



## **2006 National Survey of Unmet Legal Needs and Access to Services**

### **Summary Results for Bay of Plenty**

**Prepared**

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**By**

**ignite**research

## Key Highlights for Bay of Plenty

In comparison with national results, the following differences are noted for people in the Bay of Plenty:<sup>1</sup>

1. In **Tauranga** people have similar types of problems to the national average, but are more likely to have solved their problem on their own without the help of anyone.
2. Consequently, fewer sources of advice are accessed. However, when help or advice is sought out, doctors or other health professionals are often used.
3. Though fewer sources are used and people tend to solve problems on their own, they are more likely to suffer some form of negative impact; loss of income, relationship breakdown and moving home being higher than average.
4. Personal visits are more preferred.
5. People in **Whakatane** appear more likely to have money or debt problems (very serious), driven a lot by low income/wages and inability to meet debt repayments.
6. They typically just want information to try to sort the problem out themselves, though they make use of a range of service providers to do this.
7. Stress, loss of confidence and relationship breakdowns are key impacts for people with problems.
8. **Rural people in Bay of Plenty** appear to have more welfare benefit problems (serious in nature), caused mainly by incorrect or misleading information.
9. They are more likely to not be bothered seeking help or they simply give up trying to solve the problem.
10. Although a higher proportion of people do, in fact, seek help, relatively few sources are accessed (just over one on average).
11. Rural people seeking help are more likely want someone to help them deal with the problem.
12. Telephone is more likely to be the preferred method of access to help.
13. Lower than average awareness and knowledge of community law centres.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that some base sizes are relatively small and so caution should be exercised when interpreting the results for that area. \*denotes small base sizes less than 30 and \*\* denotes very small base sizes less than 10.

**Table: Prevalence of Problems Aggregated for Bay of Plenty and New Zealand**

<b>Nature of Problem or Dispute</b>	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Consumer related	10	7	9	9	<b>10</b>
Money or debt	10	27	4	9	<b>8</b>
Welfare benefits	6	6	12	8	<b>7</b>
Housing or land	5	4	6	5	<b>6</b>
Employment	4	3	6	5	<b>5</b>
Family/whanau or relationship breakdown	6	-	6	6	<b>5</b>
Immigration	1	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Other	6	2	11	8	<b>6</b>
Nett have a problem	27	42	33	31	<b>29</b>
Nett do not have a problem	73	58	67	69	<b>71</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>7,200</b>

**Table: % Rating Problem as Most Serious**

<b>Problem type</b>	<b>Main issues</b>	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Consumer related	Faulty or defective goods and services, difficulties getting refunds or replacements, problems with phone or power companies, banks and insurance companies	20	3	16	17	<b>18</b>
Money or debt	Not meeting day to day living needs, and not being able to make credit card or hire purchase payments	16	64	6	17	<b>17</b>
Housing or land	Disputes with neighbours, disputes with councils and local authorities and tenant disputes with landlords	12	9	15	13	<b>11</b>
Welfare benefit	Difficulties trying to obtain entitlements and difficulties finding out what benefits, grants, loans or superannuation entitled to	9	-	27	15	<b>12</b>
Employment	Unfavourable changes to terms and conditions of employment, harassment at work, and discrimination	7	-	15	9	<b>12</b>
Family/ relationship	Disputes over division of money or property with a former partner, difficulties with custody and access to children, domestic violence, difficulties obtaining child support	17	19	7	13	<b>15</b>
Immigration	Difficulties obtaining NZ residency or citizenship and sponsoring a partner or other family members	1	-	-	1	<b>2</b>
Other	Traffic/driving offences and being the victim of a crime	17	4	14	14	<b>14</b>
<b>Base</b>		<b>64</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>2069</b>

