

Tuesday 9 April, 2024

Legal aid available for flood-impacted NSW residents

Flood-affected residents are being reminded that free legal help is available through Legal Aid NSW.

Lawyers from the Disaster Response Legal Service (DRLS) NSW are on standby to provide free legal advice to residents impacted by the recent flood event in NSW.

The DRLS can advise residents on everything from insurance claims, tenancy, accessing disaster grants and payments, financial hardship and employment.

Since January 2020, Legal Aid NSW has provided 8,983 legal services to disaster impacted individuals in NSW and over 2,700 calls were answered on the DRLS Adviceline, operated by LawAccess.

“One of the most common issues people encounter after a flood involve the insurance claims process, including needing help accessing benefits under their policy like temporary accommodation,” Senior Disaster Response Solicitor Alexandra Rumore said.

Executive Director, Civil Law, Legal Aid NSW Meredith Osborne said timely legal help in disaster responses can avoid many flow-on social issues, like homelessness and unemployment.

“It is critical that people impacted by disasters have access to legal advice early on to ensure they can understand and assert their rights. Legal help must be embedded in the recovery efforts in the aftermath of disasters to ensure the best outcomes for people and communities that have experienced acute dislocation,” she said.

Free legal advice is available to anyone affected by a disaster. For more intensive casework, Legal Aid NSW policies and guidelines apply. Victims of disasters are considered priority clients.

Anyone needing legal help can call the DRLS Helpline on 1800 801 529 or visit the [DRLS website](#).

The DRLS will also be on the ground at Recovery Assistance Points in Thirroul and Warrarong from Thursday 11 April.

Media are encouraged to include the following messaging in their flood coverage: “Free legal help is available to flood victims through Legal Aid NSW’s specialist Disaster Response Legal Service by contacting 1800 801 529.”

INTERVIEWS ARE AVAILABLE WITH SPECIALIST DISASTER LAWYERS

Media contact | Georgia Clark | media@legalaid.nsw.gov.au | 0438 606 092