

## **TASCAT and Trauma-informed Practice**

Given the range of jurisdictions exercised by the Tribunal and the diversity of people involved in Tribunal proceedings, there is a likelihood that many of these people may have experienced complex trauma.

For those people, their involvement in Tribunal proceedings can possibly trigger retraumatisation. Therefore, it is important that Tribunal Members and/or registry staff are informed if you believe participating in a Tribunal hearing may be a triggering event for you. This will allow the Tribunal to engage in trauma informed practice and procedure.

### **When should you contact the Tribunal?**

You should not hesitate to contact the Tribunal registry stream responsible for the matter in which you are involved (eg. the Guardianship Stream) and:

- advise them of your preferred contact details and how you wish to be contacted;
- let them know if you require any assistance in the proceedings, including a support person or an interpreter;
- advise them of any particular trauma informed support you may require to reduce the risk of retraumatisation, for example, seeking to participate in a hearing remotely, or in a different room to another participant; and
- provide constructive feedback if you feel we have not engaged in trauma informed practice so that we can continue to improve.

### **What can you expect at the Tribunal?**

On advising us that you require trauma informed support, you can expect Members and staff of the Tribunal to:

- respect your rights and entitlements as a participant in Tribunal proceedings;
- treat you with courtesy, respect, understanding and dignity; and
- take into account, and be responsive to any particular needs or differences you have such as race, indigenous identity, sex or gender identity, cultural or linguistic diversity, sexual orientation, disability, religion and age.

### **The Tribunal registry can, if requested:**

- talk to you about what to expect in the Tribunal hearing and your role as a party or a witness;

- advise you about the status of the matter in which you are involved including the hearing date;
- prior to the hearing, give you a tour of the Tribunal's public areas including; where you will enter the premises, where you will wait prior to giving your evidence, where you will be giving your evidence and where you will take breaks.
- explain the various roles of Tribunal Members and registry staff;
- discuss any concerns you have about your safety while at the Tribunal or giving evidence.
- assist you in requesting of the Tribunal Member(s) hearing the matter in which you are involved to make appropriate arrangements that may be available to you for you to give evidence, eg. attending by Audio Visual Link or having a support person in the room with you;
- provide you with the contact details for appropriate support services;
- assist you in requesting of the Tribunal Member(s) hearing the matter in which you are involved to make a request that orders be made not to publish your name or any information identifying you in any Tribunal notices or determinations;
- assist you in a request to be provided with a copy of any published decision in which you are involved.

If you receive notice to attend a hearing at the Tribunal to give evidence as a witness you must attend. It is possible that the matter will be adjourned (delayed) or you may need to attend or more than one day.

Whilst the Tribunal registry staff are not able to discuss your evidence with you, as outlined above, if you get in touch with us before the hearing, we can look to put in place reasonable supports to assist you through the process of giving evidence.

At the hearing, if you are to give oral evidence and/or be cross examined (asked detailed questions) about your evidence, you will be given reasonable time to consider your answers and take reasonable breaks as required.

### **If you need further assistance:**

- **Sexual Assault Support Service**

SASS is a free and confidential support service for southern Tasmanian people of all ages who have been affected by any form of sexual violence. SASS also provide Redress Scheme Support Services across Tasmania.

[Home | SASS, Sexual Assault Support Service](#)

- **Blue Knot Helpline and Redress Support Service-**

<https://blueknot.org.au/survivors/blue-knot-helpline-redress-support-service/>

We support adult survivors of childhood trauma and abuse, parents, partners, family and friends as well as the professionals who work with them.

You can call the Blue Knot Helpline and Redress Support Service on **1300 657 380**. This service operates from 9am-5pm AEST Monday-Sunday and public holidays.

- **Blue Knot Community** - If you or someone you care about has experienced complex trauma and it is still affecting you, we are here to help. Many people find learning and understanding more about what happened, the possible effects, and pathways to healing, helpful. This section of the website has a lot of useful information and resources. <https://blueknot.org.au/resources/>
- **Blue Knot Professional Community** - If you are a professional, work with survivors, and are looking for training, practice or organisational support, please visit our Professional community. <https://professionals.blueknot.org.au/>