

Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024

Women's Legal Service Queensland

Strategy Context

Women's Legal Service Queensland (WLSQ) Strategy 2021 – 2024 has been informed by staff and Management Committee participation and input.

A further detailed strategic planning process will be conducted in early 2022.

Who we are

Established in 1984, WLSQ is a for-purpose organisation providing free legal advice and other key supporting services; accessed through a variety of pathways. Services are provided through our dedicated staff and volunteers (network).

Bringing our focus and expertise to legal and social issues affecting women, we are committed to a society in which every woman:

- can live free from violence and discrimination
- can tell her story, have it heard and respected, without judgement
- receives a just and equitable outcome from legal and social systems.

Why we exist

Community legal organisations such as WLSQ exist to provide assistance to vulnerable and disadvantaged clients. We are often the first point of contact for women seeking assistance, or their last resort when all other attempts to seek legal assistance have failed.

We have special concern for all women and children who face additional discrimination for reasons such as, but not limited to, poverty, destitution, social class, race, age, religion, disability, and sexuality.

Our scope

Family law
Domestic and family violence
Sexual assault (Counselling Notes Protect)
Law reform
Advocacy, community, and sector-wide engagement

Funding

WLSQ receives government funding and supplements with alternative funding options such as philanthropic donations and fundraising to support mission delivery.

Our Mission

Accessible legal and social justice for a safer future for women and children

Our Values

Informed by feminist principles ~
Care, respect, inclusivity, accountability, collaboration

WHAT DO OUR VALUES MEAN?

Values	What does this mean for WLSQ?
Care	Caring for our clients, employees and volunteers and their wellbeing; supporting empowerment; trauma informed
Respect	Treating our clients, staff, volunteers, partners, agencies with respect; being non-judgemental; valuing contribution
Inclusivity	Embracing differences and encouraging members of all communities to (equitably) access our service
Accountability	Demonstrating best practice; being responsible for our work; transparency in our dealings
Collaboration	Working together with our clients, volunteers, partner agencies and communities to achieve sustainable change; reflecting and learning

OUR PRIORITIES

Priority 1	Deliver high quality services to women
Priority 2	A safe, supportive, and unifying organisational culture
Priority 3	Enhance prevention and intervention advocacy for domestic and family violence
Priority 4	Deliver client-centred collaborative service planning
Priority 5	Be accessible and inclusive
Priority 6	Deliver organisational sustainability

Priority 1- Deliver high quality services to women

We will:

- review the ongoing needs of the community in planning, service requirements and capacity building
- review client service activities to ensure service pathways are simple, accessible, targeted, transparent and tailored
- embed a trauma informed (care) approach in our practices and service delivery channels
- provide a comprehensive approach to clients' circumstances and needs through an integrated legal/social worker practice framework
- work closely with client-referring organisations and other support providers/agencies to support client outcomes
- evaluate the impact of our services and continuously improve
- use flexible, responsive and innovative techniques to deliver better client outcomes
- promote early intervention and targeted community legal education.

Priority 2 - A safe, supportive, and unifying organisational culture

We will:

- foster a positive workplace environment of empowerment, collaboration and wellbeing
- attract and retain highly skilled staff through progressive people strategies and leadership
- ensure staff have access to ongoing professional and skill development opportunities and build capability
- provide open and transparent communication
- recognise and value diverse skills and thinking, culture and backgrounds of people in the workplace
- further develop and embed our desired culture and Core Values across the Service
- be an organisation of choice in the Community Legal Sector.

Priority 3 - Enhance prevention and intervention advocacy for domestic and family violence

We will:

- monitor trends and undertake targeted research to advance women's safety and status through key partnerships/sectors (legal, domestic and family violence)
- implement strategies to change harmful attitudes towards women, promote equality and encourage respectful relationships
- support women and children experiencing domestic and family violence, with the aim of stopping early signs of violence from escalating
- find pathways for integrated services for domestic and family violence working with the sector/network partners
- advocate for the rights of women and children affected by gender-based violence through policy and law reform aligned to Mission
- consider and address geographical isolation for victims of domestic and family violence through the provision of services
- increase awareness about the impact of domestic and family violence on women and children, including progressive Community Legal Education programs.

Priority 4 - Deliver client-centred collaborative service planning

We will:

- use a client-centred model of service evaluation
- use a monitoring and evaluation framework to guide decision-making and resource allocation, including workforce planning
- further develop partnerships with other like-minded organisations and stakeholders to enhance service delivery
- enhance existing partnerships to progress collaborative work.

Priority 5 - Be accessible and inclusive

We will:

- provide services that are accessible and inclusive of the diverse needs of women
- be culturally appropriate and mindful with our service provision
- undertake regular, organisation-wide training to support best practice for accessible and inclusive client services
- provide access to appropriate translation services for clients, where requested
- ensure physical facilities are accessible for clients to attend appointments or undertake community-based legal education
- provide multiple referral pathways, targeted from multiple sources.

Priority 6 - Deliver organisational sustainability

We will:

- maintain and deliver government funding contracts
- maintain and build funding opportunities/revenue streams to support core business, capacity building and infrastructure for service delivery
- continue to build organisational capability and capacity to better service our clients
- report on client impact and review for continuous improvement
- maintain appropriate governance standards
- invest in increasing community support to advance women's safety
- maintain a positive reputation among political, community and other stakeholders
- further develop partnerships with other like-minded organisations and stakeholders
- enhance existing partnerships to progress collaborative work, particularly in rural and remote Queensland regions
- inspire and strengthen our volunteer network capability through feedback and engagement strategy.