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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Justice respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land on which we work. We embrace the vast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural diversity, including their languages, traditions and historical experiences, and recognise their continuing connection to culture, country, water and sky.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

The Department of Justice acknowledges the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Western Australian justice system. The Department is committed to respectfully partnering with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, clients, communities and organisations.

## Introduction

The purpose of this Legal Assistance Action Plan (**Action Plan**) is to implement the [Legal Assistance Strategy 2022-2025 \(Strategy\)](#).

Whilst the development of the Strategy and the Action Plan are both requirements of the [National Legal Assistance Partnership 2020-2025 \(NLAP\)](#), this Action Plan seeks to go beyond the minimum requirements of the NLAP and in doing so build on the guidance that the NLAP objective and outcomes provide to the legal assistance sector.

The development of this Action Plan has been informed by consultation with the legal assistance sector, government agencies, Courts and Tribunals and other relevant stakeholders.

The Department of Justice has overall responsibility for the Action Plan. The specific steps taken to fulfil the actions foreshadowed in the Action Plan will also be informed by the consultation that has already taken place, as well as the ongoing consultation with the Collaborative Services Planning Group (**CSPG**) and the various Advisory Committees and Forums which report to the CSPG.

The Department of Justice will also lead a continuing cycle of implementation and review of progress in realising the objectives of the Legal Assistance Strategy and Action Plan, including a formal review every 12 months.

There will then be an evaluation at the end of the Strategy and Action Plan.





Action	Strategy Objectives
<p><b>Developing a Workforce Planning and Development Strategy and Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>The Department of Justice will work with the sector to collaboratively develop a comprehensive, sector-wide Workforce Planning and Development Strategy to build the legal assistance sector’s capacity to attract and retain staff.</p> <p>In doing so, the Workforce Planning and Development Strategy will consider, among other things, training, equitable remuneration and professional development of staff working in the legal assistance sector, as well as mental health and wellbeing support structures.</p> <p><b>Timeframe for completion:</b></p> <p>March 2024: Workforce Planning and Development Strategy and Implementation Plan</p>	<p><b>Focus Area 2:</b></p> <p>The people with the right skill sets are in the right roles in the right locations at the right times.</p> <p>Supported recruitment, training, remuneration and professional development of staff, particularly in relation to rural, regional and remote areas, to ensure high quality services for clients.</p> <p>Mental health and wellbeing support structures are embedded.</p> <p>Funding arrangements, including but not limited to longer terms, are implemented where possible, to support high quality service delivery, investment in development pathways and employment certainty within a sustainable sector.</p> <p>Cohesive, sector-wide workforce planning is fostered.</p>
<p><b>Developing legal assistance service provider roles which reflect a sector wide minimum level and standard of service</b></p> <p>The Department will work with the sector to collaboratively develop legal assistance service provider roles and sector wide minimum level and standard of service, taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Priority Client Groups</li> <li>the Priority Areas of Law</li> <li>geographic regions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Focus Area 1:</b></p> <p>Aboriginal people are recognised as the First Peoples of this country. Their legal and non-legal needs flowing from their over-representation in the justice system, including as a result of historical policies disproportionately impacting Aboriginal communities, as well as the principle of self-determination are taken into account when making legal assistance service delivery decisions.</p>



Action	Strategy Objectives
	<p>of different legal assistance service providers, contributes to a joined-up system and is responsive to current and emerging legal needs over time.</p> <p>Priority Client Groups, Priority Areas of Law and geographic-based legal needs inform the development of legal assistance service provider roles and minimum level and standard of service.</p> <p>The legal assistance sector is supported to deliver an appropriate mix of services which seeks to meet legal need in Western Australia in an effective, efficient and economic way, and legal assistance service providers are supported to deliver innovative services, including digital solutions, and to work collaboratively with legal and non-legal service providers.</p> <p>Legal assistance services directed at communities play an integral prevention and early intervention role in the system to address legal need.</p> <p>Legal assistance service providers contribute to policy development and law reform.</p>
<p><b>Developing a Legal Assistance Services Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>The Department of Justice will work with the sector to collaboratively develop a Legal Assistance Services Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan.</p>	<p><b>Focus Area 1:</b></p> <p>Aboriginal people are recognised as the First Peoples of this country. Their legal and non-legal needs flowing from their over-representation in the justice system, including as a result of historical policies disproportionately impacting Aboriginal communities, as well as the principle of self-determination are taken into</p>









Action	Strategy Objectives
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**Growing the qualitative evidence base for legal need**

It is acknowledged that the quantitative evidence base for legal need only partially expresses the service delivery outcomes.

The Department will consult

Action	Strategy Objectives
<p>March 2024: Legal Assistance Services Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan Ongoing: consultation with the legal assistance sector and other relevant stakeholders</p>	

### Fostering collaboration

The principle of collaboration underpins all the actions within the Action Plan.

The Department of Justice will formally foster collaboration through the Collaborative Services Planning Group (**CSPG**), which includes representatives from the Aboriginal Legal Service WA, Community Legal WA, the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, Law Access and Legal Aid WA.

The CSPG is also informed by the following Advisory Committees which are made up of sector representatives:

- the Data Advisory Committee, which supports the collection of consistent and reliable legal assistance service data;
- the Legislation and Policy Implementation Advisory Committee, which considers the potential and or actual impact of relevant legislation and policy on legal assistance service delivery; and
- the Community Legal Education Advisory Committee, which facilitates a sector-wide approach to community legal education development and delivery.

### Focus Area 3:

The legal system is a complex and interconnected system of laws, courts, and legal professionals. It is essential to ensure that the legal system is accessible, efficient, and effective. This focus area aims to address the challenges of the legal system and to improve the quality of legal services. The legal system is a complex and interconnected system of laws, courts, and legal professionals. It is essential to ensure that the legal system is accessible, efficient, and effective. This focus area aims to address the challenges of the legal system and to improve the quality of legal services.

**Action**

**Strategy Objectives**

Action	Strategy Objectives
<p>There will then be an evaluation at the end of the Strategy and Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Timeframe for completion:</b></p> <p>Yearly: progress review</p> <p>July 2025: Strategy and Action Plan evaluation</p>	