



Australian Legal Needs Dashboard – Explanatory Notes

The aim of the dashboard is to help identify potential legal needs across Australia through a **series of indicators** and at **various levels of geography**.

Indicators

Indicators are population counts based on various socio-demographic criteria and drawn from various data sources. They provide proxy indicators of potential legal needs by identifying people more likely to require legal assistance should they experience a legal problem as has been revealed through legal needs research.

Indicators in the dashboard include:

- Need for Legal Assistance Services (NLAS) indicators
- Population data
- Recipients of social services benefits
- Recorded incidents for selected criminal offences

From the following data sources:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census)
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR)

Levels of geography

To support collaborative service planning at national, jurisdictional and local levels, data is available for the following geographies:

- Statistical Area (SA2, SA3, SA4)
- Local Government Area (LGA)
- Postcode
- Suburb

For each geography, data can be aggregated:

- At jurisdictional and national level
- For a group of manually selected areas
- For pre-defined clusters to tailor analysis to regional breakdown

Notes:

DSS data is available by SA, LGA and postcode, but not by suburb.

BOCSAR crime data is only available for NSW. It is currently presented by LGA only and for 3 offence types as an indicative example of what data can be included in the dashboard. This is subject to change and can be expanded based on feedback.

General Notes and caveats

Rounding

Numbers (that is, 'counts') presented in the dashboard are rounded to the nearest 10, except for numbers less than 10 that are replaced with a '<10' label. However, the actual numbers are used in any underlying calculations behind the presented data

Small numbers

Small numbers (less than 10) are not displayed to protect the privacy of individuals. As a general rule, low numbers should be treated with caution and not relied upon to draw definitive conclusions. The process of perturbation in ABS data and the use of averages in DSS data means that, while low numbers can be used to calculate aggregated data with reasonable accuracy, findings based on low numbers are indicative only.

Aggregated totals

State/territory totals derived from summing up LGA, Statistical Area or postcode data may not match actual state and territory totals. This is due to the methods used to assign counts to smaller areas of geography by each data provider and different recording/handling of data where exact location details are not known. Those differences, however, remain minor and do not affect general interpretation of findings.

Cross-border postcodes

There are 15 cross-border postcodes in Australia. Data for those postcodes has been apportioned to each jurisdiction according to the percentage of the general population residing on either side of the border. This means that:

- When selecting a jurisdiction, data reported against cross-border postcodes only includes counts for that state/territory (even if the whole postcode area appears highlighted on the map).
- When selecting a cross-border postcode (without applying a jurisdiction filter), data is aggregated to show all counts for the postcode area (regardless of the state/territory data is assigned to).

Postcode data should not be used when comparing state/territory level counts

Data sources

Data source	Notes
Australian Bureau of Statistics	<p>Data source: 2016 Census (accessed through TableBuilder)</p> <p>Census-based counts should be treated as minimum counts of persons as they only include people self-declaring these characteristics. Small numbers are not reliable due to the ABS's method of randomly adjusting numbers to avoid the release of confidential data.</p>
Department of Social Services	<p>Data source: https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/dss-payment-demographic-data June 2020</p> <p>DSS data is a point-in-time snapshot of the number of recipients of each Australian Government benefit.</p> <p>For confidentiality purposes, DSS data does not release small numbers between 1 and 4. Additional data may be suppressed to prevent the derivation of identified populations that have values of less than 5. For the purpose of the dashboard, and to ensure maximum accuracy when aggregating data at different levels of geography, values of less than 5 were subsequently replaced by the average small value for that particular benefit.</p> <p>Individuals who live overseas, individuals who are without a valid home address and individuals who only have a postal address cannot be assigned to a locational boundary (including LGA and postcode).</p> <p>For further details on social services payments, see 'A guide to Australian Government payments' available on the Services Australia website: https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/about-us/publications-and-resources/guide-australian-government-payments</p>
Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research	<p>Data source: https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar_datasets/Offence.aspx Jan-Dec 2019</p> <p>This data includes the total count of incidents recorded by police over a 12-month period for selected criminal offences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence related assault • Breach Apprehended Violence Order • Breach bail conditions

List and description of indicators

Census-based indicators

NLAS indicators and population data are based on the 2016 Census.

