Grants Online User Guide
Legal Aid Western Australia

Grants Online (GOL) is the electronic lodgement system used by Legal Aid WA (LAWA) to manage grant of aid applications, extensions and claims. The purpose of this document is to provide the user with a quick guide to using the GOL system.

This guide should be used in conjunction with information provided in the Private Practitioner Manual, Conditions of Aid, Grants Guidelines and Presenting Accounts to Legal Aid. These documents are located under the Enclosures and Forms tab on the GOL website.

This guide provides information about the common functions available in GOL, including:

- logging on;
- GOL notices;
- submitting applications;
- searching files and Request IDs (RIDs);
- submitting extension requests;
- submitting transfer requests;
- submitting GOL invoices; and
- submitting blank tax invoices.

Further information, resources and contact details can be found in the Frequently Asked Questions section at the end of this guide. You will also find detailed information under the Support tab on the GOL website (as above).

Logging On

This user guide is provided to firms that have already registered for GOL and had their accounts activated. You will need your own username and password to access GOL. If you do not have a username and password, please refer to the staff changes form under the Enclosure and Forms tab on the GOL website. Once you have submitted this form and you meet the eligibility requirements, you will be issued with a unique username and password.

Please note: Usernames and passwords must not be shared.

To access the GOL system, type https://grantsonline.legalaid.wa.gov.au into your web browser. This will take you to the GOL login page. Please enter your username and password in the fields below to log on to the system.
**Password expiry and resetting your password**

To comply with LAWA audit requirements, your password is set to expire every 60 days and will require you to choose a new password. This can be done through the secure logon page on the GOL website at https://grantsonline.legalaid.wa.gov.au/my.policy. (Put a reminder in your calendar a week before your password is due to expire).

If you experience trouble changing your password, please contact the LAWA Service Desk on 9261 6345 for assistance. The Service Desk Hours are from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday.

**Grants Online Homepage**

It is important GOL users, and in particular panel practitioners review the GOL notices each time they log into the system. This is where we publish important information about managing grants of aid, GOL outages, changes to the system and other notices that users need to be aware of. These notices stay on the GOL home page “carousel” for a limited time and are then moved to the More News section of the GOL website. Please review this information in conjunction with other documents located on this site.

**Application Summary**

The homepage also has an “application summary”. This gives you a snap shot of outstanding requests and a history of processed requests. You will be able to check if you have any requests that have been saved and not yet submitted.
Submitting Applications

All electronic applications for legal aid (civil, criminal and family law) are located under the Apply for Aid tab.

To access the application forms, move the cursor over the Apply for Aid tab and then click the relevant law type.

The relevant application form will then be displayed on your screen. The first part of the application form is divided into pages, with sets of questions relating to Personal (P), Financial (F), and Legal (L) details.

New Family Law Application

All mandatory fields marked with an asterisks (*) must be completed before the application can be submitted. An error message will appear at the bottom of the screen if any compulsory fields are not completed

It is important as much information as possible is included in the application form to prevent unnecessary delays in processing the request. It is also important the information provided is current and correct. In family matters, please provide information about all other parties’ involved i.e.
a joint applicant, respondent/s, grandparents, children. In criminal matters, please provide details of all co-accused.

To ensure your client qualifies under the means test, we require detailed financial information for the applicant and any financially associated person (defacto, spouse etc.). This includes both income and assets.

Where the applicant is in receipt of a Centrelink benefit that makes them eligible for the LAWA simplified means test. Please include detailed information about their assets and any part-time employment or other financial resources in the application form (pending tax returns etc.).

If the client is in prison please include information about recent employment prior to incarceration, details of assets and include financial details of any financially associated person. Please provide the prison address as the postal address (so the client will get mail from us while in prison), not the client’s nominated residential address. Please enter the nominated residential address in the home address fields. If you are having difficulties in entering the postcode, please see the FAQ section at the end of this guide.

L1 field is a free text field with a limited number of characters (1900 words). You can alert the assessor to other important information in this field or draw attention to attachments you have included with the application. If you exceed the character allowance (1900 characters) in the L1 field you won’t be able to submit the LAAF and will get a “binary error message”. You will need to reduce the amount of text or add a word document as an attachment.

If you tick the disability field at P14, please provide further information about the disability in the L1 field.

If an administration staff member submits the application and there are multiple panel members at the firm, please use the L1 field to nominate which practitioner can take the grant of aid if approved.

Please review the example of information that you may want to include in L1.
You can click on the links at the bottom of the screen to move between the different sections of the application.

Click on the “Save” link as you complete the application to avoid losing data.

