

# Media Release

**The Hon Nick Staikos MP**  
Minister for Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Local Government



Friday, 27 June 2025

## MORE SUPPORT FOR RENTAL AND MORTGAGE STRESS

The Allan Labor Government is helping Victorians facing rental and mortgage stress by expanding access to free financial counselling services.

Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos, and Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison, today visited Child and Family Services Ballarat, which received \$900,000 over three years in the recent Financial Counselling Funding Round to expand support to residents in the Central Highlands region.

It's one of 16 providers across Victoria to receive funding under latest round of the \$15 million initiative, which supports Victorians facing housing-related financial challenges due to cost-of-living and other financial pressures.

Child and Family Services Ballarat will use its grant to establish a 'Financial Wellness Hub' to increase access to support services and help Victorians in need to build financial independence.

The hub uses an integrated service approach, with community engagement, a financial counsellor, and financial capability workers on hand to provide guidance and support.

Child and Family Services Ballarat received a further \$372,982 from 2023–24 through the Rental Stress Support Package to deliver intensive case management to vulnerable renters.

The government has invested more than \$45 million over the past three years to support community agencies across Victoria to deliver general and specialist family violence financial counselling to those in need.

The Financial Counselling Program is delivered through Consumer Affairs Victoria and supported more than 23,000 Victorians in 2023 –24, including more than 4,100 people affected by family violence.

Victorians can find their closest financial counselling provider by contacting the National Debt Helpline at [ndh.org.au](https://ndh.org.au) or calling 1800 007 007.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos

*"We know families are doing it tough – that's why we are providing more support to Victorians under pressure, to help get their finances back on track."*

*"This investment will ensure organisations can continue providing free and tailored help to thousands of Victorians every year."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

*"Funding for financial counselling at CAFS will have real benefits supporting people experiencing financial difficulties by providing professional support when they need it most."*

### Quote attributable to Child and Family Services CEO Wendy Sturgess

*"This funding marks a significant step forward for our community. The Financial Wellness Hub will help Child and Family Services reach more people in financial stress, offering vital support to stay housed, informed, and empowered."*

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