

The Independent Review Office Officially Established

Tuesday 2nd March 2021

The Independent Review Office (IRO) has been officially established, replacing the Workers Compensation Independent Review Office from 1 March 2021.

This update covers:

- What has changed under IRO?
- Publication of the Guidelines for approval as an IRO Approved Lawyer and the Independent Legal Assistance and Review Service Funding Guidelines.
- Information about IRO contact details.

WHAT HAS CHANGED – CTP COMPLAINTS

Since 2012, the Workers Compensation Independent Review Office has helped injured workers reach fair solutions with their insurers. New laws have expanded our functions, and we can now help people injured in motor accidents (CTP complaints) and people injured at work and solve complaints about their insurers.

The IRO website (www.iro.nsw.gov.au) explains the changes to our office and provides information on how to make a CTP complaint.

NEW IRO ILARS GUIDELINES

The Guidelines for approving lawyers and for ILARS grants are now available on the NSW Legislation website, <https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/>, via the links below:

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/sl-2021-75>

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/sl-2021-76>

These Guidelines have been under development since the passage of the *Personal Injury Commission Act 2020* in August 2020. In large part, they reflect the Funding Policy, Grant Amount Guide and Approval Requirements for Approved Lawyers operative prior to 1 March 2021.

The Guidelines and related forms are also available in the IRO website:

<https://iro.nsw.gov.au/lawyers>.

Currently approved lawyers and barristers do not need to reapply

Currently approved IRO (formerly WIRO) Lawyers and Barristers do not need to apply again for approval under the new Guidelines.

The new Practice Standards for IRO Approved Lawyers and the new Agreements (to be an IRO Approved Lawyer or Approved Barrister) apply to all current Approved Lawyers and Barristers.

[The new Practice Standards for IRO Approved Lawyers and Agreements are available on the IRO Website here: https://iro.nsw.gov.au/lawyers/apply-become-approved-lawyer](https://iro.nsw.gov.au/lawyers/apply-become-approved-lawyer)

New Grant Application Forms

[ILARS has issued new Grant Application forms, which are available here: https://iro.nsw.gov.au/lawyers/application-grant-funding](https://iro.nsw.gov.au/lawyers/application-grant-funding)

[While we encourage you to immediately adopt the new form, IRO will accept WIRO Grant Application Forms until further notice.](#)

Guidelines apply to grants approved or resolutions achieved on or after 1/3/21

The ILARS Funding Guidelines apply to applications for a grant of funding (including for an extension of a grant of funding) made or approved on or after 1st March 2021, and grants of funding made or approved before the commencement of the Guidelines where the final outcome of the matter is achieved on or after 1st March 2021.

The previous Funding Policy and Grant Amount Guide, which have been superseded by the ILARS Funding Guidelines, continue to apply to grants of funding made before 1st March 2021, where a final outcome of the subject of the grant is achieved before 1st March 2021. Copies of these are available in the IRO website: <https://iro.nsw.gov.au/lawyers/lawyers-toolkit-and-resources>.

NEW CONTACT DETAILS FOR IRO

The IRO website (www.iro.nsw.gov.au) is now live and any search traffic for WIRO will divert to our new website. If the old website does appear, try keying in SHIFT+F5 on your keyboard to clear the cached content on your browser, and the IRO site should appear.

Our phone number (139 476, which is 139 IRO) has not changed.

Our emails addresses have changed, our new address being @iro.nsw.gov.au. Importantly, emails sent to @wiro.nsw.gov.au will be re-diverted to our new IRO email addresses.

HOW TO RAISE CONCERNS DURING OUR TRANSITION

While we are transitioning to the IRO, minor issues are expected. If you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us using the following channels:

- Contact the IRO team by telephone (139 476/139 IRO); if we cannot immediately answer your concern or question, someone will get back to you who can assist.
- Email us (contact@iro.nsw.gov.au) and briefly outline the nature of your concern, and we will respond within one working day.
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Regards,

Simon Cohen

Independent Review Officer

