

## **New Report identifies that Legal Aid delivers significant savings by addressing family violence**

A new report from Price Waterhouse Coopers, commissioned by National Legal Aid (NLA) and being launched today in Sydney, has found that the provision of legal aid delivers \$600 million in savings to the community, government and the justice system.

These savings are demonstrated most noticeably in legal assistance preventing family violence and stopping it from escalating.

“86 per cent of all Legal Aid family law matters include a risk of family violence, and we’re committed to being part of the effort to eliminate family violence in the community,” said Louise Glanville, Chair of National Legal Aid and CEO of Victoria Legal Aid.

“This report demonstrates just how important legal assistance is to supporting the wellbeing of victim-survivors and assisting the government in avoiding the ongoing costs of family violence.”

The report found that for every \$1 invested in legal aid services by the Commonwealth government an equivalent benefit of \$2.25 was delivered. More than half these savings (\$378 million) were in supporting women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Legal Aid Commissions are part of the broader legal assistance sector, and together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, Community Legal Centres and Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, play a unique role in providing legal assistance services to the community.

Nationally, Legal Aid Commissions receive \$267 million annually from the Commonwealth to deliver family and civil law services, with 96% of the funding allocated to family law. In 2021–2022 Legal Aid Commissions provided 23,000 grants of aid in family law matters.

“This new report amply demonstrates the significant benefit Legal Aid Commissions provide to the community. Yet we could do so much more with additional investment,” Ms Glanville said.

Due to limited resources and a 14 per cent increase in family law demand since 2014, Legal Aid Commissions have had to restrict their means tests to maximise service delivery. If funded more appropriately, we could deliver much more legal assistance to those experiencing disadvantage, particularly victim-survivors of family violence.

“The PwC Report demonstrates how valuable Legal Aid assistance is,” Ms Glanville said. “We look forward to ongoing discussions with the Federal Government as to how this assistance can be maximised.”

Click [here](#) to access the report.

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