

# Forensic patient

## Statement of rights

You have been given this booklet because you are a forensic patient. This booklet provides information about your legal rights and entitlements under the *Mental Health Act 2014* and the *Crimes (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Act 1997*. A member of the treating team will talk to you about this information and answer your questions.

If at any time you have questions about this information or your rights, ask someone to explain. You can ask a member of the treating team, a friend, a family member, a lawyer, an advocate or a community visitor.

Copies of this booklet are available online at: [www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth)

## Am I a forensic patient?

A forensic patient is a person detained in hospital:

- on a **Custodial Supervision Order**
- on a **Non-Custodial Supervision Order** where the person failed to comply with their Non-Custodial Supervision Order and the safety of any person was at serious risk or the person left Victoria and has been arrested and taken to hospital.
- who has been **remanded in custody** under the *Crimes (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Act 1997* for the time specified in the order to await further court proceedings
- who has been **moved from prison** by direction of the Secretary to the Department of Justice under the *Mental Health Act 2014*
- as a **federal forensic patient** because a court has placed the person on an order under the *Crimes Act 1914* of the Commonwealth
- on an **interim disposition order made by the Magistrates' Court** after the person did not comply with an interstate supervision order and came to Victoria

- on an **interim disposition order made by the Victorian Minister** after the person was transferred to Victoria from another state
- as an **international forensic patient** being a person serving a sentence of imprisonment within the meaning of the *International Transfer of Prisoners Act 1997* of the Commonwealth.

## Treatment for mental illness

You must be given treatment for mental illness if you are a forensic patient.

You can make decisions about your mental health treatment. A psychiatrist must talk to you about what mental health treatment you would like.

If you agree to treatment this is called '**informed consent**'.

To give informed consent to treatment you must be able to:

- **understand** the information you are given about treatment
- **remember** the information you are given about treatment
- **use or weigh** the information about treatment
- **communicate** your decision about treatment.

A psychiatrist or another member of the treating team will help you to make decisions about your mental health treatment.

To help you to make a decision about your treatment a psychiatrist must:

- give you enough information to help you to make a decision about your treatment
- give you time to think about the decision before you make a decision
- tell you what the treatment will do to help you get better
- tell you what other treatments may help to make you better
- tell you about any side-effects, discomforts or risks of the treatment or other treatments.

You can ask a psychiatrist any questions that you want about your treatment. The psychiatrist must answer your questions in a way that you will best understand.

You can also have other people help you to make decisions about your mental health treatment, such as:

- a family member
- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer
- a mental health advocate.

## What if I don't want treatment or I can't make a decision?

A psychiatrist will make a decision about your treatment if:

- you do not agree to the treatment that the psychiatrist thinks will help you get better
- you are unable to make a decision about your treatment when the decision needs to be made.

If you do not agree to the treatment or are unable to make a decision about your treatment the psychiatrist will still listen to what treatment you would like.

A psychiatrist will also look at your advance statement if you have one. An advance statement is written by you when you are well.

An **advance statement** says what treatment you would like when you are unwell.

The psychiatrist will also listen to what some other people who know you have to say about your treatment:

- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer if the treatment decision will directly affect the carer or the caring role
- a parent if you are a young person under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if you are on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

The psychiatrist will also look at any second opinion about your mental health treatment that has been given to the psychiatrist.

The psychiatrist will also think about how it will affect your mental health if the treatment is not given to you.

Even if you are unable to make a decision about your mental health treatment now, you may be able to make a decision at another time.

## Leave

You can ask to leave hospital. There are three types of short-term leave for forensic patients: special leave, on-ground leave and limited off-ground leave.

Your psychiatrist will make decisions about special leave. The Forensic Leave Panel will make decisions about on-ground leave and limited off-ground leave.

You may also have extended leave from hospital, to live in the community for up to 12 months if the court that made your order agrees.

### Special leave

Special leave is for specific purposes, such as medical treatment, court appearances or special events such as a funeral. Special leave is for a maximum of 24 hours or 7 days if the leave is for medical treatment.

If you would like to have special leave you should talk to a psychiatrist, doctor, nurse or another member of the treating team.

You can also get help to ask for special leave from:

- a family member
- your nominated person
- your guardian
- a carer
- any other person you choose.

