

Being a leader in education is one of the most vulnerable professions there is. Almost every policy and procedure that we have to adhere to has some legality attached to it. As a Principal you can have responsibility for a multi-million dollar or smaller budget, with all the accountability and obligation that goes with it. If you or one of your staff does not strictly follow policy and procedures, you may fall foul of the law over conflict of interest or misuse.

“The **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)** makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, in many areas of public life, including: employment, education, getting or using services, renting or buying a house or unit, and accessing public places, because of their disability.”

Along with the risks of managing students with disability, OHS is another challenge for leaders who are increasingly targets of litigation arising out of staff or student illness arising from bullying or environmental issues.

No wonder there are diminishing applications for school leadership with an endless list of vulnerabilities in day to day work, limited support and low salary differential.

The APF has experienced record numbers of members involved in DET misconduct investigations over the past 2 years, including matters from Speak UP, IBAC and Ombudsman investigations. You need the APF and their Legal Support Services more than ever before.

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Specialists in Employment Law, Industrial Relations
and Litigation

APF Legal Support Services



**Australian Principals
Federation**

*The Union exclusively
for the
Victorian Principal Class*



All members of the APF are entitled to access our Legal Support Services.

We provide immediate access to free professional legal advice. Our legal team will represent you individually or collectively before relevant courts, tribunals, authorities or government departments.



The first 30 minute consultation is free. Should the matter proceed then the APF will pay fees up to \$5000 per individual, per matter, providing the matter has

prior approval from the Executive or State Council.

In extenuating circumstances the State Council may opt to approve further payments.

Legal approval is private and is processed by your membership number at Executive or Council. Your confidentiality is assured.

Applications for legal support must be in writing (email), to the President or Industrial Officer. Approval will be provided to you by email once obtained. We will then forward your details to Davies Lawyers.

You can make direct contact with the law firm once approval is given.

Contacting the law firm directly, without our consent, means that you are opting to cover the costs yourself should the initial advice lead to the matter proceeding further.

If you opt to go it alone, as an APF member you are entitled to the preferential rates we have negotiated with our nominated lawyers.

Unforeseen challenges

A teacher submits a grievance to the Region and the AEU. They assert that you are bullying them and start bad mouthing you to parents and colleagues. A meeting is called. *Who represents you when the AEU is representing staff?*

You are told to leave the site immediately and suspended pending an investigation. You receive little information and no support from your SEIL.

Who will guide and support you through this matter and ensure your rights are protected?