



**NATIONAL  
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION  
AND LEGAL SERVICES  
FORUM**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, May 13, 2024

For Immediate Release

### **FVPLS Services Hindered by Grossly Inadequate Lack of Investment - Critical Ask from Federal Budget -**

Calls for a significant investment into family violence services for First Nations communities is just the start of what is needed from this week's Federal Budget if the Government is truly committed to addressing the national epidemic of gender-based violence against women, according to the Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services (FVPLS) sector's national peak body.

The National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services Forum's [pre-budget submission](#) called for an additional \$60million per annum into core funding with a minimum term of 5-year contracts, to be shared across all FVPLS' that currently support First Nations women, children and their communities affected by domestic, family, and sexual violence.

"Currently FVPLSs are not adequately resourced to provide the coverage required to meet the needs of our communities. Much of this coverage in remote areas is extremely limited and often consists of only one or two days of support per month. There are also major service gaps in metropolitan and urban areas," NFVPLS Forum CEO Kerry Staines said.

"Getting access to justice shouldn't depend on where you live," Ms Staines said.

"We call on the Federal Government to provide the necessary resources to service unmet need amongst communities in remote, regional, and metropolitan Australia," she said.

"Earlier this month, the Prime Minister called the rising number of women being murdered in acts of gender-based violence a national epidemic. If he, and his government, are serious about addressing this issue, our sector must be appropriately funded to do what we do.

"Our sector delivers a combination of specialised legal and non-legal domestic and family violence programs and services targeted to meet the cultural needs of our First Nations people."

The NFVPLS Forum has also called for fiscal and policy investment into a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection notification and referral system.

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“For more than 10 years, we and our members have advocated for a nationally consistent child protection notification and referral system that would increase efficiency, broaden referral pathways, support culturally safe service provision and provide timelier outcomes,” Ms Staines said.

“This initiative would align with Closing the Gap Target 13 Outcome (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe), but most importantly it would ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mums have early access to legal and non-legal supports as soon as there are children protection concerns, which in turn would minimise child removal and displacement,” she said.

Representatives of the NFVPLS Forum and the sector will be in Canberra for this week’s Federal Government’s Budget announcement.

“Now is the time to get real about investing in community-controlled organisations that, despite being starved of resources, are already on the ground delivering services that have a proven track record in making a difference, specifically regarding early intervention, prevention, crisis response and recovery and healing,” Ms Staines said.

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### **About the NFVPLS Forum**

The National Family Violence Prevention & Legal Services Forum (NFVPLS Forum) was established in May 2012 and is the National Peak Body for Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS) around Australia that provide culturally safe and holistic services to First Nations people affected by family violence – predominantly women and children.

The NFVPLS Forum provides expert national policy advice in areas of policy, planning and law reform, and advocates for safety and justice for First Nations people affected by family violence.

