services Commissioner 9377 1800 or 1800 242 958 (country callers only)

Email: olsc@agd.nsw.gov.au