Your psychiatrist will make the decision about a request for special leave.

### On-ground and limited off-ground leave

The purpose of on-ground leave and limited off-ground leave is to help with your treatment and rehabilitation.

On-ground leave allows you to leave hospital but you must remain in the area around the hospital known as the **'surrounds'**.

Limited off-ground leave allows you to leave the hospital surrounds between 6.00 am and 9.00 pm. It can be granted outside these hours but only for a maximum of three days in any seven day period.

Limited off-ground leave can be granted for a maximum of six (6) months but at the end of this time an application can be made to have the leave renewed.

If you would like to have on-ground leave or limited off-ground leave you should talk to a psychiatrist, doctor, nurse or another member of the treating team about making an application to the Forensic Leave Panel.

If no application forms are available from the hospital, you can write a letter to the Panel setting out your name, the name of the hospital and the type of leave you want. The contact details for the Panel are included at the end of this booklet.

If your treating team believes you are ready for leave, they will prepare the application, update your treatment plan and prepare a leave plan.

It is important to talk to the treating team about your application for leave because the Forensic Leave Panel will want to know whether the treating team support your application.

## Forensic Leave Panel hearing

The Forensic Leave Panel is an independent organisation that is set up by the law (the *Crimes (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Act 1997*).

The Panel hears:

- applications for on-ground and limited off-ground leave
- appeals from forensic patients who have been refused special leave.

The Panel will hold a hearing to decide your leave application or appeal. At the Panel hearing there will be a group of four (4) members:

- a judge
- the Chief Psychiatrist or their nominee
- a psychiatrist
- a member of the community.

The Panel will listen to what you have to say about your application or appeal.

The Panel will also listen to what the psychiatrist or other members of the treating team have to say about the leave sought by you.

The hearing will be held at the hospital where you are getting treatment.

You have a right to come to the hearing and to be supported by anyone you choose.

You can ask to get help from a lawyer to get ready for the Panel hearing.

The lawyer can also help you to have your say about whether you need compulsory treatment at the hearing.

A doctor, nurse, psychiatrist or other member of the treating team must help you to contact someone who you would like to help you at the hearing.

## Access to information for Forensic Leave Panel hearing

You have the right to look at any documents about you that are held by the mental health service.

A **'mental health service'** is the hospital where you are having mental health treatment.

You can look at these documents to help you get ready for the hearing with the Forensic Leave Panel.

A psychiatrist must let you look at the documents at least 24 hours before the Panel hearing.

A psychiatrist or another member of the treating team can help you to look at the documents about your mental health treatment.

You can also ask to get help to look at the documents from a lawyer or any other person that you choose.

### Application for non-disclosure of information

A psychiatrist may ask the Panel to stop you looking at a document about your mental health treatment. This is called an **'application for non-disclosure'**.

A psychiatrist can only stop you looking at a document if the Panel says so.

The Panel can only stop you looking at a document about your mental health treatment if the information in the document:

- will cause serious harm to your health or the health or safety of another person
- the information in a document was given in confidence or is personal information about another person.

If the Panel decides you should not see a document or part of any document, it may allow your representative to see it instead.

## Forensic Leave Panel decision

### Approval of leave

If the Panel decides the leave will help your rehabilitation and your safety or the safety of members of the public will not be seriously endangered, it may grant your leave.

The Panel may place conditions on the leave; for example, that members of staff escort you at all times.

### Refusal of leave

If the Panel refuses your application for leave, you should talk to the treating team about the Panel's reasons for refusing leave.

The treating team may be able to help you make another application that is more likely to be granted. While you remain a forensic patient you can apply for leave to the Panel at any time.

### Special leave

If you have appealed to the Panel because you have been refused special leave by your psychiatrist, the Panel may grant the special leave if it believes there are special circumstances and the safety of members of the public will not be seriously endangered.

### Reasons for the decision

At the end of the hearing, the Panel will provide a copy of their decision and tell you the reasons for its decision.

If you want written reasons for the Panel's decision, you must make a request in writing to the panel. The Panel must provide you with a statement of reasons within 14 days of your request.

### Suspension of leave

If the Chief Psychiatrist believes your safety or the safety of members of the public will be seriously endangered, your leave or part of your leave can be suspended. You will be told if your leave is suspended.

