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MEDIA RELEASE

LEGAL AID ADVICE LINE ENHANCES PUBLIC'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Legal Aid South Africa (Legal Aid SA) continues to ensure access to justice for all. The establishment of the toll-free Legal Aid Advice Line in 2010 addressed a growing demand for quality legal advice from the public, especially indigent and vulnerable persons in rural areas.

The Legal Aid Advice Line is accessible to members of the public via a number of channels:

- you can call in on the toll-free number **0800 110 110**;
- send a Please Call Me to **079 835 7179**;
- leave a voice message; or
- log a request for legal advice on the organisation's website www.legal-aid.co.za

No qualifying criteria are used in providing advice and so the Legal Aid Advice Line will assist any person who seeks legal advice. The Legal Aid Advice Line operates Monday to Friday from 07h00 to 19h00 and is accessible in all 11 South African official languages. All calls are recorded for quality monitoring purposes. The website request form also provides an opportunity for those with speech or hearing impairments to receive legal advice via email, or other forms of mobile communication.

In the 2018-2019 financial year, the Legal Aid Advice Line attended to a total of 124,374 calls which included new advice calls (47,921); information request calls (21,772) and follow up advice calls (5,453). The Legal Aid Advice Line provides legal advice across a number of areas of law, such as: Civil, Family, Labour, Criminal, Immigration, Children, Health, Deceased Estates, Land including Evictions, Constitutional, Applications and Commercial. "The Advice Line is staffed with qualified paralegals who are supervised by admitted legal practitioners, who provide professional legal advice across a wide spectrum of law. Where it is found that callers require a legal practitioner to take their matter forward, they are linked to the Legal Aid SA Local Office or Satellite Office nearest to them to determine if they qualify for legal aid assistance in criminal or civil litigation as per the Legal Aid Regulations. In the event that we cannot assist the client, they are referred to stakeholders who can assist," says Legal Aid SA Spokesperson Mr Mfanafuthi Shabangu.

Legal Aid SA serves the public with legal representation in both criminal and civil litigation through its national footprint of offices, comprising 64 Legal Aid SA Local Offices and 64 Satellite Offices. In the 2018-2019 financial year, we took on a total of 416,203 new criminal and civil legal matters and provided legal advice to 308,050 people, including the nearly 48,000 people served by the

Legal Aid Advice Line. Legal Aid SA fulfils its constitutional mandate to provide legal aid services by providing assistance to over 724,000 persons annually within a good governance framework, and also achieving a clean audit in 2018-2019, which is its 18th consecutive unqualified audit opinion from the Auditor-General. Legal Aid SA also values its employees who are its greatest asset in providing quality legal services to the public. This is evident from it being accredited as a Top Employer in South Africa for 10 consecutive years.

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Issued by the Communication Department of Legal Aid South Africa. For more information, please contact Legal Aid South Africa Communications Executive and National Spokesperson Mr Mfanafuthi Shabangu on 011 877 2056/066 301 6935 or the Media and Marketing Manager Mr Godfrey Matsobe on 011 877 2382/066 481 6792

Visit our website at www.legal-aid.co.za or call the Legal Aid Advice Line on 0800 110 110 or send a Please Call Me to 079 835 7179

Please be reminded that the name of our organisation **Legal Aid South Africa** is correctly abbreviated as **Legal Aid SA** and not as LASA. We respectfully request that you use the correct abbreviation **Legal Aid SA** which is representative of our mission to deliver quality **legal aid** services to the poor and vulnerable in South Africa.