



Becoming an independent children's lawyer

Frequently Asked Questions

What is involved in the training?

The ICL training program has been developed by National Legal Aid (NLA). There are three phases of training to be eligible for the Legal Aid NSW ICL Panel:

Phase 1 is online consists of six modules on topics of

1. The role of the ICL
2. Family and Domestic Violence
3. Child Development & Attachment
4. Child Trauma
5. Children's Mental Health
6. Adult Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol abuse

The online modules include lecture style videos, written resources and multiple-choice quizzes in each Module to test trainees learning.

It is estimated to take 26 hours to complete the online modules. The online modules must be successfully completed to progress to Phase 2.

Phase 2 is a full day of face-to-face workshop and covers:

1. Evidence Gathering, procedural matters and decision making
2. Urgent, interlocutory and interim matters
3. After the interim hearing
4. Preparation for trial
5. Conduct during the trial
6. Post-hearing and appellate matters

Phase 2 workshops are usually in November each year for NSW. The next Workshop is scheduled for **8 November 2024** in Sydney. Trainees' participation is assessed on the day by the trainers and if satisfactory, trainees are asked to submit a referee report from a current member of the ICL Panel before being invited to progress to the Phase 3.

Phase 3 "Nuts & Bolts" training. This is a face to face day of practical training which takes you through an ICL matter from an ICL appointment to the conclusion of the matter, including interacting with the Family Dispute Resolution Unit and Grants at Legal Aid NSW. Once a practitioner satisfactorily complete Phase 3 they can apply to join the ICL Panel.

You can find more information about the national ICL training program and register for the training by visiting the [Training Centre](#).

What professional support can I get as an ICL?

[The ICL website](#) has a wealth of resources for ICLs – including significant cases, social science, conference papers, and precedent letters and orders. The ICL website will also host regular online webinars to support ICLs with their professional development.

In addition, Legal Aid NSW runs a program of professional development for in house and panel lawyers with regular webinars and an annual conference. Biennially, Legal Aid NSW hosts a conference in NSW for child representatives, with the next conference scheduled for a date TBA in the second half of 2024.

There are no other ICLs at my firm, is mentoring available?

National Legal Aid run a national mentoring program through the ICL website. The objective of the program is to match experienced ICLs who can provide guidance and support, networking opportunities, feedback and coaching to ICLs seeking mentorship, especially those new to the role.

We have experienced and supportive ICLs who have registered to be mentors. New ICLs are encouraged to take advantage of the program and can apply via the website to be matched with a mentor.

What is required to be on the ICL Panel? How much ICL work will I have to do?

To join the ICL Panel, you need to have five years post admission experience in family law. You can find the criteria for joining the ICL Panel by visiting [Legal Aid Panels](#).

There is no minimum number of ICL matters that panel members are required to take.