If you are not in the hospital, you must return there. You will be given written notice of the suspension from the Chief Psychiatrist. If you do not return, police or other prescribed people can apprehend you.

### Extended leave

Extended leave allows forensic patients on Custodial Supervision Orders to leave the hospital and live in the community for a period of up to 12 months.

If you have successfully used on-ground leave and limited off-ground leave over time, you may be ready to apply for extended leave.

Your treating team will be able to give you advice and discuss your choices about extended leave.

If you want extended leave, you must make an application to the court that made your Custodial Supervision Order. You will need a lawyer to help you make the application because the procedures are complex and you will need a legal representative at the court.

Organisations that may be able to help with your application are described at the end of this booklet.

If an application is made for extended leave your psychiatrist will send a clinical report and the leave plan to the court. Copies will be given to you or your representative.

It is your right to attend the court hearing and to have a lawyer represent you. Your psychiatrist and other members of the treating team will give evidence at the court hearing. You and your representative will also be able to give evidence.

The court may grant your application if it is satisfied that granting you extended leave will not seriously endanger your safety or the safety of members of the public. The court will apply conditions to the leave, for example, the place you will live, and where and how often you should receive treatment.

If the court refuses your application for extended leave, it is your right to appeal against the court's decision to the Court of Appeal.

### Suspension of extended leave

The Chief Psychiatrist may suspend your extended leave if they believe your safety or the safety of members of the public will be seriously endangered.

The Chief Psychiatrist will notify you in writing about the suspension and you must return to the hospital. If you do not return, police or other prescribed people can apprehend you.

If the suspension is not lifted within 48 hours, the Chief Psychiatrist will make an application to the court to stop your extended leave.

The court must have a hearing as soon as possible. It is your right to attend the court hearing and to have a lawyer represent you. Your psychiatrist and other members of the treating team will give evidence at the court hearing. You and your representative will also be able to give evidence and explain your side of the case.

The court will decide either to:

- Lift the suspension. You will then be released to live in the community again on extended leave. The court may also change the conditions of the leave.
- Revoke your extended leave. You must then remain in the hospital as a forensic patient.

## Leaving the hospital

The way in which you will be released from the hospital depends on the way you were admitted.

### Custodial Supervision Orders

If you have completed at least 12 months of extended leave, you can apply to the court that made your supervision order to have it varied to a Non-Custodial Supervision Order.

The court may make a Non-Custodial Supervision Order if it is satisfied your safety and the safety of members of the public will not be seriously endangered. The court will take into account whether you have complied with the conditions of the extended leave.

If the court releases you on a Non-Custodial Supervision Order, you will be able to live in the community, subject to conditions decided by the court.

If the court refuses your application, you cannot apply again for at least three (3) years, unless the court sets a shorter period. You have the right to appeal against the court's decision to the Court of Appeal.

Your psychiatrist, the Secretary to the Department of Health, the Director of Public Prosecutions or the Victorian Attorney-General can also apply to have your order varied.

### Major review

The court that made your Custodial Supervision Order must conduct a major review of your progress at least three (3) months before the end of your nominal term.

The nominal term is set by the court when they make the Custodial Supervision Order.

The purpose of the major review is to decide if you can be released from the Custodial Supervision Order on to a Non-Custodial Supervision Order.

The court must change your order to a Non-Custodial Supervision Order unless it is satisfied your safety or the safety of members of the public will be seriously endangered.

If the court releases you on a Non-Custodial Supervision Order, you will be able to live in the community subject to conditions decided by the court.

If the court does not release you on a Non-Custodial Supervision Order, they may make a grant of extended leave. Refer to page 4 of this booklet.

If the court does not release you on a Non-Custodial Supervision Order, you have the right to appeal to the Court of Appeal.

The court will automatically review you at least every five (5) years after your first major review, while you remain on a Custodial Supervision Order.

### Non-Custodial Supervision Orders

If you were admitted to the hospital because you did not comply with your Non-Custodial Supervision Order, you must be released within 48 hours unless an application is made to the court to vary the order.

If an application is made, the court must have a hearing as soon as possible.

It is your right to attend the court hearing and to have a lawyer represent you.

Your psychiatrist and other members of the treating team will give evidence at the court hearing; for example, how you failed to comply with your Non-Custodial Supervision Order. You and your representative will also be able to give evidence and explain your side of the case.