Indicator	Description
NLAS(Capability)	<p>The NLAS(Capability) indicator provides a proxy measure of legal capability by identifying people aged 15 to 64 who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal income less than \$26,000 per year • Highest year of school completion ranges from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 12 (ages 15-39) - Year 11 (ages 40-49) - Year 10 (ages 50-64) • Not currently a full time or part time student • Do not have a non-school qualification, such as a trade certificate or an academic qualification later in life <p>People aged 65 years are not included as leaving school early was previously more common and their inclusion skews the count to older people. Older people are represented by a separate priority group.</p>
NLAS(ATSI)	<p>The NLAS(ATSI) indicator identifies people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aged 15 years and over: • who have a personal income less than \$26,000 per year; and • who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
NLAS(CALD)	<p>The NLAS(CALD) indicator identifies people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aged 15 and over • with a personal income less than \$26,000 per year; and • who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (other than Indigenous).
NLAS(\$52K)	<p>The NLAS(\$52K) indicator identifies people aged 15 to 64 who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a moderate personal income (less than \$52,000 per year); and • highest year of school completion ranges from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 12 (ages 15-39) - Year 11 (ages 40-49) - Year 10 (ages 50-64); and • Not currently a full-time or part-time student; and • Do not have a non-school qualification, such as a trade certificate or an academic qualification later in life
NLAS(65+)	<p>The NLAS(65+) indicator identifies people aged 65 years and over who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a personal income less than \$26,000 per year; and • highest year of school completion ranges from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 9 (ages 65-74) - Year 8 (ages 75+); and • Not currently a full-time or part-time student; and • Do not have a non-school qualification, such as a trade certificate or an academic qualification later in life
Population (all)	A count of all people.
Population (age group)	A count of people in the specified age group. Some indicators focus on specific age groups, as indicated.
People with a personal income <\$26k (15+)	People aged 15 years and over with a personal income < \$499 / week or < \$25,990 / year.
People with a personal income <\$52k (15+)	People aged 15 years and over with a personal income < \$999 / week or < \$52,000 / year.
People with a household income <\$26K (all ages)	<p>People of all ages living in a household with an income equivalent to a single person household income of < \$499 / week or < \$25,999 / year. This data is only available at Postcode, LGA and SA2."</p>

Indicator	Description
People with a lower education (15-64)	<p>People aged 15 to 64 who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest year of school completion ranges from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 12 (ages 15-39) - Year 11 (ages 40-49) - Year 10 (ages 50-64) • Not currently a full time or part time student • Do not have a non-school qualification, such as a trade certificate or an academic qualification later in life <p>People aged 65 years are not included as leaving school early was previously more common and their inclusion skews the count to older people. Older people are represented by a separate priority group.</p>
Unemployed people (15+)	People aged 15 years and over classified as either unemployed looking for full-time work, or unemployed looking for part-time work.
Single parents (15+)	<p>People aged 15 years and over classified as lone parent.</p> <p>This is households with one male or female parent and a dependent child. All children under 15 are classified as dependent. Children aged 15 to 24 are dependent when they are in education.</p>
Children and youth (0-24)	People aged 24 years and under, including babies and children.
Disengaged youth (15-24)	People aged 15 to 24 years, unemployed and not currently a full time or part time student.
Older people (65+)	People aged 65 years and over.
People with a disability (14 and under)	People aged 14 years and under classified as having a need for assistance with core activities.
People with a disability (15-64)	<p>People aged 15 to 64 years classified as having a need for assistance with core activities.</p> <p>People 65 years and older have been excluded from this measure as their inclusion skews the count to older people. Older people are represented by a separate priority group.</p>
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (14 and under)	People aged 14 years and under who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (15+)	People aged 15 years and over who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with personal income <\$52K (15+)	People aged 15 years and over who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander with a personal income < \$999 / week or < \$52,000 / year.
Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people (15+)	People aged 15 years and over who speak another language other than English at home, excluding an Australian Indigenous language.
People with poor English proficiency (15+)	People aged 15 years and over, including Indigenous Australians, whose English proficiency is classified as spoken 'not well', or 'not at all'.
People who did not access internet from dwelling (15+)	<p>People aged 15 years and over who did not access the internet from their dwelling on census night.</p> <p>(Note: this priority group is not available at suburb level). This includes accessing the internet through a desktop/laptop computer, mobile or smart phone, tablet, music or video player, gaming console, smart TV or any other devices . It also includes accessing through any type of connection for example ADSL, fibre, cable, wireless, satellite and mobile broadband (3G/4G)</p>
People residing in rural or remote areas (all ages)	People of all ages living in an area classified as Outer Regional, Remote or Very Remote in the Accessibility and Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+).

