



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Citizenship
Minister for Regulatory Reform

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LEGAL AID SERVICES TO BE EXPANDED ACROSS NSW

Members in the community in need of free legal advice and assistance will be able to access more legal aid services as a result of the Keneally Government securing \$60.3 million in funding from the Commonwealth.

NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos today announced that NSW has signed the new National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services that guarantees it will receive \$10 million more in funding than under the old regime.

“This agreement provides a significant boost to Legal aid services in New South Wales which has in the past suffered as a result of funding cuts introduced by the former Commonwealth Government,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

Mr Hatzistergos said the agreement reflects the State Government’s commitment to early intervention legal services, community legal information and advice services.

“As a result of this agreement Legal Aid NSW will be able to deliver more preventative legal services such as legal education and information, early intervention services, such legal advice and minor assistance, across both Commonwealth and State areas of law.”

“The funding will allow Legal Aid NSW to expand Family Dispute Resolution services, to assist more people to resolve family disputes without the need to go to court.

“It will also allow Legal Aid NSW to expand its successful legal assistance program for families experiencing mortgage stress.

Mr Hatzistergos also said he was pleased that the Commonwealth has committed an additional \$34.9 million over four years to Indigenous legal services.

This includes additional funding for the Aboriginal Legal Service, which will help to improve access to legal advice for Aboriginal people in New South Wales, especially in criminal matters.

Chief Executive Office of Legal Aid NSW, Mr Alan Kirkland welcomed the new funding agreement saying that “This boost in funding recognises the valuable work provided by legal aid lawyers every day, in courts and community agencies across New South Wales.”