At the hearing the court has two options:

- Release you from the hospital back onto your Non-Custodial Supervision Order. It may also change the conditions of the order.
- Place you on a Custodial Supervision Order. If the court places you on a Custodial Supervision Order, you must remain in the hospital as a forensic patient.

### Remand orders

If you are on a remand order, you will be returned to the court at the end of the time specified in the court order.

### Federal forensic patient

If you are a federal forensic patient, you will be discharged from the court order at the end of your order and you will no longer be a federal forensic patient.

While you are a federal forensic patient, the Commonwealth Attorney-General will review you at least once every six (6) months to see whether you can be released from the hospital on a release order.

Release orders allow federal forensic patients to live in the community, subject to any conditions imposed by the Commonwealth Attorney-General.

In deciding whether to make a release order, the Attorney-General must be satisfied you are not a threat or danger to yourself or to the community.

The Attorney-General will obtain reports about you from a psychiatrist and from anyone else the Attorney-General chooses.

You, or someone on your behalf, can also send information to the Attorney-General; for example, to explain why you should be allowed to live in the community on a release order. You can ask a member of the treating team, a friend or family member, a lawyer or a community visitor to help you do this.

If the Attorney-General makes a release order for you, it will last for the rest of the time specified in your court order or for five years, whichever is shorter. Your release order will also have conditions, such as where you must live and what treatment you must receive.

The Attorney-General can revoke your release order if you do not comply with the conditions of the order. If this happens, you will be arrested and either taken to a hospital or a prison.

### Interim disposition order made by the Magistrates' Court

If you are on an interim disposition order made by the Magistrates' Court, the Secretary to the Department of Health must apply to the Supreme Court for a review of that order within seven (7) days after the order is made.

On review, the court has several options:

- Make a Custodial Supervision Order. You must then remain in the hospital as a forensic patient. The court might also grant you extended leave if it is satisfied that granting you leave will not seriously endanger your safety or the safety of members of the public.
- Make a Non-Custodial Supervision Order. You will be able to live in the community subject to conditions decided by the court.
- Order you to be taken back to the state you came from.
- Release you unconditionally to live in the community.

It is your right to attend the court hearing and to have a lawyer represent you. Organisations that might be able to give you advice and help with legal representation are described at the end of this booklet.

### Interim disposition order made by the Victorian Minister

If you are on an interim disposition order made by the Victorian Minister, the Secretary to the Department of Health will apply to the Supreme Court for a review of the order within six (6) months of your arrival in Victoria.

On review, the court has several options:

- Make a Custodial Supervision Order. You must then remain in the hospital as a forensic patient. The court might also grant you extended leave if it is satisfied that granting you leave will not seriously endanger your safety or the safety of members of the public.
- Make a Non-Custodial Supervision Order. You will be able to live in the community subject to conditions decided by the court.
- Release you unconditionally to live in the community.

### Security conditions

While you are a forensic patient you may be made subject to such security conditions as the psychiatrist considers necessary to protect your health and safety or to protect the safety of any other person. For example by limiting your phone calls.

### Restrictive interventions (seclusion and bodily restraint)

'Restrictive interventions' is another name for 'seclusion' and 'bodily restraint'. Restrictive interventions may be used while you are in hospital.

#### Seclusion

'Seclusion' is when a person is kept alone in a room and cannot open the door or windows.

This can only happen if it is needed to protect the person or other people from imminent and serious harm.

'Imminent' is another way of saying 'very soon'.

Seclusion must be stopped if the reasons for putting the person in seclusion are not there anymore.

Seclusion can only be used when all other ways of stopping the serious harm:

- have been tried
- are thought to be unhelpful in stopping the serious harm.

If seclusion is used, the psychiatrist must tell:

- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer if the use of seclusion directly affects the carer or the caring role
- a parent if the person is under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if the person is on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

### **Bodily restraint**

**'Bodily restraint'** is when a person is stopped from moving around by:

- being physically held
- the use of a device such as a strap or harness or blanket.

Restraint can only be used on a person if it is needed to:

- protect the person or other people from imminent and serious harm
- give the person treatment for mental illness
- give the person treatment for a medical condition.

