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# Annual Report

wacoss
wa council of social service

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## News Hub

- Our community is stronger when we walk gently with one another
- Statement on the potential terrorist attack at the Boorloo Invasion Day Rally
- Disinformation, extremism and democratic strain take centre stage at Emerging Issues forum
- One year of No Place for Poverty
- Planning for Future Services
- International Women's Day: Confronting inequity and championing change
- Real stories, real struggle: WA families turn to emergency relief to survive cost-of-living pressures
- Business Contingency Planning for the Fuel Supply Crisis – Community Service Organisation
- Premier activates natural disaster recovery fund
- Sector-wide survey to measure impacts of global fuel crisis on community services
- State Govt commits $3.8m to food services
- $2m food relief grant pool opens

## Media Statements

- Community services sector ground zero for gender pay gap
- State Budget Submission: Investing in people, building our future
- Cost of survival: WA families facing entrenched financial hardship
- WACOSS calls for swift Government action as prices surge
- WA government delivers huge win for renters
- Cost of living relief misses the mark
- State minimum wage decision lags national increase

## Events and Webinars

- State Budget Submission Launch
- Gender Equity in the WA Community Service Sector Webinar
- Emerging Issues Forum 2025
- Transforming Legal Assistance Services Webinar
- Developing a Community of Practice Webinar
- New Year Sector Breakfast 2026
- Reducing Gambling and Gaming Harm in WA: Insights, Impacts & Opportunities for Action
- Regional and Metro Services Consultation: Impacts of the Middle East Conflict on WA Communities & Services
- Towards Equity in Patient Travel
- Emerging Issues Forum: Shared Belonging, Democratic Resilience and Australia's Path Forward
- WA Digital Inclusion Expo 2026
- 2026-27 State Budget Briefing Webinar
- State Budget Submission Consultations

**WACOSS is the peak body for the community services sector and works to create an inclusive, just and equitable society. We are committed to genuine engagement, authentic collaboration, and building trusted relationships with members, communities and governments.**

We represent more than 240 community service organisations and 500 organisations involved in the provision of community services to the people of Western Australia.


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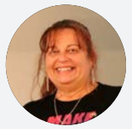
## CEO and President's Report



As we reflect on the 2025-26 financial year, we are reminded once again of the strength, compassion and resilience that exists across Western Australia's community services sector and the people we serve.

This was another tough year for many Western Australians, with rising living costs and the fuel crisis pushing already stretched households even further. For too many, it was no longer a cost-of-living crisis, but a cost-of-survival crisis. WACOSS worked alongside our members and communities to highlight these pressures and advocate for practical solutions that put people first.

Over the past year, WACOSS strengthened collaboration across the community services sector, advancing social and economic justice, inclusion and community-led solutions. Our achievements are only possible because of the commitment of our members and partners to work collectively towards a fair, just and inclusive Western Australia.

WACOSS continued to be a strong and trusted voice for our sector, using advocacy, research and media to highlight the pressures facing Western Australians and shift the conversation from the cost of living to the cost of survival.

WACOSS has also continued to play an active role in campaigns and collective efforts that are making a real difference, including Make Renting Fair, No Place for Poverty, End Child Poverty, Social Reinvestment WA, and End Child and Youth Homelessness coatlition. These campaigns demonstrate the strength of sustained, values-led advocacy and the power of working alongside members, people with lived experience, Aboriginal leaders and organisations, community partners and allies across the State.

Our deepest thanks go to our members, people with lived experience and expertise, our staff and Board, the extraordinary brains trust behind WACOSS. Your wisdom, experience, insights, creativity and passion bring enormous value to our work and strengthen everything we do. We simply could not do this work without you. Together, you keep us grounded in community, ambitious for change and united in our vision for a fairer, more inclusive Western Australia.

As we look ahead, we remain optimistic. While challenges continue, so too does the determination, innovation and generosity of our members and communities. Together, we will continue to advocate for the changes needed to reduce inequality, strengthen communities and build a Western Australia where everyone can thrive.

**Louise Giolitto**
Chief Executive Officer

**Mark Glasson**
President

## Campaigns We Support

SOCIAL REINVESTMENT WESTERN AUSTRALIA

NO PLACE FOR POVERTY

END Child Poverty

MAKE RENTING FAIR

WESTERN AUSTRALIA FOR A HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

anti-poverty week act on poverty

EVERY BODY'S HOME

End Child and Youth Homelessness

#Raise The Age

RAISE THE RATE FOR GOOD

Alliance for Gambling Reform

## Advocacy Wins

The work we do is ongoing and often takes years to achieve. It requires sustained effort by dedicated individuals and organisations, to overcome the systemic barriers that stop access to basic human rights and services. We are stronger together, and collaborative policy development and advocacy are at the heart of what we do.

### Targeted Cost-of-Living Relief

We were pleased to see a number of State Government initiatives that provide more targeted support to people experiencing financial hardship and vulnerability, including:

- The introduction of the WA Foster and Grand Carer Gold Card
- Increased payments for foster and family carers
- A one-year extension of the WA Rent Relief Program
- A commitment to fund the Energy Ahead program for a further three years
- A 10 per cent increase to the Energy Assistance Payment for concession card holders
- Expanded public transport services, including the return of the Australind train service and increased regional bus services
- Continued investment in social and affordable housing and homelessness services

### Tenancy Reform - Make Renting Fair

- In May 2026 the WA Government announced it would abolish no-grounds evictions
- It also committed to introducing minimum standards for rental properties

### Food Relief and Emergency Support

- We achieved a $3.8 million funding injection comprising $1.5 million for leading food relief services and $2.3 million for a grants program for smaller groups and organisations, administered by WACOSS

### Sustainable Services

- We have continued to advocate strongly for a fairer indexation formula, uplifts in funding to contracts which are severely underfunded and support for organisations in addressing the additional costs of the fuel crisis
- In the 2026-27 State Budget, we welcomed a new uplift in funding for Youth At Risk services as well as ongoing uplifts for Child Sexual Abuse Therapeutic Services, Family and Domestic Violence, Financial Counselling, Homelessness and Mental Health services

## Submissions

- Joint submission with FACWA and Financial Wellbeing Collective to the Review of the Water Services Code of Conduct (Family Violence) 2020
- Stronger Together Implementation Group on the development of the Stronger Together Case Study Database Project
- Submission to ACOSS on mutual obligations for income support recipients
- Submission on the Draft Implementation Plan for the Community Disaster Resilience Strategy
- Submission to the National Office for Child Safety on the Draft Evaluation Framework for the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Submission to the Standing Committee on Legislation Inquiry into the Criminal Code Amendment (Post and Boast) Bill 2025
- Submission on the Draft Guidelines on Community Benefits for Renewable Energy Projects
- Submission to the State Emergency Management Preparedness Procedure 3.11 – Prescribe, Review and Revoke a Hazard
- COSS Network submission to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee Inquiry into Australia's Youth Justice and Incarceration System
- Submission to the Review and Reform of Western Australian Gambling Laws
- Submission to the Preventative Health Promotion and Mental Health and Wellbeing Roundtables
- Feedback on the Stronger Together Implementation Group Third Action Plan
- Submission to the Economic Regulation Authority on the Framework and Approach for Western Power's AA6 Access Arrangement
- Submission to the Office of Multicultural Interests on the development of a Multicultural Act for Western Australia
- Endorsement and submission to Minister Buti supporting the ACOSS-led review of the National Construction Code
- Joint submission, led by Shelter WA, to the Land Rent Scheme Inquiry
- State Wage Case submission, advocating for a 6.5 per cent increase to the State Minimum Wage