

D. Priority client groups

Priority client groups are groups of people who experience higher levels of legal need or face systemic, social, or personal barriers to accessing justice. They are therefore prioritised for publicly funded legal assistance. These groups, which are described in Figure D1, are more likely to experience compounding disadvantage or face serious consequences if legal problems are not addressed early. Prioritisation supports targeted service delivery and effective use of limited legal assistance resources.

Figure D1
National priority client groups

Priority group	Priority reason
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	prioritised due to systemic disadvantage, over-representation in the justice system, and the need for culturally safe legal services
Children and young people (up to 24 years)	prioritised because of vulnerability, limited legal capacity, and reliance on adult and institutional systems
LGBTIQA+ people	prioritised where discrimination, safety concerns, or systemic barriers affect access to justice
Older people (over 65, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over 50)	prioritised due to increased vulnerability, age-related disadvantage, and risk of exploitation or harm
People affected by natural disasters	Prioritised due to vulnerability and disadvantage arising from natural disasters that impair an individual's capacity to access or resolve legal problems.
People experiencing, or at risk of, family violence	prioritised due to the high risk of physical, emotional, and financial harm and the need for timely legal intervention
People experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness	prioritised because legal problems often directly contribute to housing instability and social exclusion
People in custody and/or prisoners	prioritised due to the immediate impact of legal outcomes on liberty, safety, and rights
People residing in outer regional and remote areas	prioritised where geographic isolation limits access to legal services and support
People who are culturally and linguistically diverse	prioritised where language, cultural, or migration-related barriers affect access to justice
People with a disability or mental illness	prioritised due to barriers to understanding, communication, and effective participation in legal processes
People with low education levels	prioritised where limited literacy or education affects the ability to understand rights, obligations, and legal processes
Refugees and migrants	prioritised due to migration-related legal complexity, language barriers, and vulnerability to exploitation
Single parents	prioritised due to increased financial pressure, caring responsibilities, and heightened exposure to legal vulnerability