**Applicants Declaration**

A copy of the Application Declaration *signed* by the client agreeing to the conditions of a grant of aid should be kept on file. In limited cases where this is not practical (i.e. client in custody and application is taken over the telephone), please make a note on the file to confirm that you read the declaration to the client who verbally agreed to the terms.

A PDF copy of the Applicant Declaration is available on the GOL website under the **Enclosures & Forms** tab.

The client should also be provided with a copy of the **Conditions of Aid**. This sets out the terms of the grant of aid, and the obligations the client has to inform you or LAWA of any changes to their circumstances. If the client is unable to sign the application form agreeing to the terms of a grant of aid, a verbal acknowledgement from the client is acceptable. The person taking the application from the client should note on the client file that they have:

- verified the client is the person submitting the application for aid
- read the Application Declaration to the client and the client has agreed with the terms
- provided the client with a copy of the Conditions of aid (in person or posted).
You can find the **Conditions of Aid** under the **Enclosures and Forms** tab at the top of the screen.

### Practitioner Declaration

When the firm is issued GOL access users are provided with either EP (panel practitioner) or EA (administration) access. The level of access is considered by LAWA when considering the advice on merit. The practitioner’s electronic lodgement, using their unique username and password, is sufficient verification that the practitioner is submitting the application form.

**“Solicitor Declaration**

I (full name)

of the firm

of address

CERTIFY that the applicant has consulted me and I am of the opinion that

- [ ] this application has legal merit
- [ ] this application does not have legal merit
- [ ] legal merit is not applicable to this application
- [ ] the legal merit of this application cannot be determined at this time.

[Solicitor’s Signature]

Date: [dd/mm/yyyy]

The “solicitor declaration” must be completed along with selecting the relevant radio button regarding merit.
Applications submitted by Administration Users

When administration staff/users (EA users) submit the application, the declaration should be completed when the practitioner has instructed them to do so. This includes the name of the practitioner and selecting the relevant radio button in relation to merit. If the radio button “this application has legal merit” is selected, a copy of this declaration should be signed by the practitioner and retained on the file. LAWA will accept this declaration on the basis that the practitioner has instructed the administration user to include this in the application.

If a practitioner has not checked the application, the administration user should click on the radio button “the legal merit cannot be determined at this time”. Please be aware LAWA may request further information about the matter if merit cannot be determined.

If you are experiencing trouble printing the declaration page, a PDF copy is available on the GOL website under the Enclosures & Forms tab.

Attaching Documents

Documents can be attached to your extension request by clicking on the “Attachments” link.

Click on “Add files” to select the file you want to attach, then click on “Start Upload” or check the “Auto Upload” field to automatically upload the files.

Request ID’s and LAWA Client File Numbers

When any request is lodged through GOL you will receive a reference number called a Request ID (RID). This number is unique to every request you submit. You will be provided with the RID once the request has been successfully submitted.

Once LAWA has processed the initial application for legal aid your client will be allocated a LAWA file number (i.e. 16W099999). This file number remains the same for the life of the grant.

The decision will be emailed to the firm email address along with details of the grant, the payment limit and any other important information. It will also include the RID that you received when you submitted that request. You will need this information when you need submit a claim (see submitting a tax invoice below).

An example of what the RID and LAWA file number looks like in the grant email is below:

Your Ref: no ref, Request ID: 999999
Our Ref: File - 16W099999 NW, GOL Ref - G:\11111\16W099999\

For grants assistance contact the Client Services office on 9261 6530.
You will also note any approval grants include a “clause code” following the description of what the grant covers. You will need these clauses when submitting a tax invoice.

An example of a clause is below. The clause code in this example is “C36”.

Your client’s grant of aid also covers viewing of videos by you. The maximum costs payable to you are 1 hour/s at the rate of $110.00 per hour. (C36)

Searching File Numbers and Request ID’s

You will need the file number and relevant RID when you correspond with LAWA.

To search for a file, move the cursor over the “Search” heading and then click on the “Request Search” link. It is preferable that you search by entering either the LAWA file number or Request ID (this can be found in the grant letter that is emailed to the firm). Please clear the search memory before each new search.

Submitting Extension Requests

Each time a grant of aid needs a further decision or important information is required, a request must be submitted via GOL. This is referred to as an extension request and should be used to:

- request further funding
- request a reconsideration or review of a decision
- provide information impacting on your client’s eligibility (merit and/or means)
- request a transfer of the grant of aid
- provide client contact details such as change of address

To request an extension search for the relevant file as above, then click on the “Extend” link.
Alternatively, move the cursor over the “Apply for Aid” heading and click on “Extension of Aid”. Then enter the LAWA file number or Request ID and click on extend. Please note that the recon, review & info function available under this tab is currently for internal use only.