Restraint must be immediately stopped if these reasons are not there anymore.

If restraint is used, the psychiatrist must tell:

- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer if the use of bodily restraint directly affects the carer or the caring role
- a parent if the person is under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if the person is on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

### **What happens if I am secluded or restrained?**

If you are put in seclusion or you are restrained:

- you must be given food and water when you want
- you must be given blankets and pillows and bedding
- you must be given clothing
- you must be able to use the toilet
- you must be able to wash.

If you are secluded or restrained:

- a doctor or nurse must check on you at least every 15 minutes to see that you are ok
- a psychiatrist or doctor must examine you at least every four (4) hours to make sure that you are ok.

If you are being restrained a doctor or nurse must also watch you all the time to make sure that you are ok.

### **Authorisation**

**'Authorise'** means to give someone permission to do something.

A psychiatrist, doctor or nurse must give permission for a restrictive intervention to be used on a person.

A restrictive intervention must be immediately stopped when the reasons for using the restrictive intervention are not there anymore.

## Your rights

### You have the right to get support

You can ask to get help from a family member, a carer or any other person you choose.

You can also get help from a person who can speak your language.

A doctor, nurse, psychiatrist or other member of the treating team must help you to contact someone who you would like to help you.

### You have the right to communicate with anyone you choose while you are in hospital

You can communicate with any person you choose while you are in hospital **unless this is contrary to a current security condition.**

You can make a phone call.

Your mail will not be opened.

A doctor, nurse, psychiatrist or other member of the treating team must help you to communicate with any person.

A psychiatrist can stop you communicating with another person if it is necessary to protect the health, safety or wellbeing of you or another person.

A psychiatrist cannot stop you communicating with:

- a lawyer
- the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner
- the Mental Health Tribunal
- the Chief Psychiatrist
- a community visitor.

### You can speak up if you think something was not ok with your treatment

You can make a complaint about the mental health services you have been given.

You can talk to the treating team or staff at the hospital about your complaint. You can also talk to the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner or someone at the Commissioner's office.

The Mental Health Complaints Commissioner is an independent organisation that makes sure that mental health services are doing the right thing.

The Commissioner makes sure all assessment and treatment follows the law.

You can talk to the Commissioner or someone at the Commissioner's office if you are unhappy about your assessment and treatment.

A psychiatrist, doctor, nurse or other member of the treating team must help you to talk to the Commissioner.

You can also ask a family member, a carer or any other person you choose to help you to talk to the Commissioner.

The contact details for the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner's office are included at the end of this booklet.

### Making an advance statement

An **advance statement** says what treatment you would like when you are unwell.

You can make an advance statement at any time, if you:

- understand what an advance statement is
- understand what it means to make an advance statement.

You make an advance statement by:

- writing it down
- signing the document.

The document must also be signed by a witness.

A **'witness'** can be a psychiatrist, a doctor, a nurse or another member of the treating team, a lawyer or some other people.

The witness must say:

- that you understand what an advance statement is
- that you understand what it means to make an advance statement.

A psychiatrist, doctor, nurse or another member of the treating team can help you to make an advance statement if you ask them for help.

You can ask to get help from any other person you choose.



## Choosing a nominated person

You can ask someone to be your nominated person at any time.

A **'nominated person'** is someone you can choose to look out for you if you have to have compulsory treatment.

Your nominated person can be:

- a family member
- a carer
- a partner
- anyone else you choose.

Your nominated person gets lots of information about your mental health treatment.

Because of this you should choose someone who knows you well and who you can trust.

The person needs to agree to be your nominated person.

You can choose a nominated person if you:

- understand what a nominated person is
- understand what it means to choose a nominated person.

You choose the nominated person by:

- writing it down
- signing the document.

The document must also be signed by a witness.

A **'witness'** can be a psychiatrist, a doctor, a nurse or another member of the treating team, a lawyer or some other people.

The witness must say:

- that you understand what a nominated person is
- that you understand what it means to choose a nominated person.

The witness cannot be the person you choose to be the nominated person.

A psychiatrist, doctor, nurse or another member of the treating team can help you to choose your nominated person if you ask them for help.

You can ask to get help from any other person you choose.

## Second psychiatric opinions

You can ask for a second psychiatric opinion at any time.

