



**Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal**

**Chief Magistrate's Chambers  
Melbourne Magistrates' Court**

**Practice Direction**

**No. 2 of 2008**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC ASSESSMENT REPORTS BY  
NON-TREATING PRACTITIONERS**

PRACTICE DIRECTION ISSUED PURSUANT TO SECTION 58  
OF THE *VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE ACT 1996*

**Background**

An applicant, the applicant's solicitor or the Tribunal may request that a psychologist or psychiatrist prepare an assessment report regarding an applicant's psychological/psychiatric condition and treatment/counselling needs.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Practice Direction is to prescribe procedures in relation to the preparation and filing of assessment reports prepared by a psychologists or psychiatrists who will not be providing treatment/counselling to the applicant the subject of the report.

Reports by psychologists and psychiatrists proposing to provide treatment or counselling to the applicant, and reports in support of the payment of counselling expenses, are to be filed in accordance with Practice Direction No. 1 of 2008.

**Assessment reports filed by applicant**

An applicant or their legal representative may, on their own initiative, file a psychological or psychiatric assessment report prepared by a suitably qualified practitioner in circumstances where the practitioner preparing the report does not propose to provide counselling to the applicant. All expenses awarded are at the discretion of the Tribunal.

## **Assessment reports requested by Tribunal**

Pursuant to section 39(1)(b) of the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 1996*, the Tribunal may, if it determines that it requires further information to enable it to determine an application, order the preparation and submission to the Tribunal of an assessment report. Pursuant to section 39(5) of the Act, the Tribunal must bear the costs of, and incidental to, the preparation of an assessment report.

To facilitate the preparation and submission of an assessment report, the Tribunal may refer an applicant to a particular psychologist or psychiatrist. A panel of psychologists and psychiatrists has been appointed to provide independent psychological and psychiatric assessments at the request of the Tribunal.

## **Form of assessment report**

A psychologist or psychiatrist who assesses and reports to the Tribunal as to the psychological/psychiatric condition of and treatment/counselling needs of an applicant shall prepare their report in the format set out in **Form 1** (*Psychological/Psychiatric Assessment Report*).

A completed *Counselling and Report Fee Invoice* for the expense associated with the assessment report must accompany the report (see **Form 5** attached to Practice Direction No. 1 of 2008).

## **Commencement**

This Practice Direction has effect from **1 July 2008**.

Practice Direction No.9 of 2003 will continue to apply to all assessment reports and invoices received by the Tribunal prior to 1 July 2008.

**IAN L GRAY**  
Chief Magistrate  
8 May 2008

# PSYCHOLOGICAL / PSYCHIATRIC ASSESSMENT REPORT



## **Instructions to report writer**

A report in this format is to be provided to the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal when:

- An applicant or their legal representative has requested that a psychologist or psychiatrist prepare an assessment report for the Tribunal, and the psychologist/psychiatrist does not propose to provide counselling/treatment to the applicant; and
- The Tribunal has requested the preparation of an assessment report.

The assessment report must be accompanied by a completed *Counselling and Report Fee Invoice* for the expense associated with the report (see Form 5 attached to Practice Direction 1/2008).

An electronic copy of this form may be downloaded from the Tribunal's website at [www.vocat.vic.gov.au](http://www.vocat.vic.gov.au). The text boxes will expand as content is entered by the report writer.

## **Section 1: Applicant Details**

- 1.1 Applicant's name
- 1.2 Applicant's date of birth
- 1.3 Tribunal reference number *(if known)*
- 1.4 Tribunal venue *(where application lodged)*

## **Section 2: Practitioner Details**

- 2.1 Practitioner's name
- 2.2 Practitioner's occupation / job description *(e.g., psychologist, psychiatrist)*
- 2.3 Practitioner's address and contact details *(including name of agency / business, address and telephone number)*
- 2.4 Practitioner's qualifications to assess and diagnose the applicant *(include full title of relevant qualification/degree, the name, State and country (if outside Australia) of the institution awarding the qualification/degree and the year the qualification/degree was awarded).*

- 2.5 Practitioner's experience in assessment, diagnosis and treatment, and other relevant experience.

- 2.6 Practitioner's professional associations and memberships *(include registration numbers where applicable)*.

### **Section 3: Alleged Act of Violence**

- 3.1 Briefly outline the alleged act of violence.

- 3.2 List particulars of all material considered in relation to the applicant *(e.g. police statements, reports, etc.)*.

### **Section 4: Consultation**

- 4.1 Detail the period of time spent in consultation with the applicant to prepare this assessment.

### **Section 5: Applicant's Psychological / Psychiatric Issues**

- 5.1 Briefly outline the applicant's psychological / psychiatric problems, presenting symptoms or issues. Provide details of any tests undertaken, if relevant.

- 5.2 Detail any relevant prior psychological / psychiatric history of the applicant, including details of any previous counselling provided to the applicant.

- 5.3 Explain the link, if any, between the applicant's psychological/psychiatric problems, presenting symptoms or issues and the alleged act of violence the subject of the application to the Tribunal.

**Section 6: Assessment**

- 6.1 Detail your assessment of the applicant's treatment prognosis, as well as any extenuating circumstances or barriers that might affect treatment progress (e.g., prior psychological / psychiatric history, substance abuse etc).

- 6.2 If the applicant has already received psychological / psychiatric treatment or counselling, provide an opinion as to what, if any, benefit or detriment has been achieved by the treatment.

- 6.3 If psychological, psychiatric or counselling treatment is recommended, detail the treatment approaches and strategies that you consider are appropriate.

**Practitioner's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Practitioner's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_