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About the Legal Services Agency

The Legal Services Agency (the Agency) is a Crown entity responsible for helping people access justice. The Agency ensures that legal aid is applied consistently and that access to appropriate representation is available when people most need it.

The functions of the Agency as set out in the Legal Services Act 2000 (the Act) are:

- to administer schemes in a consistent, accountable, inexpensive, and efficient manner as is consistent with the purpose of this Act
- to fund, provide, and support community legal services for the public or any section of the public, as provided for in Part 5 of the Act
- to investigate and advise on any matter that is referred to it by the Minister and that relates to schemes or community legal service
- to carry out any other functions that are conferred on it by the Act or any other enactment.

The Agency comprises a Head Office and centralised Debt Management Group in Wellington, a Public Defence Service in Auckland and Manukau, and twelve regional Legal Aid Offices. The location and contact information of each office is at www.lsa.govt.nz/contactus.php on the Agency's website – www.lsa.govt.nz

About this Manual

The Manual has been designed to assist lawyers and other legal aid providers listed with the Agency to undertake legal aid work. It applies to all legal aid matters commenced after the implementation of the Legal Services Amendment Act 2006 (the Act), which comes into effect on 1 March 2007.

A copy of the previous listed provider manual should be retained to manage eligibility and debt issues on grants made prior to implementation of the 2006 Amendment Act. The previous manual is at www.lsa.govt.nz/original/ListedProvider/policies/index.html.

The manual is divided into four sections as follows:

- **Introduction**
- **Service Contracts** – the processes for listing lawyers and other providers and the contractual arrangements, investigating and managing provider conduct, and conducting the audit of legal aid work undertaken by providers.
- **Grants** – the policies and procedures for granting legal aid including decisions on initial applications and amendments to the grant, assignment of providers and payment of providers' claims, establishment of debt, and the administration of the duty solicitor and Police Detention Legal Assistance schemes.
- **Debt** – processes covering the establishment of debt, the administration of securities held as collateral over the debt including caveats and statutory land

charges, the management of debt recovery, payment plans and applications to write-off of debt.

Availability of this Manual

The Manual is available online and the Agency no longer issues a 'hard' copy of the manual to each firm of listed providers.

Updates to the Manual

The online Manual is updated on an 'as needs' basis. The version number and date are included on all updates.

The Agency's Website

The Agency's website, www.lsa.govt.nz, has information and resources designed to assist lawyers and other legal aid providers and the general public navigate the legal aid system.

The following information and resources are available for *lawyers and other legal aid providers* :

- applying to become a legal aid provider
- legal aid application forms
- manuals
- how to have an Agency decision reviewed
- other Agency publications
- Agency projects.

For the *general public*, the website provides information on:

- legal aid eligibility
- finding a legal aid lawyer
- locating a community law centre
- accessing law-related education and information.

Both the public and lawyers and other legal aid providers are encouraged to use the website as the first stop for all legal aid queries. For further information and queries about specific applications, please contact your local legal aid office.

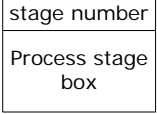

We welcome your feedback on the Manual and the website – please send to info@lsa.govt.nz.

Understanding the Process Diagrams

This manual uses process diagrams (also known as process maps) to describe activities involving interactions between providers and internal Agency staff. One

example is the listing application and approval process in *Service Contracts, Part 1, Apply for Listing as a Lead Provider*. The diagram tells you what happens over time, and who is responsible for each activity. Time flows from left to right, and each horizontal lane represents a different role, for example provider or Agency Advisor.

The symbols used in the diagrams are explained below:

	<p>Numbered boxes represent each activity in the process. The numbers indicate the order in which events occur. The numbers do not correspond to steps in the related procedures.</p>
	<p>The document symbol indicates where an application form, contract or other document is used to support the process. Documents are always shown in the Systems/Tools lane of the process map.</p>