

NSW Budget 2023-24



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\$97 million to deliver justice, support victims and prevent abuse

The Minns Labor Government is providing an additional **\$97 million** over four years to deliver justice in a timely and efficient manner through NSW courts and tribunals, Legal Aid NSW and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Minns Government is rebuilding and developing vital services to enable faster and simpler access to justice, and to support victims of crime and abuse.

The NSW Government is determined to reduce rates of domestic and family violence and to support women and girls in the justice system because of this violence.

This year, we've developed a website to educate people about coercive control, explaining the signs and behaviours in intimate partner settings that constitute this abuse, ahead of coercive control becoming a criminal offence in mid-2024. One of these behaviours is financial abuse, which can involve restricting or blocking a person's access to money, manipulating their financial decisions or using their money without consent.

In the 2023-24 NSW Budget, we are spending **\$8.1 million** over four years to support and expand Redfern Legal Centre's financial abuse service statewide, so that people experiencing money problems or family law issues as a result of financial abuse can access free legal assistance.

We're also providing **\$9.5 million** over four years for Legal Aid NSW to implement a new platform that will make applying for legal assistance quicker and easier. The legacy system was neglected by the Liberal Government for more than a decade, and technology has progressed dramatically in that time.

Greater ease of access to free, timely legal assistance will help prevent small problems from escalating into bigger ones and ease pressures on the courts. Almost 61 per cent of Legal Aid clients live in regional NSW, and intensifying cost-of-living pressures mean the need for access to legal assistance has increased. The service helps with criminal matters, family law issues, and civil law matters including housing, income support or access to health and disability support.

The NSW justice system is the largest and busiest in Australia. It includes almost 400 judicial officers across NSW Courts and Tribunals, as well as the 2,500 staff who support them. Collectively, these courts and tribunals hear and manage more than 300,000 matters a year, including criminal and civil proceedings and appeals.

Innovative programs such as Circle Sentencing and the Youth Koori Court have also been expanded with the aim of reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the justice system.

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