

SOUTHEAST

Bid to keep line open for victims

LEGAL SERVICE UNDER THREAT

Sarah Orr

STAFF behind a frontline service used by hundreds of domestic violence victims have turned to crowdfunding in a desperate bid to keep the phone line in operation.

The Women's Legal Service launched its upgraded free family law and domestic violence helpline in January, but co-ordinator Rosslyn Monro said they may be forced to shut down when government funding is exhausted in July. She said she feared the closure would leave many vulnerable families in the lurch.

"They've fallen through the cracks, they're in dangerous situations, can't afford private lawyers and don't qualify for Legal Aid," she said. "Access to legal advice is vital to their safety."

The charity estimated the helpline had increased their rate of assistance by 700 per cent, so its termination would be devastating.

Domestic violence survivor Rachel said initiatives like WLSQ gave victims hope in distressing times.

"Women like me, going through domestic violence, are so isolated from information," she said. "Having access to Women's Legal Service provides them with pathways that are completely priceless, giving them knowledge to empower them."

WLSQ aims to raise \$100,000 to keep the helpline going for an extra 12 months.

Support the campaign at
[mycause.com.au/page/](http://mycause.com.au/page/120968/keep-the-line-open-help-womens-legal-service)
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