

Auckland Council Legal Team Charter

Our role: To provide independent, well-informed legal advice to support your decisions and operations. By doing this we will help the council achieve its vision.

What we will do:

<i>Understand you</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a constructive and collaborative relationship with you through a key relationship lawyer. • Work hard to understand your strategic, commercial and policy concerns. • Strive to provide high quality, strategic legal advice that recognises your context and meets your needs.
<i>Help you use us wisely</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the strategic importance of your issue, project or work-stream from an organisation perspective, to ensure the legal resource is used responsibly. • Let you know where your issue doesn't need legal team input and where possible, suggest an alternative solution. • Equip you with the training, tools and templates to help you manage your issue yourself, with our support.
<i>Communicate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge your request, let you know who is working on your advice, discuss timelines and keep you informed of progress. • Consult with you if we need to engage external providers due to specialist or capacity constraints and consider your views. • Explain the legal position and our advice in plain language.
<i>Improve</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open and responsive to feedback and look for opportunities for continuous improvement.

What we ask you to do:

<i>Communicate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let us know early if you think you need legal help. If we are involved early, it can mean less work later and better outcomes. • Give us as much information you can to help us properly advise you. Be completely open - your request for advice is legally privileged. • Keep us informed as the project or matter progresses where it will help us understand your goals and anticipate and manage workflows.
<i>Use us wisely</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you instruct us, take an organisation perspective, so that the legal resource is used responsibly on matters that are strategically important to the council. • Obtain guidance and approval from the person responsible in your department for instructing the legal team before asking us to undertake legal work. • Do what you can do yourself, with our support. Don't ask us to do non-legal work.
<i>Help us improve</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us if we could do better. Speak first with the lawyer who provided the advice and then to their manager.

Please remember:

We are required as lawyers to give independent legal advice without fear or favour.

As officers of the Court, we cannot lie to or mislead anyone.

Our clients are Auckland Council and its CCOs, not any one person or team.

Our advice is legally privileged (confidential) and should not be discussed or disclosed outside the council without consulting with us.