

GUIDELINES FOR TAKING ON A CASE

Policy

WLSV provides ongoing legal representation in cases in the areas of relationship breakdown and violence against women and their children, where:

- cases have systemic impact
- highly disadvantaged clients would otherwise be excluded from accessing the justice system.

Procedure

An assessment is made using the matrix below.

Cases taken on by WLSV should be within the very high or high categories.

IMPACT	3	HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH
	2	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH
	1	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM
		1	2	3
BARRIERS				

Barriers

When assessing what barriers a client faces, WLSV will consider the following (non-exhaustive) list:

- The entrenched nature of the disadvantage experienced by the women
- Disability or health issues experienced by a women or dependent child/ren
- Racial or cultural background resulting in disadvantage
- Personal background and capacity impacting on women's ability to engage with the legal system
- Social exclusion; women who are marginalised or lack social support
- Geographic disadvantage
- Women receiving low or no income, who are entitled to department of housing accommodation, and Centrelink benefit as their sole source of income
- No access to legal assistance such as Victoria Legal Aid

Impact

Any matter that is determined to have potential systemic impact is a '3' on the impact axis of the matrix. This will mean the case will receive a 'high' or 'very high' priority category.

When assessing impact, WLSV will consider the following (non-exhaustive) list:

Systemic impact

- The case has potential to have broader impact for Victorian women who suffer a similar injustice
- The case has potential to change law, policy or practice or community attitude
- The case highlights an omission in the current law, a pattern of adverse outcomes for women or a legal process that disadvantages women

Individual impact

- WLSV's involvement in the matter will make a significant difference to the outcome or impact for the women and her child/ren
- WLSV's involvement will give the women confidence to break the cycle of violence
- There is injustice, unfairness or discrimination experienced by the women