

## Overview

### What is this report?

In 2003, the *Justice Too Far Away Report*, (Renouf) found out that people in the Barkly did not have the legal help they needed. This new report *Access to Justice in the Barkly (2019)* shows what is happening now, 16 years later. We listened to the stories of people in Tennant Creek, Elliott, Ali Curung, Ampilatwatja, Arlparra, Canteen Creek, Epenarra and Alpurrurulam. (Fact sheet #2)

This report talks about the legal needs and problems and what will make justice work better in the Barkly Region by changing how services are set up; doing more legal education; improving how services help people; and building up partnerships between law, health and other services.

### Who did we talk to?

6500 people live  
in the Barkly Shire.

We talked to 84 - all Aboriginal people.



### What legal problems do people have in the Barkly?

#### Housing Problems

**This is the number one problem for everyone.**

**67.9%** of all people have legal problems with this.

#### Discrimination

For men, this is the second biggest problem. **44.2%** face this.

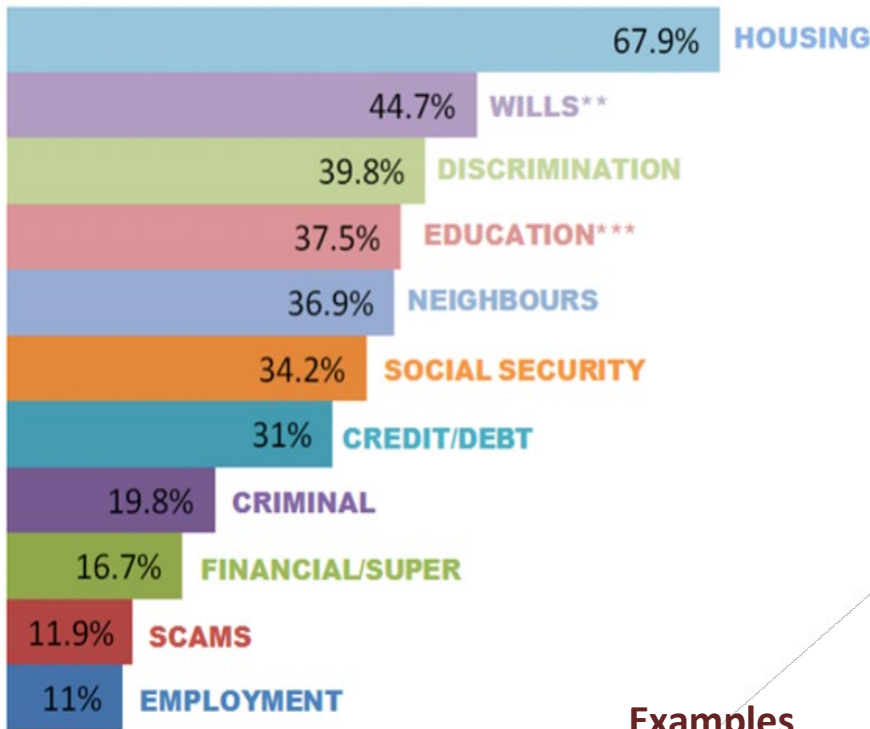
#### Credit/debt (money)

For women, this is the second biggest problem. (**41.5%**)

**Most people with legal problems in the  
Barkly don't get help!**

**Overview**

**All the legal problems people told us about:**



**Examples**

<p><b>Housing Problems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People can't get landlord to fix Air-conditioner, water leaks, unsafe kitchens, and bathrooms</li> <li>• Overcrowding – too many in one house.</li> <li>• It is hard to get on the housing waitlist</li> <li>• People lose their house if someone passes</li> <li>• No help moving to a new house</li> <li>• Aboriginal people are stereotyped and treated badly as tenants</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discrimination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People use the wrong name for traditional owners</li> <li>• Shops charge Aboriginal people more than white people</li> <li>• Police racism in watch house</li> <li>• Police, corrections, other services treat people unfairly, say racist comments.</li> <li>• Not using interpreters</li> <li>• No culturally 'right' programs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut off from benefits</li> <li>• Debt from being overpaid</li> <li>• Long wait time to talk to Centrelink</li> <li>• No computer access</li> <li>• No emergency money due to debt</li> <li>• Debts from partner working</li> </ul>	<p><b>Welfare &amp; family violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children &amp; grandchildren taken out of the home;</li> <li>• Kids moved away &amp; family can't visit often.</li> <li>• Domestic violence is a major issue affecting families.</li> <li>• Family violence threats about children</li> </ul>

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### How can legal and other services help?



There are 4 legal services with very few staff. They can't help people with ALL legal problems or visit all communities.

Health Justice Partnerships (HJPs) work well in other places. Legal and health services working together to get people the help they need with the law. Some Barkly health services already work to make justice better. They help people and speak up about big problems that cause legal problems like housing, mental health, drugs and alcohol & more.



Organisations like Saltbush, Relationships Australia, CatholicCare and BRADAAG and others are good places to work with legal services to help people learn about their rights.

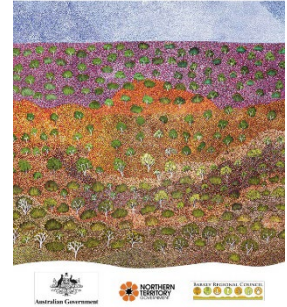
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### Government policies

These NT policies and programs can help make justice better if they listen to the ideas in this report.

#### Barkly Regional Deal (BRD)

- \$78.4 million over 10 years
- Building a youth justice facility in Tennant Creek
- Upgrading of the Tennant Creek watch-house
- Installation of video-conferencing in remote communities



#### Local Authority Groups (LAG)

<https://www.barkly.nt.gov.au/communities>

- Represent local communities and towns in the Barkly region
- Talk with Council about new and upcoming problems in their communities
- Work on local service delivery issues.
- Meet every month



#### Everyone Together 2019-2029

[Everyone together strategy](#)

- Impacts on legal need, service provision and access to justice
- Use of Local Decision-Making (LDM) Framework, which commits government to Aboriginal led community-based decision making

#### Aboriginal Justice Agreement (AJA) (2019)

[AJA NT government](#)

- Covers criminal law, legal need and access to justice issues
- Aims to involve and support Aboriginal leaders like the Law and Justice Groups showing positive cultural values and helping people stop crime
- Wants better service provision across the whole legal system
- Community-based alternatives (remote too!)
- More diversion for young people
- Giving more people bail and helping them follow bail rules
- Changing laws about sentencing (punishment)
- Making sure more people can and do complain about police or other kinds of bad treatment