Asking for a second psychiatric opinion will not stop you being given compulsory treatment.

Your psychiatrist can still give you compulsory treatment while you wait for a second psychiatric opinion and even once you receive a second opinion report.

A **'second psychiatric opinion'** means that another psychiatrist will examine you and say what treatment would best treat your mental illness.

You can ask for a second psychiatric opinion from a psychiatrist who is not working at the hospital where you are getting treatment.

A psychiatrist, doctor, nurse or another member of the treating team must help you to get a second psychiatric opinion if you ask them for help.

You can also ask some other people to help you get a second psychiatric opinion:

- any person you would like to help you to get a second psychiatric opinion
- a guardian
- a parent if you are a young person under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if you are on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

### What will the second opinion psychiatrist do?

A second opinion psychiatrist will listen to what you have to say about what treatment you would like.

A second opinion psychiatrist will look at your advance statement if you have one.

The second opinion psychiatrist will also listen to what some other people who know you have to say about your treatment:

- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer if the recommended changes will affect the carer or the caring role
- a parent if you are a young person under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if you are on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

The second opinion psychiatrist will then give you a written report on what they think about your compulsory treatment.

The second opinion psychiatrist will also give a copy of the written report to your treating psychiatrist and:

- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer if the second opinion will directly affect the carer or the caring role
- a parent if you are a young person under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if you are on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

#### **What happens if the second opinion psychiatrist recommends different treatment for me?**

Your psychiatrist has to read the second opinion report and think about whether to change your treatment.

This is called 'having regard' to the second opinion report.

Your psychiatrist does not have to change your compulsory treatment.

If your psychiatrist does not change your treatment then the psychiatrist:

- must say that they are not going to change your treatment
- must say why they are not going to change your treatment.

Your psychiatrist must also tell you that you can ask the Chief Psychiatrist to review your treatment.

The Chief Psychiatrist is a senior psychiatrist employed by the Department of Health. The role of the Chief Psychiatrist is to help service providers improve the quality and safety of their services.

A '**review**' means that the Chief Psychiatrist will look at the report by the second opinion psychiatrist. The Chief Psychiatrist will say what treatment would best treat your mental illness.

If the Chief Psychiatrist thinks it is necessary they may:

- examine you
- look at your clinical record
- look at your advance statement if you have one
- speak with the authorised psychiatrist and other staff involved in your treatment.

When deciding whether to recommend changes to your treatment the Chief Psychiatrist may take into account the views of the following people:

- your nominated person
- a guardian
- a carer if the recommended changes will directly affect the carer or the caring role
- a parent if you are a young person under 16 years of age
- the Secretary to the Department of Human Services if you are on a custody to Secretary order or a guardianship to Secretary order.

The Chief Psychiatrist may direct your psychiatrist to change your compulsory mental health treatment.

## For more information or to ask other people to help you

You can call:

**Forensic Leave Panel** is an independent statutory body that hears applications for leave for forensic patients and forensic residents.

Toll Free: 1800 222 987

Website: [www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/forensic](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/forensic)

Address: Forensic Leave Panel  
50 Lonsdale Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

**Mental Health Complaints Commissioner** is an independent complaints body that can help you with any concerns or complaints you may have about the mental health services you are being given.

Toll Free: 1800 246 054.

Email: [help@mhcc.vic.gov.au](mailto:help@mhcc.vic.gov.au)

Website: [www.mhcc.vic.gov.au](http://www.mhcc.vic.gov.au)

Address: Mental Health Complaints Commissioner  
Level 26, 570 Bourke Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

**Victoria Legal Aid** provides free legal information, education and advice about lots of areas of law. It provides a visiting advice service to most of Melbourne's mental health inpatient facilities and many regional mental health inpatient facilities.

For information about the law and how we can help you, call Legal Aid on **1300 792 387**

More information is on the Victoria Legal Aid website at [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

**Mental Health Legal Centre** provides a free legal advice service on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 6.30 pm and 8.30 pm.

Tel: 9629 4422

More information is on the Mental Health Legal Centre website at [www.communitylaw.org.au/mhlc](http://www.communitylaw.org.au/mhlc)

**Community Visitors** are people who visit mental health services and can assist you with any questions and help you to seek support or resolve issues about the mental health services you are being given.

Tel: 1300 309 337