**Table: Main Cause for Most Serious Problem to Happen in First Place**

	Tauranga %	Whakatane %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Receiving incorrect information/being mislead/false advertising	7	3	34	17	9
Other (non income) job related such as bullying, overwork etc	3	-	4	3	9
Faulty goods and appliances	8	-	10	8	8
Relationship break up, e.g. separation or divorce	13	6	2	8	6
Being the victim of a crime, e.g. theft, burglary, assault	12	4	-	7	5
Low income/wages	2	35	3	6	5
Taking on too much debt	7	-	3	5	4
Unable to meet (re)payments	3	21	-	4	4
Illness or poor health	3	-	-	1	4
Being overcharged for a good or service	4	-	4	4	3
Difficulties with a government agency or department <sup>2</sup>	-	-	9	3	3
Loss of/breakdown in communication	6	13	9	8	3
Committed a traffic or driving offence	2	-	4	2	3
Problems with neighbours	4	-	2	3	3
Loss or change of job	5	8	-	3	3
Conflicts/disputes with partners, ex-partners, children or other family	3	6	-	2	3
Alcohol or drugs	7	-	-	3	2
Being taken advantage of	-	-	2	1	2
Difficulties with billing and poor/untimely service	-	-	-	-	2
A reduction in benefit/change in benefit status	3	-	1	2	2
Not understanding the implications of credit contracts	3	-	-	2	2
Death of a family member	-	-	6	2	2
Suffered an injury or accident	-	-	-	-	2
Irregular income	-	-	-	-	2
Difficulties with council/planning subdivisions	-	-	4	2	1
Domestic violence	1	-	-	1	1
<b>Base: All people with most serious problem</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>14*</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>2069</b>

<sup>2</sup> This covers a broad range of agencies and departments, including, but not limited to, IRD, WINZ, ACC and the Immigration Service.

**Table: How Problem was Resolved**

	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Solved the problem on own without the help of anyone	42	32	17	29	<b>28</b>
Agreement was reached with the other party	19	68	31	28	<b>24</b>
Solved the problem with the help of someone (other than mediator or family and friends)	13	-	21	16	<b>10</b>
The problem sorted itself out	3	-	-	1	<b>10</b>
After court or tribunal action	5	-	-	2	<b>9</b>
Solved the problem with the help of family and friends	8	-	6	7	<b>7</b>
Gave up trying to resolve the problem	-	-	22	11	<b>6</b>
Through mediation	8	-	4	5	<b>4</b>
Did nothing to resolve the problem	-	-	-	-	<b>2</b>
<b>Base: Most serious problem over</b>	<b>26*</b>	<b>4**</b>	<b>29*</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>1016</b>

**Table: Current Problem Position**

	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Trying to solve it on own without help of anyone else	19	49	21	24	<b>28</b>
Trying to solve it with help of family and friends	23	25	23	23	<b>16</b>
Trying to solve it with the help of someone (other than mediator or family and friends)	14	26	22	18	<b>15</b>
Trying to reach agreement with the other party without court or tribunal action	13	-	5	9	<b>10</b>
Not trying to do anything because don't know what to do	8	-	5	6	<b>9</b>
Not trying to do anything because think it will resolve itself	3	-	17	6	<b>7</b>
Court or tribunal action is occurring	-	-	2	-	<b>5</b>
Court or tribunal action is about to occur	20	-	-	12	<b>5</b>
In the process of going though mediation	-	-	5	1	<b>4</b>
<b>Base: Most serious problem still ongoing</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>9**</b>	<b>19*</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1052</b>

**Table: % Intend to or Have Sought Help**

	Tauranga %	Whakatane %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Yes	56	22	63	55	44
Maybe	4	34	-	6	4
No	40	44	37	39	52
<b>Base: Have problem</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>14*</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>2069</b>

**Table: % Type of Help Wanted**

Type of help wanted	Tauranga %	Whakatane %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Information only, so they can sort problem out themselves	31	80	39	39	34
Information <u>and</u> basic support (e.g. help with filling in forms, help with contacting third parties to seek information)	37	15	41	37	35
Someone to help them deal with the problem (e.g. talking to the other side)	35	27	44	38	35
Someone to sort out problem for them	23	-	2	13	11
Someone to appear on their behalf and/or represent them before a court or tribunal	3	8	17	9	18
<b>Base: Seeking help</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8**</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>981</b>

