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More legal support available for people experiencing family violence across the Mallee

More legal services and support is now available for people who live in the Mallee and are experiencing family violence.

Mallee Family Care (MFC) is thrilled to announce that Solicitor Tessa Amatya has joined the team at its Community Legal Centre.

Tessa officially started in her role at the end of May, relocating to Mildura from South East Melbourne. She will work as part of MFC's Community Legal Centre team, providing free and confidential legal support to people living in northwest Victoria and southwest New South Wales.

Tessa joined the team as a participant in Women's Legal Service Victoria's new Emerging Lawyers Program. This training and jobs initiative aims to set up lawyers for a successful legal career while improving access to family violence and law support across Victoria.

Mallee Family Care is one of 14 Community Legal Centres that Women's Legal is working in partnership with across the state to deliver this program.

CEO Teresa Jayet said having more legal expertise available locally was vitally important.

"Sadly, our region has one of the highest rates of domestic violence incident reports in the State, so it is no surprise that demand for support services is incredibly high too," Ms Jayet said.

"Legal support is so important to people's recovery from family violence. And this program means more lawyers can be there when a person's relationship breaks down or family violence occurs," she said.

The MFC Community Legal Centre provides free support, which can help victims to secure safe housing, make agreements to safely look after children, split up assets or bank accounts, organise a new visa, or make sure the bills are paid fairly.

Women's Legal Service Victoria CEO Claudia Fatone said Tessa, along with other successful Emerging Lawyers program participants would train together as a group across the 18-month program.

"Everyone deserves to live free from violence, no matter their income or where they live. But right now, too many women experiencing family violence in Victoria are missing out on vital legal support and access to safe, secure housing, both necessary to assist their recovery.



“We’re working so that communities and people who are most in need can get what they need to stay safe, secure housing and support to move on from family violence,” Ms Fatone said.

To find out more about the free and confidential legal services provided by the MFC Community Legal Centre, call 1800 243 002 or visit mfclegalcentre.com.au

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