

# FLAC's Campaign

## Civil Legal Aid: A Right not a Privilege

While the right to civil legal aid is recognised in Ireland, there is still much to be done to realise that right. The current scheme of civil legal aid is narrowly focused, poorly resourced and excludes many who should be entitled. To be effective in the vindication of basic rights which are guaranteed in law, legal aid provision must be constructed from the perspective of those people and communities who need it to access justice.

If implemented, FLAC's blueprint would deliver civil legal aid in a way which would respect and protect the human rights of those who are otherwise at risk of being denied access to justice. The elements of the blueprint are practical, possible, and are in line with Irish State obligations in national and international law.

The right of access to justice and to civil legal aid is often not recognised. Organisations and communities concerned with human rights must be vigilant to ensure that the right is protected and promoted. FLAC includes amongst these, the Irish government, the Legal Aid Board and non-governmental organisations which work in the community and to advance human rights.

FLAC, a human rights organization which is dedicated to the realisation of equal access to justice for all, will work, in conjunction with all other interested parties, to make the blueprint a reality.

### What you can do to help:

- Seek law reform. The means test must be reformed. No area of law should be excluded.
- Press Government for resources so that an effective legal aid service is available.
- Ensure that community groups, groups working with vulnerable and marginalised groups and those working to advance human rights are aware of the existence of the Legal Aid Board and the extent of its services.
- Lobby for changes in the regulations to ensure that financial eligibility is calculated at levels which are realistic.
- Tell FLAC – the Free Legal Advice Centres – of unfairness or hardship caused by the denial of civil legal aid, or of inadequacies in the service.

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