

Checklist for working with CALD communities

This checklist has been developed to provide guidance to legal agencies working collaboratively with CALD communities.¹ It is based on the principle that CALD communities should be active partners not passive recipients.

What do we already know?

While recognising that there is no 'one size fits all' for CALD communities, research shows that people from non-English speaking countries often:

- € have a fear of the law and legal system
- € have different understandings of how the law operates e.g. concepts of civil law
- € lack knowledge of their rights and responsibilities in Australia
- € lack knowledge or are confused about the roles of different legal services
- € prefer to use face-to-face services
- € may have low literacy levels in their own language
- € have difficulty communicating in English.

Be realistic

- € Define the scope of the project. Don't be too broad e.g. limit the number of communities and/or regions.
- € Plan projects within resource limitations. Don't underestimate the resources or time needed for a consultative approach.
- € Don't raise expectations that can't be met.

Be collaborative

- € Build in sufficient time for a consultative, partnership approach.
- € Work in partnership with legal and non-legal agencies to identify and meet legal need.
- € Find out about existing services and networks and link to these where appropriate.
- € Meet face-to-face with communities and community workers where possible.
- € Build relationships with organisations and people trusted by the target communities.
- € Clearly define the roles of partner agencies.

Be prepared

- € Find out about the target groups through research and consultation.
- € Develop the ability of legal agency staff to work with CALD communities.
- € Build sustainability into projects.
- € Regularly review and evaluate projects.
- € Learn about the community before engaging with them
- € Provide training and resources to agencies that work with your target communities.

Be responsive

- € Be responsive to the needs of the communities.
- € Design content based on the experiences of your target group.
- € Be sensitive to and respectful of diverse belief systems
- € Use bilingual cultural facilitators to build trust and relationships.
- € Have a flexible approach to delivery e.g. courses outside business hours

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ⁱ The framework is based on lessons learned from similar projects including

Family Court of Australia 2008, *Families and the law in Australia: the Family Court working together with new and emerging communities*,
<http://www.familycourt.gov.au/wps/wcm/resources/file/ebd39c05b7936b0/LIH_REPORT_FINAL.pdf;

Legal Services Commission of SA, *Family law and culturally and linguistically diverse communities project*,
http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au/cb_pages/images/Legal%20Education%20Kit.pdf;

Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association *Making links* - <http://www.mdaa.org.au/archive/05/mdaa-communitylinksproject.pdf>