



THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE COMMUNITY LEGAL SECTOR

RECOMMENDATION 1

\$80M

per year for 10 years from the Commonwealth Government to enable more people to get the legal help they need.

An estimated 80 people a week are turned away from community legal centres (Centres) in each electorate.

Funding for this assessment would enable the Community Legal Sector to:

Provide more ongoing support for :

- First Nations People
- The Elderly
- People in rural, regional remote areas



RECOMMENDATION 2

\$1.5M

every four years for a national legal needs assessment to facilitate evidence-based planning and allocation of the Community Legal Sector's limited resources.

The last comprehensive nation-wide study of legal need occurred in 2012. Fifteen percent of the population have unmet legal needs.

Funding for this assessment would enable the Community Legal Sector to:

- Allocate resources to areas of greatest need and developing issues
- Coordinate evidence based long term planning to ensure future legal needs are met



Two thirds

of centres were assisting clients experiencing more complex issues



70%

of centres indicated that clients are experiencing more urgent issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



RECOMMENDATION 3

\$20M

per year to enhance the COVID-19 response and disaster recovery and resilience, with sustained funding until 2025. Centres are integral in the response to the recent bushfires, floods and now the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional funding would enable the Community Legal Sector to:

- Support Centres to maintain service levels in light of remote working requirements
- Coordinate and support the Community Legal Sector in disaster response and to ensure ongoing resilience to disasters



RECOMMENDATION 4

\$25M

per year funding for wrap-around support through an integrated services model until 2025.

Many Centres across Australia operate with an 'integrated service model' that involves ongoing partnerships between Centres and a range of organisations and services, such as health services, community organisations and schools to meet people's complex needs.

Additional funding would enable the Community Legal Sector to:

- Prevent further escalation of legal problems, thus improving overall community outcomes and decrease the likelihood of people needing repeat help and ensure effective use of funds.



Between July 2020 and June 2021 there was a:

16%

Increase in domestic violence protection orders.



14%

Increase in legal support for parenting arrangements.

