
RLAS' Aim

- is to provide
- initial and basic legal advice,
- free of charge by
- volunteers who are legally qualified

For more information

For further information:

- visit the RLAS website:
www.rlas.org.uk
- via email: rlas@rlas.org.uk
- in writing: c/o Holy Trinity Church,
Sheen Park, Richmond, Surrey, TW9
1UP
- by telephone: 020 8940 7362 (Victor
Woroner, Secretary)

Our registrations

Registered charity number: 1094365

Information Commissioner: Z1633133

Key information

When is RLAS open?

Every other Tuesday between 8pm and 9.30pm

Check our website for which Tuesday in a month

How we operate

RLAS is a drop-in advice service—it is not possible not to make an appointment.

You should try to arrive close to 8pm. Depending on when you arrive and how many other people come for advice you may need to wait for some time.

Note: It is not possible always to see everyone who comes seeking to advice.

Where we provide advice

Holy Trinity Church, Sheen Park, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1UP

How to find us

For details on finding and travelling to this location—see the RLAS website: <http://www.rlas.org.uk/location.htm>.



Providing
free legal
advice

How
RLAS
can
help

What kind of help we give

We try to diagnose your problem and give advice and suggestions, as far as we can in the limited time available.

Our advice is based on the information you provide to us when you attend a Richmond Legal Advice Service (RLAS) session. If you have any documents (such as letters, forms, receipts or other papers) which are relevant to your problem, please bring them with you. For example, if your problem concerns:

- *renting a flat*: bring your tenancy agreement and inventory, notices your landlord has sent you, and any letters or emails you and the landlord have written; or
- *employment*: bring your employment contract, rules about, e.g. disciplinary and grievances matters, letters or emails you and your employer have written; or
- *something you have bought*: bring the invoice/receipt for the item bought, and any letters or emails you and the retailer have written, and any estimates for repairs.

What kind of help we cannot give

We do not (and are not able) to 'take on' cases in the same way that a firm of solicitors can. We cannot prepare letters, fill in forms or prepare any documents for you or on your behalf. If you do need to write a letter, fill in a form or prepare a document, then we can make some suggestions (which you may or may not choose to adopt) regarding the content and format, but only while you are with the legal adviser during the very limited time he or she can spend with you (about 10-15 minutes). Our legal advisers may look at a letter, form or document you have prepared and suggest amendments, but again only during the

limited time the legal adviser can spend with you. Because we are only open one evening a week, we also cannot provide or confirm in writing what a legal advisor has discussed with, or told, you.

However, we cannot represent you in a court or at a tribunal. Also, if your problem is too complex for an instant answer, or requires more time and attention than we can give in several short advice sessions, we will recommend that you go to a firm of solicitors or a suitable agency.

If there is a deadline you need to meet or there is urgency concerning your problem we often have to ask you to obtain help elsewhere. This is because of our limited opening hours (one evening per a week) and that the adviser who sees you will not be present every week.

Some limitations

We aim to see you for about 10 to 15 minutes per a session depending on the problem and those waiting. This limited time may mean we cannot give a definitive view on your problem.

If it is legally complex or there are a lot of facts or papers to go through then sometimes all we can do is refer you on or try to give a 'common-sense' answer. However, we do maintain a list of links to other resources (such as firms of solicitors dealing with particular areas of law, other advice agencies and so on), which is on the RLAS website.

No legal adviser can be an expert or have detailed knowledge on all areas of law. Therefore if your problem concerns an area of law which is outside the experience of the volunteers present on the night you attend, we may not be able to help at that session. Often another volunteer will be able to help, but you may need to come on another evening.

About us

For more than 65 years RLAS has provided free legal advice in the Richmond area.

The need for our service remains strong, particularly with the continuing withdrawal of legal aid and the reduction in funding to other advice agencies, such as the CABx.

RLAS declares its intention not to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities, age, political or religious belief or lack of it or trade union activity.

RLAS has been generously supported by various groups. *Richmond Parish Lands Charity* has provided grants for several years to enable RLAS to obtain professional indemnity insurance, maintain a web site and pay for renting premises in Richmond. In the past *Mortlake Community Association* has allowed RLAS to use premises without charge to run extra advice sessions.

Who provides advice at RLAS

Our volunteer lawyers are only qualified lawyers (solicitors, or barristers) and all are volunteers. They receive no payment for the advice they give and cannot benefit in any way from seeing clients at RLAS (such as taking on a client they have seen at RLAS outside of RLAS in return for payment).

Your comments

If you have any comments or criticisms please feel free to tell the adviser you see or contact the secretary on the number or address on the other side of this leaflet.

Web site

Our web site (www.rlas.org.uk) has further information about what we do and copies of information leaflets we provide.