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MEDIA RELEASE

A Step Forward for Women in Crisis

Women's Legal Services Australia welcomes increased investment in specialist legal services for women fleeing domestic violence

Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA) welcomes the Commonwealth Government's significant boost in funding for women's legal services. This funding increase marks a critical step forward in supporting women experiencing crisis and addressing gender-based violence.

For the first time, the National Access to Justice Partnership provides a dedicated funding stream specifically for specialised legal assistance for women.

The inclusion of WLSA as a peak body in the national agreement is a historic achievement that will strengthen the sector's capacity to address the unique legal needs of women.

"This landmark funding deal will have immediate and long-term impacts for women across Australia," said Elena Rosenman, spokesperson for WLSA.

"This new agreement represents a major step forward for women across the country who rely on our services during some of the most challenging times in their lives."

In some States, the additional funding will allow women's legal services to significantly expand their reach and provide greater assistance to women in crisis. In smaller jurisdictions, the additional finance will provide some relief to ameliorate the effects of chronic underfunding.

"The dedicated funding stream for specialist legal services for women is an important milestone, but we know there is still so much work to do."

"For decades, our members have been on the frontlines, helping women navigate complex legal issues arising from domestic and family violence, sexual violence, and economic insecurity."

"WLSA and our members will continue advocating for greater investment from all levels of government, systemic reform, and policies that ensure no woman is left without the support she needs."

"We are pleased WLSA is now formally recognised as the national voice for women's legal services, highlighting the critical role these services play in supporting women and advocating for systemic change."



“The demand for specialist women’s legal services continues to grow, driven by rising rates of domestic and family violence, sexual violence, and gender inequality.”

“We stand ready to keep fighting for a system that delivers justice and equality for all women.”

ENDS

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Women’s Legal Services Australia

Women’s Legal Services Australia (WLSA) is the national voice for 13 specialist Women’s Legal Services in each State and Territory across Australia. Women’s Legal Services specialise in providing legal assistance and non-legal support services to women, including legal representation, support, and advocacy. In 2022-2023, Women’s Legal Services delivered legal assistance and non-legal support services to over 25,000 women nationwide.