

LEGAL AID MATTERS

BE AFRAID WITHOUT LEGAL AID

MASSIVE FEDERAL CUTS TO LEGAL AID

In 1996, the Federal Government introduced massive cuts to legal aid.

Previously, the Federal government provided 55% of funding to legal aid, while contributions from the States and Territories accounted for most of the remainder.

In 1996, the Federal Government slashed its share of legal aid funding to 30%.

In 2016-17 alone, *additional* Federal funding of \$126.3 million is required, just to bring the Commonwealth's share of spending back to 50%.

The current funding imbalance is hurting everyday Australians, undermining civil society and the rule of law.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MUST PAY ITS FAIR SHARE

The Federal Government shirks its funding responsibilities, claiming State and Territory laws create demand for legal aid. This is unsustainable:

- State and Territory criminal law and regulations are essential for maintaining law and order across Australia.
- Enforcement of law and order is a national priority – legal aid is therefore a national obligation.
- We have a national legal system made up of Commonwealth and State laws.
- We need a properly funded legal aid system to make equality before those laws a reality.