

WHAT HAPPENS IF I FAIL THE MEANS TEST AND I AM FACING HARDSHIP?

Where an applicant fails the means test but is facing hardship, the Director may in any case where the applicant:

- (a) is living separate and apart from his spouse and where it appears to the Director in his absolute discretion to be reasonable to do so to relieve hardship, disregard the income of the spouse;
- (b) is suffering from any sudden physical or mental disability which permanently and severely restricts his capacity to earn an income and where it appears to the Director in his absolute discretion to be reasonable to do so to relieve hardship,
 - a. in determining the disposable capital, exclude savings of the applicant up to \$30,000; and
 - b. in determining the disposable income, deduct a further amount of:
 - \$1,000, in the case of an applicant who has also suffered a sudden loss of income and requires legal aid to defend or take legal proceedings as a matter of urgency; or
 - \$2,000 in any other case.
- (c) has suffered a sudden loss of income and requires legal aid to defend or take legal proceedings as a matter of urgency, and where it appears to the Director in his absolute discretion to be reasonable to do so to relieve hardship:
 - a. regard the total disposable income limit to be \$5,000 during the period of 6 months immediately preceding the date of application; and
 - b. regard the 'disposable income' to mean the income of an applicant together with the income of the spouse of an applicant during the period of 6 months immediately preceding the date of application, after deducting:
 - i. \$1,750 for each dependent,
 - ii. \$2,250 personal deduction for the applicant,
 - iii. an amount not exceeding \$500 for rent (if any),
 - iv. an amount equal to the applicant's contribution to the Central Provident Fund.

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

The Legal Aid Bureau was established in 1958 to provide legal advice, assistance and aid to persons of limited means.

'Advice' is oral information on Singapore Law and advice on what steps you might take in the circumstances. 'Assistance' is provided for the drafting of simple documents such as wills, deed polls, deeds of separation and achieving out-of-court settlements. 'Aid' means that we will help represent you in court proceedings.

If you need the services of a lawyer and cannot afford one, you may apply for legal aid.

REGISTRATION HOURS

Mondays to Thursdays
8.30 am to 12.30 pm
2.00 pm to 5.15 pm

Fridays
8.30 am to 12.30 pm
2.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Saturdays
8.30 am to 12.00 pm

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All information in this brochure is accurate as at April 2011

A GUIDE TO THE



LEGAL AID SCHEME



WHAT TYPE OF CASES ARE COVERED?

The Legal Aid Scheme covers civil matters such as divorce, custody of children, adoption, wrongful dismissal, letters of administration/probate, tenancy disputes, claims in contract and tort.

The Legal Aid Scheme does not cover criminal matters.

HOW DO I QUALIFY FOR LEGAL AID

To qualify for legal aid you must:

- a) be a Singapore citizen or permanent resident; and
 - b) pass the Means and Merits tests.
- 1) THE MEANS TEST determines your financial eligibility for legal aid based on the value of your annual household earnings and capital assets.
 - 2) THE MERITS TEST determines if there are reasonable grounds for granting legal aid in the circumstances of the case.

