

Be prepared if going it alone in court



OUR COURTS SHANE ULYATT

Greenhalgh Pickard solicitor

GOING to court without legal representation is daunting for anyone who is not familiar with the law or the court processes.

There are many reasons you may find yourself before a court including disputes over debts, with a neighbour, family law matter, a contested will or even contesting a fine.

You may not have legal representation because of the cost of a lawyer, limits to the kind of areas Legal Aid assist or because legal representation is not permitted.

Disputes relating to neighbouring trees and fences, small debt matters or goods and services can be heard in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

On the Sunshine Coast, QCAT is heard in the same place as the local

magistrates court.

Legal Aid can help with serious criminal matters and family law claims if you qualify for assistance but do not cover most traffic related matters before the court unless it involves dangerous driving causing death or resulted in a manslaughter charge.

Local volunteer community legal services, such as the Suncoast Community Legal Service can provide preliminary advice and assistance in all areas of law and help prepare you for court or QCAT.

It is important you familiarise yourself with the law related to your case and the processes of the court and seek out advice where you can.