Complete the checklist and provide details of your extension request in the field provided in the legal section. Your extension request must include the following information:

- the matter continues to have merit;
- the progress and current status of the matter;
- details of the additional legal services sought to be covered by the extension request and the reasons they are required;
- the amount of any additional disbursement sought to be incurred and the reason it is required; and
- any change in the assisted person’s financial situation or contact details.

In addition to the above, extensions of aid for Family Law matters must include the following information:

- the orders sought by the assisted person and the other party;
- the likelihood of the assisted person obtaining the orders they seek;
- details of all offers and counter offers made;
- suitability for Dispute Resolution;
- the track the matter has been assigned to; and
- details of any settlement offers which have been made or received (if relevant).

Documents can be attached to your extension request by clicking on the “Attachments” link.

Click on “Add files” to select the file you want to attach, then click on “Start Upload” or check the “Auto Upload” field to automatically upload the files.
Press submit when your extension request has been completed. You will receive a notification with a unique Request ID once you have successfully submitted the request.

Submitting Transfer Requests

Transfer requests must be submitted on GOL and are submitted in the same way as extension requests as outlined above.

In the “Legal” section indicate that you are requesting the grant to be transferred, the reasons for the transfer, and provide a brief outline of the status of the proceedings, the next court date and court event.

Press submit to complete your request.

Duplicate Applications

In some cases it is necessary to have a separate grant of legal aid. Please refer to the Private Practitioner Manual for details when this may be necessary.

If a separate grant of aid is required and it is within 6 months of submitting the initial application for aid, you may “duplicate” the legal aid application form. To do this follow the same steps as the extension request, but instead of clicking on extend, click on the duplicate button.

Alternatively, move the cursor over the “Apply for Aid” heading and click on “Duplicate Application”. Enter the LAWA file number or Request ID, select the application type and click on duplicate.

You will be provided with a condensed version of the application form. Once the request is submitted successfully you will be provided with a unique Request ID (RID). Once the decision is processed a different LAWA file number will be issued. It is important to check that you are claiming for services on the correct file.
Submitting GOL Tax Invoices

Detailed information about the Grants Guidelines and Presenting Accounts to Legal Aid can be found under the Enclosures and Forms tab on the GOL website. Please review the information, in conjunction with the Private Practitioner Manual, before submitting accounts to LAWA.

If administration staff (EA users) submit a tax invoice, it is on the basis that the assigned practitioner has checked all details and authorised that the claim be submitted.

Note that you can only claim on approved extensions.

To submit a claim, search for the relevant file as above, then click on the “Claim” link against the extension you are claiming. If there are multiple extensions it is important that you claim against the correct RID.

When you submit your claim ensure that the RID you are claiming against matches the RID that is in the email approving the grant of aid.
Enter the **clause codes**, **fees being claimed**, **GST** and **notes** as required in the fields provided. Clause codes can be found on the grant of aid email that was sent to you when funding was approved. If claiming more than one clause code, click on ‘+’ to add more rows.

When entering the $ amount **do not include commas** or the numbers will disappear from the invoice. For example you should enter 2000 (not $2,000).

The **general notes** text box in the tax invoice is a free text field. Please provide sufficient information to support your claim and provide LAWA with details of the outcome or how the matter is progressing. Please refer to the Private Practitioner Manual for details relating to reporting, record keeping and the information that you should include in the **general notes** section.

The tax invoice includes a **certification** from the assigned practitioner that the claim is true and correct. The certification will automatically be populated with the assigned practitioner’s details. This will be on every invoice, regardless of whether the assigned practitioner or another employee submits the claim. It is the assigned practitioner’s responsibility to ensure the details and report are in accordance with the terms of the grant and the Private Practitioner Manual. This includes ensuring all work has been completed and proof of disbursements are retained on the file (where applicable).

To submit the claim, please click on the **submit** field at the bottom of the claim form.

**Please do not save claims.** Complete the claim in **one session** and click **submit** when finalised.
Submitting Blank Tax Invoices

Blank tax invoices should **only** be submitted on approved grants for ICL/Child Representative matters or for confidential clients (you will be notified if the matter is confidential and if you should manage the grant in this way). Blank tax invoices should **not** be submitted for other electronic files UNLESS you have been authorised or requested to do so.

To access a blank tax invoice move the cursor over the “Enclosures and Forms” heading and click on the “Blank Tax Invoice” link. Blank tax invoices must be submitted in the one session and cannot be saved.

Select the relevant [area of law](#) and click on “Generate Blank Claim.”

