

Using media

(A resource for community advice offices and community-based paralegals brought to you by NADCAO, from the Paralegal Manual published by the Education and Training Unit and the Black Sash.)

Media is an important communications tool that can be used to help organisations communicate with other people. Examples of media that can be used are pamphlets, posters, newsletters, badges, banners, T-shirts, newspapers, radio, television and websites.

How can you use the media?

You can use media to:

- **inform** other people about a situation or an event, or about an organisation. For example, you can use media to inform people that pensions are a legal right;
- explain facts to people, for instance why pensions are a legal right. This **educates** people about pensions;
- **politicise** people, to make people more aware of what is happening around them. For example, you can link pension problems to a campaign against corruption;
- ask people to do something; this is called mobilizing - for example, you can try to mobilise people to protest by coming to a meeting;
- **advertise** an event.

Making media

Making media includes, creating posters, pamphlets, drama shows with the purpose of communicating a message to people. It is important to know what your aim is when you decide to use media. For example, if you are planning a pamphlet or a poster you must think about:

- the aim of the pamphlet or poster
- who the pamphlet or poster is for (the target group)
- what you want to say (the content)

The design of the pamphlet or poster is also very important. Remember these things:

1. Make the language easy to read.
2. Use different kinds of headings such as underlining, boxes, capitals. Most computers can be used to make attractive pamphlets by changing the font size for different headings.
3. Arrange the writing in different ways.
4. Use pictures.
5. Don't make the design too cluttered so that it becomes confusing or unreadable.

What the law says about pamphlets and posters

The pamphlet must include the name of the organisation who produced the pamphlet, an address and who printed the pamphlet.

You must get permission from the local council in your area if you want to put up any posters in public. In many areas you have to pay a deposit.

Newsletters

Newsletters are the newspapers of the organisation. Newsletters usually come out regularly, for example four times per year, or every two months. They take a lot of work to produce.

Before deciding to have a newsletter you should decide if:

- there are enough people to work on the newsletter
- there is enough money to pay for it
- there are some experienced people who can help with producing the newsletter

Websites / blogs

A website gives the basic sense of who you are and what you do. You can put everything on the website that you want to make available for your audience or community. It is especially important to have your contact details on the website.

You get less expensive websites that are based on a template; you just add the information that you want. A blog can also serve as a website. You can add entries to a blog and it will show the date that the entry was added. The most recent entry will appear first. An entry can consist of text and/or photos and/or videos.