

Client accessing or utilising the Aboriginal Family Legal Services Queensland (Maruma-li-mari), have certain rights and responsibilities.

Client Rights

When you seek assistance from AFLSQ you are entitled to the following rights:

1. To be treated in a respectful, non-judgmental and non-discriminatory way.
2. To receive appropriate, thorough and well researched advice and/or referrals to other agencies.
3. To understand our standards for providing legal services, which we will discuss and explain.
4. To be treated with honesty, respect, dignity and regard for your privacy and confidentiality.
5. To allow a support person when you attend this service.
6. To bring an interpreter.
7. Subject to disclosure required by law or disclosure required to prevent harm to yourself or other persons, any information supplied by you to AFLSQ shall be treated as confidential at all times.
8. To voice a concern or make a complaint.

Client Responsibilities

When you seek assistance from AFLSQ, you have the following responsibilities.

1. To treat staff, volunteers and our service providers with respect at all times.
2. Act respectfully, courteously and safely towards other people using the service, and towards staff and volunteers.
3. To not swear or act in a rude, aggressive or abusive manner towards staff, volunteers or other service providers.
4. To ensure your support person understands they have the same responsibilities.
5. To arrive at your appointment on time and attend all court dates or events, as advised by a staff member.
6. To supply correct information about yourself and your situation so that staff fully understand what is happening and can assess how to best assist you and are able to represent you accurately in court if required.
7. Understand that the information and advice provided by AFLSQ is based on the information you give us. It is therefore important that you provide complete, relevant, honest, accurate, timely information and instructions.
8. To work together to resolve concerns.
9. To act in a way that doesn't put yourself or any other person at risk or compromise any person's safety.
10. To inform the service at least **24 hours before** of any cancellations regarding your appointment.

11. You may be required to make a payment to progress your matter (as outlined in your retainer). We will provide you with details of any such payments needing to be made. An example of these would be the service of documents, Subpoenas and/or Barrister fees.

Please note: AFLSQ may refuse or cease the provision of services or acting for you on your matter if you do not meet these obligations.

Conflict Checks

Before we are able to assist you, we must first check that we don't have a conflict of interest. If we have a conflict of interest, we will advise and assist you to get legal advice elsewhere.

Agreement for Legal Advice

By attending our service for legal advice, you agree.

1. AFLSQ will provide legal advice to you on the basis of the information that you provide. AFLSQ's ability to give you useful legal advice/assistance depends on you giving our staff accurate and specific information about your issues and all relevant documents in a timely manner.
2. AFLSQ will keep your file and documents in secure storage for 7 years after the closure of your file (or for a child, 7 years after your 18th birthday). Unless a sexual disclosure was made, then your file is retained for 30 years. You can request a copy of your file.
3. AFLSQ will provide you with legal advice, but the responsibility for progressing your legal matter remains with you.
4. That you are receiving a free legal advice appointment and that ongoing work/casework is resource intensive and is therefore available in limited circumstances.
5. AFLSQ is required by law to keep all your information strictly confidential unless you authorise AFLSQ to reveal it or unless AFLSQ is required by law to reveal it to prevent imminent and serious harm or another person.

When seeking a service from AFLSQ you can help us by:

- Providing all the relevant information about your matter.
- Providing documents related to your matter when requested.
- Following our advice if/when given.
- Telling us how you want us to stay in contact with you should further contact be required.
- Providing a Certificate of Aboriginality, and updated general contact details (for example, phone number, email).

If we open a casework file for you, we also ask that you:

- Contact us if anything relating to your matter changes.
- Tell us if you change your phone number or address.
- Keep appointment times.
- Sign an Authority to Act.
- Sign a "Retainer Letter" where applicable.

Agreement for Counselling Support

By attending our service for Counselling, you agree:

1. AFLSQ will provide Counselling support to you on the basis of the information that you provide. AFLSQ's ability to give you Counselling support depends on you giving our staff accurate and specific information about your issues and all relevant documents in a timely manner.
2. AFLSQ will keep your file and documents in secure storage for 7 years after the closure of your file (or for a child, 7 years after your 18th birthday). Unless a sexual disclosure was made, then your file is retained for 30 years. You can request a copy of your file.
3. AFLSQ will provide you with Counselling support, but the responsibility for continued engagement remains with you.
4. That you are receiving free Counselling support appointments, and that extensive ongoing work/casework is resource intensive and is therefore available in limited circumstances.
5. In compliance with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW), AFLSQ is required by law to keep all your information strictly confidential unless you authorise AFLSQ to reveal your personal information, in accordance with any consent given by you to a third party or where disclosure is authorised, compelled or permitted by law. Or unless AFLSQ is required by law to reveal it to prevent imminent and serious harm to another person.

Privacy

We respect clients' rights to privacy and confidentiality and comply with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.

We are required by law to keep all your information strictly confidential, unless you authorise us to reveal it to others or unless we are required by law to reveal it to prevent imminent and serious harm to yourself or another person.

You may request information from your file. We may require proof of identification in order to release the information.

Feedback and Complaints

Feedback and Complaints in circumstances where client demand is increasing, we are obliged to limit the provision of our more intensive services to the most vulnerable people who are unable to advocate for themselves.

We acknowledge that unfortunately this means some clients, who believe they should receive services in addition to advice, may be disappointed. Any concerns about a service provided by AFLSQ should first be raised with the staff member involved.

If there are still issues requiring clarification after talking to the staff member, discuss the issue with the staff member's supervisor.

AFLSQ takes client feedback and complaints seriously. We use a fair and uniform approach to ensure issues are dealt with in a consistent and timely manner. We will keep you informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation or changes made as a result of your feedback.

Unresolved concerns or complaints must be addressed in writing to Chief Executive Officer, Kathleen Wincen, email kathleen.wincen@afsq.org.au or post to PO Box 1105 Toowoomba City QLD 4350.

Where to find us

Head Office
Suite 9, Lvl 3,
158 Margaret Street
Toowoomba, Qld, 4350
PH: 07 4614 7116

Murgon
74-76 Lamb Street, Murgon,
QLD, 4605
PH: 07 4179 0110



Gympie
Shop 7/11 Mary Street,
Gympie, QLD, 4570
PH: 07 5356 9261

Roma
Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement
36 McDowell Street, Roma, QLD, 4455
PH: 0491 331 473
PH: 0499 617 722

Acknowledgement of Country

The Aboriginal Family Legal Services Queensland (Maruma-li-mari) would like to respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians who have walked on and cared for this land for thousands of years and recognise their continuing connection to land, sea, and waterways. AFLSQ Acknowledges the stories, traditions, and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, whose sovereignty was never ceded.

Connect with us

 enquires@afsq.org.au
 www.afsq.org.au