**Table: Services Accessed for Advice and Help**

Service Provider	Tauranga %	Whakatane %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Leaflet, booklet or other publication	2	15	-	3	10
Internet site	7	52	2	9	13
Local council of other public authority	12	37	1	10	12
Community law centre	-	15	3	3	11
Citizens Advice Bureau	14	15	6	11	16
Other local social services and advocacy organisation	-	37	9	7	13
Private lawyer	7	-	24	13	22
Lawyer doing pro bono work	-	-	-	1	5
Legal aid lawyer	-	-	3	1	10
Insurance company	-	-	3	1	3
Government agency or department	2	49	20	14	20 <sup>3</sup>
Police	9	8	5	7	9
Doctor or other health professional	40	-	-	20	23
Mediation or reconciliation service	2	-	1	2	7
Member of parliament	2	-	2	1	6
Ombudsman	-	-	-	-	2
Friends of other family members	28	80	18	29	34
Trade Union	2	-	15	7	3
Court desk	-	-	1	-	3
Minister of religion	3	-	-	2	3
Māori organisation	-	37	10	8	4
Average number of sources used	1.3	3.4	1.2	1.5	2.5
<b>Base: Seek help</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8**</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>981</b>

**Table: Preferred Methods of Access (All people)**

	Tauranga %	Whakatane %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Personal visit	47	43	43	45	42
Telephone	33	20	42	35	36
Through a web site	6	9	-	4	7
By letter	4	16	4	5	3
By email	2	-	3	2	4
Some other way	1	-	3	2	2
Don't know/it depends	6	12	5	6	5
<b>Base</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>7,200</b>

<sup>3</sup> Note: Some people are likely to have provided this response when they have received legal aid.

**Table: Main Reasons Provided for Not Seeking Help**

	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Dealt with it myself	19	57	18	23	33
The problem was sorted before got around to seeking help	5	-	4	4	13
Thought the problem would resolve itself	27	-	5	16	11
Did not think it was serious or important enough	11	-	6	8	9
Did not think it would make much difference	9	-	7	7	8
Couldn't be bothered	8	-	36	17	5
Didn't know what to do or where to go	-	-	-	-	4
Wanted to keep it in the family/whanau	5	-	-	3	4
Thought it would cost too much	4	-	14	7	4
Thought it would be too stressful to sort out	-	7	-	1	3
Tried to seek help or advice but they were unable to help	-	-	-	-	4
Was uncertain of my rights	1	-	-	1	3
Thought it would take too much time	6	-	-	3	2
Didn't trust anyone	-	-	4	2	2
Fear of government or official agencies/intimidated by them	1	-	-	1	2
The help or advice wanted was not available locally	-	-	-	-	2
Too embarrassed/shy	-	21	-	3	2
Confused by the legal process/intimidated by it	-	15	1	2	1
Thought that the other party was right	3	7	-	2	1
Too scared	-	-	-	-	1
Thought it would damage the relationship with the other party	-	-	-	-	1
Other	21	-	12	15	20
<b>Base: All people not seeking help</b>	<b>25*</b>	<b>6**</b>	<b>18*</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1087</b>

**Table: Impacts Reported by People with Problems**

<b>Impacts of problem</b>	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Stress related illness	40	58	42	43	<b>39</b>
Loss of confidence	32	54	30	33	<b>32</b>
Loss of income	38	16	31	33	<b>26</b>
Physical ill health	28	8	23	24	<b>20</b>
Relationship breakdown	24	34	5	18	<b>16</b>
Loss of employment	15	7	16	14	<b>14</b>
Had to move home	22	-	10	15	<b>10</b>
Violence	7	-	6	5	<b>6</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>14*</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>2069</b>

**Table: Awareness and Knowledge of Legal Aid**

	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Aware of legal aid and know where or how to apply for it	39	64	43	42	<b>34</b>
Aware of legal aid but don't know where or how to apply for it	46	28	46	45	<b>51</b>
<b>Total awareness</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>85</b>
Not aware of legal aid	15	8	11	13	<b>15</b>
<b>Base: All people</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>7,200</b>

**Table: Awareness and Knowledge of Community Law Centres**

	<b>Tauranga %</b>	<b>Whakatane %</b>	<b>Rural %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Aware of community law centres and know where they are located	15	11	18	16	<b>23</b>
Aware of community law centres but don't know where they are	26	45	17	24	<b>25</b>
<b>Total awareness</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>48</b>
Not aware of community law centres	59	44	65	60	<b>52</b>
<b>Base: All people</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>7,200</b>