



When every dollar counts, so does financial counselling – we can't afford to wait

Financial counsellors have launched their federal election campaign - *When every dollar counts, so does financial counselling – we can't afford to wait.*

Financial Counselling Australia (FCA), along with all the state financial counselling associations, is calling for a commitment from all sides of politics to provide increased and more sustainable funding, particularly for face-to-face financial counselling services.

There are hundreds of agencies across Australia employing financial counsellors providing vital face-to-face services. Many have long wait lists and cannot currently meet the growing demand for their services.

Data from the National Debt Helpline (NDH) shows 169,000 people reached out via phone or online in 2024 – a 12% increase from the year before.

Despite face-to-face financial counselling services struggling to meet the growing demand, long term funding has not been significantly increased since before the pandemic.

Whilst the Federal government has been responsive to many of the needs of our sector, with increases in funding to the National Debt Helpline, Financial Counselling Australia, disaster response and support for the industry funding model – our sector, as a whole, needs more funding for face-to-face services.

Financial counsellors are calling for a commitment to adequate and stable funding for the sector which includes:

1. Increased and better targeted funding for face-to-face financial counselling services
2. Improved financial sustainability in the sector; make the funding system fairer and more flexible through continued commitment to implementing and resourcing the National Not-For-Profit Sector Development Blueprint
3. Improved financial counselling services to First Nations communities through resourcing remote areas and quarantined funds for First Nations people and communities
4. Urgently addressing need for more community crisis and recovery response services (including disaster response services, domestic, family and sexual violence and gambling services)
5. Increased funding for services providing specialist small business financial counselling



6. Continuing commitment to the Financial Counselling Industry Fund by continuing the strong support for the funding model, including fostering broader industry participation.

Financial counselling plays a key role in preventing people in financial hardship from reaching crises like homelessness or bankruptcy. Financial counsellors provide free, independent, and confidential information, advice, and advocacy to people experiencing financial hardship.

[This is a link](#) to a campaign video.

[This is a link](#) to a fact sheet.

Quotes

Dr Dominique Meyrick, co-CEO of Financial Counselling Australia (FCA)

“The work our sector does has always been important, but rising cost-of living pressures mean our sector is vital. We need increased and more sustainable funding, now more than ever. We can’t afford to wait.”

Jon O’Mally, CEO of Financial Counsellors Association of Queensland

“As many Australians grapple with an array of economic challenges, urgent action is needed to alleviate the financial strain impacting households and small businesses across the country. Immediate action is required by increasing direct funding into face-to-face financial counselling services to support Australians' financial well-being and strengthen the resilience of households and businesses.”

Melanie Hopkinson, CEO of Financial Counselling Association of Western Australia

“Financial stress and mental health challenges go hand in hand. Strengthening place based financial counselling services will build stronger, healthier communities. The Federal



Government must invest in long-term, sustainable funding so people in financial hardship can access local, in-person support”.

Jo Parker, Executive Officer, Financial Counselling Association of NSW

“Increased and sustainable funding from the Federal Government is urgently required now so that people struggling with their finances can see a financial counsellor.”

Zyl Hovenga-Wauchope, CEO Financial Counselling Victoria

“In a cost-of-living crisis seeing a financial counsellor can mean the difference between hardship and hope for everyday Australians. Now more than ever the federal government should step up and provide sustainable funding for place-based financial counselling services.”

Kate Fox, CEO South Australian Financial Counsellors Association (NT too)

“Increased and sustainable funding from the Federal Government across the sector would create more targeted financial counselling services better prepared to help those impacted by disasters and reduce hardship in the community.”

Danielle Slade, President of Financial Counsellors Association of Tasmania

"Financial stress in Tasmania is deepened by isolation, high living costs, and economic challenges. Increased, sustainable funding for face-to-face financial counselling is essential to help Tasmanians navigate hardships, reduce mental health strain, and rebuild their financial futures. Long-term funding is needed to ensure communities can face ongoing challenges and provide vital support now and in the future."

For comment, please contact media@financialcounsellingaustralia.org.au.



Or contact the state associations:

Jon O'Mally, CEO of Financial Counsellors Association of Queensland on 0429 061 269

Melanie Hopkinson, CEO of Financial Counselling Association of WA on 08 62341483

Jo Parker, Executive Officer, Financial Counselling Association of NSW on 0466 351 400

Zyl Hovenga-Wauchope, CEO Financial Counselling Victoria on 03 9663 2000

Kate Fox, CEO South Australian Financial Counsellors Association 0423 085 432

Danielle Slade, President of Financial Counsellors Association of Tasmania 0410 523 444