Department of Social Services data

Indicator	Description
ABSTUDY (Non-Living Allowance)	ABSTUDY (Non-Living Allowance) refers to recipients who do not receive the ABSTUDY Living Allowance but receive an ABSTUDY supplementary payment only. Supplementary payments include Schooling A Award, Part-time Award, Lawful Custody Award and the Testing Assessment Award. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system.
Age Pension	Age Pension is a support payment for people who have reached the qualifying age. From 1 July 2013, the qualifying age for both men and women is 65 years. From 1 July 2017 the Age Pension qualifying age will progressively increase from 65 years to 67 years, reaching 67 years in 2023. This affects both men and women born on or after 1 July 1952. To qualify for the Age Pension, a person must have been an Australian permanent resident for a total of 10 years with at least five of those years being continuous, or have a qualifying residence exemption, or satisfy the residence requirements under an international social security agreement. In some instances, Age Pension recipients have the choice of having their Age Pension paid by either the Services Australia (SA) or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), SA pays the vast majority of Age Pensions. Data.gov.au only includes data for the SA paid recipients. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) or suspended on the Centrelink payment system.
Austudy	Austudy is a means-tested payment made to full-time students and Australian apprentices who are aged 25 years and older. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system.
Carer Allowance	A supplementary payment for carers who provide daily care and attention at home for a person with a disability, severe medical condition or who is frail and aged. Carer Allowance (CA) may be paid in addition to income support payments. If a person does not qualify for Carer Allowance (Child) based on the level of care required, the child they are caring for may still qualify for a Health Care Card (HCC) if at least 14 hours a week of additional care and attention is provided. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) or suspended on the Centrelink payment system. Notes: - Unless otherwise specified CA excludes HCC Only recipients and/or child care receivers. - Carer Allowance data utilises a recipients' home address as their primary address type to determine locational boundaries (e.g. State, SA, LGA, etc.), this may differ from other reported payments.
Carer Payment	Carer Payment provides income support for carers who, because of the demands of their caring role, are unable to support themselves through substantial paid employment. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) or suspended on the Centrelink payment system. Notes: - Carer Payment totals include overseas recipients. - Due to changes in data source a break-in-series exists for Carer Payment data from 1 July 2013 and again from 1 October 2013. Care should be taken when comparing time series data. - Carer Payment data utilises a recipients' home address as their primary address type to determine locational boundaries (e.g. State, SA, LGA, etc.), this may differ from other reported payments.
Commonwealth Rent Assistance	Generally, to qualify for Rent Assistance a person must be eligible for an income support payment, ABSTUDY, Family Tax Benefit Part A, or a Veteran's service pension or income support supplement. To receive Rent Assistance, a person must pay or be liable to pay private rent (excludes rent paid to specified state housing authorities) above the applicable rent threshold, for their usual home. Rent Assistance is paid at the rate of 75 cents for each dollar above the rent threshold up to a maximum rate applicable to their family situation. Commonwealth Rent Assistance numbers are measured at the income unit level.

