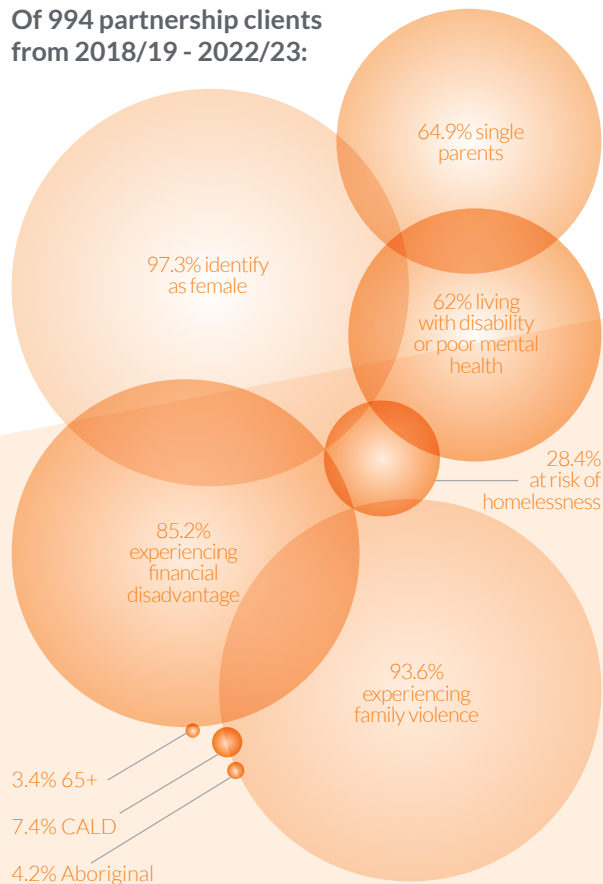


## Who?

From 2018/19 to 2022/23, **994** clients have received legal assistance under this partnership, over **1438** legal advices have been provided, **207** legal tasks completed, and **129** cases have been closed.

*The story client numbers do not tell is that victim survivors and people at risk of family violence often experience multiple disadvantages that can exacerbate and compound legal problems and disadvantage.*

Of 994 partnership clients from 2018/19 - 2022/23:



## What next?

HRCLS is committed to advancing a comprehensive response to family violence in our region to create lasting change.

Funding security is needed to achieve this and continue the delivery of critical, early, and targeted legal assistance in this integrated family violence health justice partnership.

Without increased funding to meet current and growing demand the provision of legal assistance in this partnership is at risk.

Victim survivors and people at risk of family violence in North East Victoria must have fair access to high quality legal support.

HRCLS acknowledges funding from the Victorian Government's Department of Justice and Community Safety Community Legal Centre Family Violence Fund, administered by Victoria Legal Aid.

hume riverina  
community legal  
service

Level 1, 9 Stanley Street, Wodonga 3690  
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We are a service of  Upper Murray Family Care

*'I wouldn't be in the position I am in now, mentally, physically, financially, legally, in all aspects really, without yours and CAV's assistance, help and support.'*\*

Hume Riverina  
Community Legal Service's  
integrated family violence  
health justice partnership  
with Centre Against Violence

A pathway to holistic, effective, timely, legal assistance and support for victim survivors and people at risk of family violence in North East Victoria.

hume riverina  
community legal  
service

\*Victim survivor client

## What?

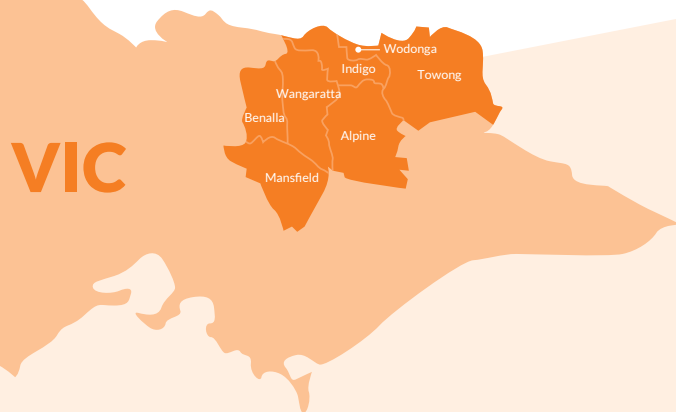
In partnership with Centre Against Violence (CAV), Hume Riverina Community Legal Service (HRCLS) provides legal assistance to victim survivors and people at risk of family violence across seven Victorian Local Government Areas: Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga.

The prevalence of family violence in all but one of these LGAs has grown steadily since 2018, and three LGAs have recorded rates of family violence exceeding the Victorian state average.

In 2023 **Benalla** recorded a family violence incident rate **82%** higher than the state average. **Wodonga** recorded **67%** more family violence incidents than the state average, and **Wangaratta 47%** higher.\*

From 2018 to 2023 the rate of family violence in Wangaratta increased by **34%** from 459 to 614 recorded incidents.\*

Access to early and targeted legal assistance is critical in responding to family, gendered and sexual violence. Legal assistance improves and supports the determinants of health: safety, safety of children, financial security and secure housing.



\* Latest crime data by area | Crime Statistics Agency Victoria

## Why?

*'...thank you for making me feel **comfortable, supported and validated** in potentially such a retraumatizing process.'*

*'Thankyou so, so, much for all your **help & support** throughout this long process. I'm so relieved it's finally all over and I can focus on building a **healthier, happy future** for my babies and myself without fear.'*

*'Today for the first morning in over 5 years I have woken without a knot in my stomach, anxiety and worry.'*

*'Your effort... has provided me with a **sense of relief and the belief** that I will eventually be able to overcome my mental health issues. I have thought for a long time that I would never be able to be a productive member of society again. I now believe that perhaps that is a **possibility.**'*

*'Ever since the IVO was served on my husband, it has become, well... life changing... Feeling **safe and happy** (My word it has been a long time since I can claim that feeling) is a truly wonderful feeling.'*

\* Victim survivor clients

## How?

HRCLS lawyers attend CAV in Wangaratta and Wodonga to provide legal assistance to clients, and secondary consultations and legal education sessions to CAV staff.

These practical actions are designed to meet the five objectives of the partnership:

1. Address unmet legal need through the provision of legal assistance to people who need it but are otherwise unlikely to access legal help
2. Improve health and wellbeing by addressing health-harming legal problems
3. Strengthen ties between providers of legal assistance and family violence and sexual assault services for the benefit of the community
4. Build the capacity of CAV staff to identify and refer their clients' legal needs to HRCLS, through the provision of legal education and training
5. Build the capacity of lawyers to identify and respond to the health and social impacts of their clients' legal needs through the provision of family violence and sexual assault education and training

*'Leaving and stopping the cycle of the Domestic Violence situation I found myself in would have been impossible without CAV's referral and assistance and your assistance. You do amazing work... **supporting women at their most vulnerable...**'*