



Fact Sheet Commonwealth Budget 2021

This fact sheet outlines measures impacting the legal assistance sector in the 2021-22 Budget, totalling approximately \$350 million. Most of these measures will be delivered through the National Legal Assistance Partnership 2020-25 (NLAP).

NLAP: Dedicated funding for women's legal centres					
Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	\$31.626m	\$32.005m	\$32.453m	\$32.908m	\$128.992m

The Government will provide funding to women's legal centres in each state and territory to increase their capacity to deliver services to women, including those experiencing, or at risk of, family violence. This will ensure women and children can access support for a range of legal issues, including much-needed family law and family violence assistance.

NLAP: Maintaining and enhancing the Family Advocacy and Support Service (FASS)					
Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	-	\$27.110m	\$27.706m	\$28.316m	\$83.132m

The Government will provide additional funding for the FASS to continue operation for a further three years and expand to an additional 26 locations in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. This funding will also enhance the services provided with the engagement of mental health and social support staff by FASS locations to ensure they continue to evolve and meet the needs of the communities they service.

NLAP: Dedicated funding for clients with mental health conditions					
Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	\$15.000m	\$15.000m	\$15.000m	\$15.000m	\$60.000m

The Government will provide funding to legal aid commissions, community legal centres, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services to provide comprehensive, coordinated and consumer-driven legal support to people experiencing mental health conditions. The funding will also resource compassion-based training for providers to assist them to identify mental health issues and better support people in distress.

CLSP & NLAP: Preventing and responding to Child sexual abuse					
Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding for national specialist legal services (CLSP)	\$4.165m	\$3.918m	\$3.973m	\$4.029m	\$16.086m
Funding to support prosecutions (NLAP)	\$1.641m	\$1.659m	\$1.682m	\$1.706m	\$6.688m
Total	\$5.806m	\$5.577m	\$5.656m	\$5.735m	\$22.774m

The Government will provide funding to enhance and expand legal assistance services for child sexual abuse, and strengthen capacity to prosecute perpetrators. Funding will expand the national specialist trauma-informed legal service and establish an online chat service aimed at delivering legal assistance services to children experiencing or at risk of harm, including sexual abuse.

NLAP: Enhancing mental health supports through Domestic Violence Units

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	\$4.200m	\$4.250m	\$4.310m	\$4.370m	\$17.130m

The Government will provide additional funding to Domestic Violence Units (DVUs) and Health Justice Partnerships to increase the accessibility of legal and mental health support services to women who have experienced family violence. The funding will provide a mental health worker for the existing 21 DVU locations across Australia and for 7 DVU locations to deliver enhanced outreach (such as online services) to regional and remote locations.

NLAP: Family law pilot in South Australia

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	\$3.570m	\$3.570m	\$3.570m	\$3.570m	\$14.280m

South Australia will receive additional Commonwealth legal assistance funding to establish a pilot program for family law matters. This pilot will increase the availability of much-needed family law assistance.

Extension of family law property mediation - Legal Aid Commission Trial

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	\$2.117m	\$4.294m	-	-	\$6.411m

The Government will extend the legal aid commission property mediation trial - which was due to cease in December 2021 - for a further 18 months. The LAC Trial delivers lawyer-assisted property mediation to assist separating couples to resolve their small value property dispute outside of court.

Funding for Family Violence and Cross-Examination of Parties Scheme

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Funding	\$6.260m	-	-	-	\$6.260m

The Government will provide additional funding for the Family Violence and Cross-Examination of Parties Scheme to ensure that all eligible parties can access legal representation. The Scheme supports amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975* that protect victims of family violence in family law proceedings (who are primarily women), by banning direct cross-examination of the victims by their perpetrators in certain circumstances involving family violence.

Legal assistance for people engaging with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Legal financial assistance scheme	\$4.195m	\$4.195m	-	-	\$8.440m
Legal advisory service	\$5.070m	\$4.412m	-	-	\$9.482m
Total	\$9.265m	\$8.557m	-	-	\$17.922m

The Government will provide funding to individuals and entities to assist with meeting the costs of legal representation and disbursements associated with engaging with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. The Government will also provide funding to establish a legal advisory service for members of the public engaging with the Royal Commission. The legal advisory service will be independent from the Royal Commission and provide free information and legal advice.