Indicator	Description
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	<p>The Commonwealth Seniors Health Card is claimed by people who have reached the qualifying age for the Age Pension but do not qualify for a pension. To qualify for the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, a person must also meet an adjusted taxable income test. The Commonwealth Seniors Health Card provides access to health concessions, including cheaper pharmaceutical medicines.</p>
Disability Support Pension	<p>DSP is an income support payment for people who are unable to work for 15 hours or more per week at or above the relevant minimum wage, independent of a Program of Support due to permanent physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment. A DSP claimant must be aged 16 years or over and under Age Pension age at date of claim, however once in receipt of DSP, a person can continue to receive DSP beyond Age Pension age. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) or suspended on the Centrelink payment system.</p>
Family Tax Benefits Part A and B	<p>Family Tax Benefit (FTB) was introduced to help with the cost of raising children. FTB Part A is the most common payment to help with the cost of raising children and is paid per child. It includes a supplement per child that becomes payable after the end of the financial year. FTB Part A is income tested on family income. FTB Part B gives extra assistance to single-parent families and to couple families where one income is low. It is paid on a per family basis and includes a supplement that becomes payable after the end of the financial year. FTB Part B is income tested for single parents, and is income tested on both the lower income earner and the main income earner for two-parent families.</p> <p>Most families with at least one dependent child aged 15 and under are eligible to receive FTB. Receipt of FTB should be viewed differently to receipt of income support payments. FTB is paid to one parent in respect of a child. FTB data should not be analysed by the gender of the payment recipient as payment is made to the family and not to the individual person.</p> <p>Information shown here in regard to FTB only includes recipients who elect to receive their FTB entitlement on a fortnightly basis. These are counted in a population referred to as an FTB instalment population. FTB instalment populations exclude people who are paid through a lump sum which is claimable at the end of a financial year.</p>
Health Care Card (HCC)	<p>The Health Care Card (HCC) is issued to recipients of certain social security benefit or allowance payments to provide access to health concessions, including cheaper pharmaceutical medicines. Low-income earners may claim the HCC. Where data related to Low Income Health Care Card (LIC) is provided in the same table as data related to the HCC, HCC numbers will include those with a LIC. The number of LIC recipients should not be added to the number of HCC recipients.</p>
JobSeeker Payment	<p>JobSeeker Payment is the main income support payment for recipients aged between 22 years and pension age (the minimum qualifying age for Age Pension), who have capacity to work now or in the near future. JobSeeker Payment is available to people who are looking for work, who temporarily cannot work or study because of an injury or illness, or bereaved partners in the period immediately following the death of their partner, subject to meeting eligibility requirements. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system and are not in receipt of a zero rate of payment. From 20 March 2020, JobSeeker Payment replaces Newstart Allowance, Bereavement Allowance and Sickness Allowance. Bereavement Allowance closed to new entrants on 20 March 2020 and the payment will cease when all existing recipients have completed their bereavement period. Sickness Allowance closed to new entrants on 20 March 2020 and the payment will cease on 20 September 2020.</p> <p>In other published sources, recipient counts of Newstart Allowance and JobSeeker Payment may include recipients of Bereavement Allowance and Sickness Allowance, as these payments have been subsumed into JobSeeker Payment. This combining of payments allows for a better comparison between the recipient numbers. Note that this is not the case in this report, with each individual payment shown separately and not combined.</p> <p>Further information on the introduction of JobSeeker Payment is available here:</p>

Indicator	Description
	https://www.dss.gov.au/benefits-payments/jobseeker-payment
Low Income Health Care Card	The Low Income Health Care Card (LIC) can be claimed by low income earners, providing them access to health concessions, including cheaper pharmaceutical medicines. Where data related to the LIC is provided in the same table as data related to the Health Care Card (HCC), HCC numbers will include those with a LIC. The number of LIC recipients should not be added to the number of HCC recipients.
Parenting Payment Partnered and Parenting Payment Single	Parenting Payment provides income support for parents or guardians to help with the cost of raising children. Parenting Payment Partnered is an income support payment for partnered parents with a youngest child under six years of age. Parenting Payment Single is an income support payment for single parents with a child under eight years of age. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system.
Pension Concession Card	The Pension Concession Card is automatically issued to pensioners and eligible allowance recipients to provide access to health concessions, including cheaper pharmaceutical medicines.
Youth Allowance (other)	Youth Allowance (other) is the primary income support payment for young people aged 16–21 years who are seeking or preparing for paid employment. Some 15 year olds may also receive assistance. To qualify for Youth Allowance (other) a person must be unemployed, aged under 22, looking for work or combining part-time study with job search, or undertaking any other approved activity, or temporarily incapacitated for work or study. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system.
Youth Allowance (student and apprentice)	Youth Allowance (student) is a means-tested payment for full-time students or apprentices. Data includes recipients who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system.

Recorded criminal incidents data

Indicator	Description
Domestic violence related assault	
Breach Apprehended Violence Order	A total count of incidents recorded by police in relation to this criminal offence over a 12-month period (2019).
Breach bail conditions	

Disclaimer on the use of the Foundation's data

The Law and Justice Foundation of NSW (the Foundation) is committed to providing the legal assistance sector, the broader justice system and the public with open and transparent access to relevant data to assist with policy development and the effective planning and delivery of services. The Foundation makes every attempt to ensure accuracy, currency and reliability of data contained in its online data resources. The data used in the Foundation's dashboards has been produced and processed from data sources and client information systems believed to be reliable, accurate and complete at the point of data extraction. However, due to the dynamic and sometimes developmental nature of data collection and measurement in the justice sector, changes in circumstances after time of publication may impact the quality of this information.

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