



Legal assistance data highlights increasing and critical role of Legal Aid in providing family law services

23 April 2026

National Legal Aid (NLA) welcomes the third release of national legal assistance data by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as an important step in providing national data and evidence of access to justice in Australia. Legal Aids can utilise consistent data across time to understand and improve service provision to the most disadvantaged people in Australia.

The data is an outline of 2024-2025 legal assistance services provided and funded under the final year of the recently expired National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP). For Legal Aids, this primarily provides a picture of family law legal services, with the current dataset showing Legal Aids undertaking an increasing amount of work in family law representation.

Legal Aids play a critical role in ending domestic and family violence as we are the major providers of family law duty law and legal representation services in Australia, and the only providers of the Independent Children's Lawyer Program, which provides court appointed legal representation for the best interests of children in parenting matters, particularly where there are safety and other risks.

Court statistics show that 86% of Legal Aid grants for family law matters include a risk of domestic and family violence.

During 2024-25, 194,832 clients received a completed in-scope service from Legal Aids nationally and Legal Aids completed 347,593 in-scope legal services.

The data highlights that:

- Over 18,000 family law duty lawyer services were provided, a 7% increase from 2023-24. Over 12,000 of these were for parenting arrangements;
- Over 33,000 family law representation services were provided, a 7% increase from 2023-24. Over 21,000 of these were for parenting arrangements;
- Over 7,000 Independent Children’s Lawyer representations were provided.

It highlights that of the people accessing our services:

- 13% of clients are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- 50% of clients are women, comprising 62% of duty lawyer clients and 55% of legal representation clients;
- 14% of clients are over 55 years of age;
- 17% of clients are under 25 years of age.

Legal Aids also play a key role in providing duty lawyer and legal representation services in criminal, domestic and family violence, child protection and state civil law areas not funded via the NLAP. Therefore, this data set is only a proportion of Legal Aid service delivery and is by no means a complete representation.

The current federal funding agreement for legal assistance services, the National Access to Justice Partnership, is developing a data strategy as a long-term reform initiative. This recognises the important role of the ABS dataset in improving data for the legal assistance sector, to better understand our services and clients.

NLA looks forward to working with the ABS to integrate data on our state and territory funded services in forthcoming releases to develop a more complete national data set on legal assistance.

You can view the ABS Legal Assistance Dataset 2024-25 on their [website](#).

For further comment please contact NLA Executive Director, Yvette D’Ath via Yvette.Dath@nationallegalaid.org.au