

## ABOUT THE CANCER COUNCIL PRO BONO PROGRAM

The Cancer Council Pro Bono Program can help cancer patients, carers and bereaved carers with advice on the following:

- Legal issues
- Financial planning

### How the program works

We connect people affected by cancer with a professional who volunteers their time. Professionals include lawyers and financial planners.

Cancer Council staff do not provide advice directly to clients. The service is means tested, and is free for people who cannot afford the cost of advice.

## Criteria and Exclusions

### Some general guidelines

- Issue must be related to the cancer diagnosis
- Client cannot already be receiving advice on the issue
- Client must be unable to afford the cost of advice (see page 2)
- Client can be referred to the service once only per issue

### Who we can help

Anyone diagnosed with cancer, or currently caring for a person diagnosed with cancer. We can assist carers of people who have died from cancer if the issue relates to the cancer diagnosis.

### What we can help with

- Basic wills, testamentary guardianships, powers of attorney and enduring guardianships (patients only)
- Employment rights
- Accessing superannuation and insurance
- Managing credit and debt issues
- Insurance claims and disputes
- Immigration law (in limited circumstances)

We may be able to assist with other issues related to the cancer diagnosis on a case-by-case basis.

### What we cannot help with

- Criminal law matters
- Family law, e.g. divorce and separation, custody or property settlements
- Property issues
- Estate administration
- Bankruptcy and taxation issues
- Medical negligence and workers compensation
- Advance Health Care Directives

### If a patient already has a will

Generally, if the will has been prepared recently (within the past 5 years) and the client only wants to make minor amendments, we will ask the client to see the previous lawyer who drafted the will to make changes.

If they cannot go back to the previous lawyer (either because of a change in their financial circumstances or some other reason), we will look to refer them for assistance with preparing a new will.

Please note that the volunteer lawyers will not make changes to or check existing wills (including will kits). They are only able to prepare new wills.

If you are unsure whether the Pro Bono Program can assist a client, please contact the Pro Bono Program on [probono@cancercouncil.org.au](mailto:probono@cancercouncil.org.au) or **1300 856 199** before referring.

## Eligibility and program processes

Please let your client know that we need to ask them some financial questions because our service is means tested.

### We will ask the client questions about their:

- Employment status
- Household income
- Centrelink payments
- Assets and debts

This information helps us work out if your client is eligible for pro bono assistance. The means test considers the whole of the client's circumstances. We also take into account the likely cost of obtaining the relevant advice on a commercial basis (if it is available commercially).

### How do I start the referral process?

1. Complete the referral form
2. Email to [probono@cancercouncil.org.au](mailto:probono@cancercouncil.org.au) or fax to 1300 240 622

A client must consent to being referred. If they are not ready or unsure about a referral, let them know that they can self-refer by calling Cancer Council 13 11 20.

### What happens next?

We generally call the client twice to complete our processes. If we are unable to get in touch with a client or other contact, we will leave a voicemail, as well as send them a text message or email with our contact details.

### 1st call – Determining eligibility

During this call, we will confirm the client's details, explain how the service works, ask some questions about the client's financial situation and the issue(s) they are seeking assistance with to determine their eligibility for free assistance. This call usually takes 5–15 minutes.

### 2nd call\* – Gathering further information

We confirm whether the client is eligible for free assistance, and whether their issues are within the scope of the program.

If the client is eligible for free assistance, we will discuss their issue further – this can take between 15–30 minutes depending on the complexity of the issue.

The process of gathering information may require more than one phone call, e.g. if the client does not have all of the relevant information at the time of the call. This information will be shared with a volunteer professional.

Once we refer the client to a volunteer professional, the volunteer professional will contact the client directly to arrange an appointment.

\*Typically the 2nd call is made the same day as the 1st, however, if this is not possible, we will try to call the client back on the next working day.

### What happens if the client is not eligible for free assistance?

We will contact the client to let them know, and we will offer the client details of one of our volunteer professionals who can assist on a paid basis.

### What happens if assistance is outside the scope of our services?

We will do our best to provide information to the client about other free services available to them and, where possible, we will look to refer them to another free service.

### Feedback

The Pro Bono Program welcomes feedback. Please email [probono@cancercouncil.org.au](mailto:probono@cancercouncil.org.au) or call **1300 856 199** to provide feedback, follow up on a client's referral or ask questions about the program generally.

**WHO REQUIRES ASSISTANCE:** Patient  Carer  Bereaved carer

## Details of patient (PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION)

Title:	First Name:	Surname:
Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	DOB: / /	Treating hospital:
Cancer type:	Stage of disease: Early <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Survivor <input type="checkbox"/> Deceased <input type="checkbox"/>	
Street address:	Suburb:	Postcode:
Home no: ( )	Mobile no:	
Leave message on: Home <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/>	Email:	
ATSI: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Country of birth:	Interpreter language required:

## Details of carer or other contact

Title:	First Name:	Surname:
Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	DOB (if requesting pro bono support) / /	Relationship to patient:
Street address:	Suburb:	Postcode:
Home no: ( )	Mobile no:	
Leave message on: Home <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/>	Email:	
ATSI: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Country of birth:	Interpreter language required:

## Referrer details

Name:	Organisation:	Date of referral: / /
Phone/Pager/Mobile:	Email:	

**Reason for referral** (We offer access to legal and financial advice – see page 1 for further details.)

**URGENT referrals:** In certain circumstances, we are able to expedite legally urgent referrals (e.g. when a client needs to make a will and has been given a short prognosis or when the client's issue has a legal timeframe). If the referral is urgent, call us on **1300 856 199**.

Can the client travel to the service provider's office to meet? Yes  No  If no, meet at: Home  Hospital

Yes  No  I have advised the client that the service is means tested

Yes  No  I have received the client's consent to send through this referral

Yes  No  I have read and confirm the client has been informed of the following privacy statement:

Your Personal Information and your Client's Personal Information is collected by Cancer Council NSW for the purpose of considering your request for pro bono services for your Client. Your Client's Personal Information may be passed to a third party service provider or to other Cancer Councils in your local state. Cancer Council NSW will handle both your and the Client's personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and its Privacy Policy. If you wish to access and correct your personal information or make a privacy complaint, visit [www.cancercouncil.com.au/privacy](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/privacy) or call **1300 780 113**.