**Blank Tax Invoice**

Use the blank tax invoice to submit a claim against a file where the request for legal aid was **not** submitted through Grants Online. For example:

- Grants assigned to you prior to using Grants Online
- Grants issued by Legal Aid that do not have a Request ID

**Select Area of Law**

- Civil
- Criminal
- Family

Enter the client's name, file number, extension number, clause codes, fees and GST claimed and include any notes as required in the fields provided (see information above “submitting GOL tax invoices”). Complete the [certification](#) field by adding the details of the assigned practitioner.

Complete the invoice and click **submit**.

**Checking that the tax invoice has been submitted correctly**
When you have successfully submitted a claim against a RID, a $ will appear in the file summary.

To check what you have submitted as a claim, click on the $ sign and the Claim ID, submitted date and amount will appear.

You can check to see if you have submitted the claim by opening the Claim ID. If the Submitted Date field is blank, the claim has not been submitted to LAWA. If the Submitted Date and Amount fields are completed, you have submitted the claim to LAWA.

If the Submitted Date field is blank, the claim has not been submitted to LAWA.
Grants Online Frequently Asked Questions

General FAQ’s relating to grants of aid are also available on the GOL website under the support tab.

Why can’t I share my GOL login details?

Your login details are your unique fingerprint. When LAWA receives a request for a grant or claim, it includes the details of who submitted the application. This is also important when your files are being assessed for merit, or audited at a later date.

Requesting access for new members is very easy. The “staff changes form” can be accessed on the GOL website under the “Enclosures and Forms” tab, and by clicking on the Guidelines link.

Why can’t I login?

You may need to reset your password, as this is required every 60 days for security reasons. Please refer to page 3 of this guide to help you rest your password.

I have forgotten my password and/or user name?

Please email the LAWA Service Desk at goltechsupport@legalaid.wa.gov.au who can assist you further.

Why can’t my administration assistant request my login details?

As these details are unique to you, they should be kept confidential. LAWA will only release login details to the individual.

What is the difference between saving and submitting a request?

Save

When a request is saved, the information you have entered is stored in the GOL program on your computer. You can retrieve and complete the application or extension at a later date. When saving an application form, you are not required to complete all the mandatory questions. This means that you can save an application at any point in the process.

Submit

When submitting a request, you are sending the request to LAWA for assessment. You can only submit a request once all the mandatory fields have been completed and there are no errors with the data you have provided. If you attempt to submit an incomplete request, the system will provide you with a list of all incomplete questions and you will be required to correct these errors or omissions before you can successfully submit the form.
When you have successfully submitted an application, you will receive a notification with a unique Request ID number.

Can I save a tax invoice before submitting?
Yes, however it is preferable you complete and submit the tax invoice in one session.

What do I do when I get a “binary string error message” and cannot submit the LAAF?
If this message appears it means that you have exceeded the character allowance (1900 characters) at L1. Try to shorten your request or add it as a word document attachment.

Why do the numbers keep disappearing from my invoice?
Make sure you have entered the numbers as plain text without commas. For example $2,000 should be entered as $2000.00

Will I be logged out if I am inactive for a period of time?
Yes, you will be automatically logged out if you are inactive for more than 20 minutes. To prevent loss of data when entering an application, click save as you enter data.

How do I enter a postcode?
Grants Online does not allow postcodes to be entered manually. Please type in the suburb e.g. Perth and press the TAB key. A pick list will then appear and will allow you to select the relevant suburb/town and matching postcode.
If I'm submitting an application for a domestic violence restraining order, which matter type should be selected?

You will need to submit a Family Law Application. The drop down menu in the L4 section will allow you to select Violence Restraining Order as the matter type.

If my client is in custody, do I need to enter a home address?

Yes, please provide the full prison address in the postal address fields and the home address as the in the home address fields.

How can I check what is saved but not submitted?

On the homepage you will see a table called “Application Summary”. This provides a snapshot of requests that have been submitted and ones that are saved but not yet submitted.

Please note. Claims do not appear on this summary.

How can I check if my claim has been submitted correctly?

Once a claim has been saved or submitted, a “$” will appear next to the RID on the file summary. You can check to see if you have submitted the claim by opening the Claim ID. If the Submitted Date field is blank, the claim has been saved and not been submitted to Legal Aid WA. If the Submitted Date is completed, you have submitted the claim to Legal Aid WA.

Other useful resources and contacts

Further information about the GOL system or applying for a grant of aid can be found under the “Enclosures and Forms” or “Support” headings on the GOL website.

Who can I contact?

If you have a technical issue accessing Grants Online, please call the Legal Aid WA Service Desk and leave a voicemail on 9261 6345 or email goltechsupport@legalaid.wa.gov.au

The Service Desk Hours are from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday.

If you have an assessing or grant related query, please contact the assessor or call the Assessing secretary on 9261 6530.

If you have a general query in relation to panel membership or to update GOL user details please email panel@legalaid.wa.gov.au.