



2 April 2024

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **LEGAL AID SA AMENDS MEANS TEST, WIDENING ACCESS TO LEGAL SERVICES**

The Legal Aid South Africa (Legal Aid SA) Means Test, used to determine if applicants qualify for legal aid, has been revised upwards to cater for increases in the Consumer Price Index. This will enable access to legal services to a wider group of people.

The changes come into effect on 1 April 2024.

Below is a summary of the new Means Test thresholds. Legal Aid SA considers what applicants earn, after tax, and own:

1. Applications for legal aid in criminal/civil cases – applicants must earn less than **R8,700** per month.
2. Applications for legal aid in civil cases where the applicant is a member of a household – applicants must earn less than **R9,500** per month.
3. If an applicant owns movable assets, they must not be worth more than **R160,800**.
4. If an applicant owns immovable assets, they must not be worth more than **R754,400**.

In criminal cases, children – minors below the age of 18 – continue to automatically qualify for legal aid and do not have to take the Means Test. If it is a civil case, the family of the child will need to take and pass the Means Test.

Legal Aid SA looks forward to championing the rights of even more persons to access justice through the provision of independent, accessible and quality legal aid services in criminal and civil legal matters, at no cost.

– Ends –

**Issued by the Communication Department of Legal Aid South Africa.**

**For more information, please contact Legal Aid South Africa Communication Executive and National Spokesperson Ms Pateka Quwe on 073 028 6647 or the Acting Media and Marketing Manager Mr Raymond Nenjelele on 082 978 0630**

Visit our website at [www.legal-aid.co.za](http://www.legal-aid.co.za) or call the Legal Aid Advice Line on 0800 110 110

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 indigent and vulnerable in South Africa.