



2006 National Survey of Unmet Legal Needs and Access to Services

Summary Results for Nelson-Malborough

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Key Highlights for Nelson-Malborough

In comparison with national results, the following differences are noted for people in Nelson-Malborough:¹

1. There are fewer serious family relationship breakdown problems in the **Nelson-Malborough region** than nationally.
2. People are generally more likely to give up on problem resolution, though for those who seek help, they are more likely to use community law centres, private lawyers and government agencies (especially people in rural areas).
3. Personal visits are the preferred means of accessing help.
4. Overall, awareness of the community law centre is relatively high, however in Nelson and Blenheim there appears to be some lack of knowledge about where it actually is.
5. Within the region, serious consumer related problems are more of an issue in the **Nelson area**, particularly due to faulty goods and services. People here are more likely to seek help, though they are more likely to just want information so they sort the problem out themselves.
6. In **Blenheim**, people are more likely to experience at least one problem. Welfare benefit and 'other' problems are more common and more serious. Receiving incorrect information and alcohol/drugs have a greater influence on these problems happening.
7. People in Blenheim are less likely to seek any form of help.
8. Loss of income has a greater impact on people with problems. They are also less likely to know where or how to apply for legal aid.
9. In **rural** parts of the region, money or debt problems and housing/land problems are more of an issue. Taking on too much debt and being unable to meet repayment commitments are more significant problem triggers.
10. Although people use a multitude of sources to help them with their problem, often they end up solving it on their own.
11. Those seeking help are more likely to be looking for information and basic support, and someone to help them deal with the problem.
12. Loss of income is a key negative outcome in **Blenheim** and loss of confidence is a key negative outcome for **rural** people.

¹ 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.

Table: Prevalence of Problems Aggregated for Nelson-Malborough and New Zealand

Nature of Problem or Dispute	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Consumer related	19	9	7	12	10
Money or debt	5	7	12	8	8
Welfare benefits	5	15	8	8	7
Housing or land	6	5	12	8	6
Employment	5	7	2	5	5
Family/whanau or relationship breakdown	5	1	3	3	5
Immigration	2	1	-	1	1
Other	4	14	9	8	6
Nett have a problem	30	37	30	32	29
Nett do not have a problem	70	63	70	68	71
Base	164	96	140	400	7,200

Table: % Rating Problem as Most Serious

Problem type	Main issues	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Consumer related	Faulty or defective goods and services, difficulties getting refunds or replacements, problems with phone or power companies, banks and insurance companies	36	15	6	20	18
Money or debt	Not meeting day to day living needs, and not being able to make credit card or hire purchase payments	9	3	35	16	17
Housing or land	Disputes with neighbours, disputes with councils and local authorities and tenant disputes with landlords	15	12	17	15	11
Welfare benefit	Difficulties trying to obtain entitlements and difficulties finding out what benefits, grants, loans or superannuation entitled to	4	26	11	12	12
Employment	Unfavourable changes to terms and conditions of employment, harassment at work, and discrimination	10	19	2	10	12
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	8	-	8	6	15
Immigration	Difficulties obtaining NZ residency or citizenship and sponsoring a partner or other family members	7	3	-	3	2
Other	Traffic/driving offences and being the victim of a crime	11	22	20	17	14
Base		49	36	43	128	2069

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

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Receiving incorrect information/being mislead/false advertising	4	14	-	6	9
Other (non income) job related such as bullying, overwork etc	11	2	5	7	9
Faulty goods and appliances	26	6	4	13	8
Relationship break up, e.g. separation or divorce	4	5	4	4	6
Being the victim of a crime, e.g. theft, burglary, assault	-	4	6	3	5
Low income/wages	4	-	-	1	5
Taking on too much debt	-	-	15	5	4
Unable to meet (re)payments	-	-	17	6	4
Illness or poor health	-	-	6	2	4
Being overcharged for a good or service	5	4	-	3	3
Difficulties with a government agency or department ²	-	2	-	1	3
Loss of/breakdown in communication	-	4	11	5	3
Committed a traffic or driving offence	-	-	2	1	3
Problems with neighbours	6	4	-	4	3
Loss or change of job	4	2	-	2	3
Conflicts/disputes with partners, ex-partners, children or other family	3	-	-	1	3
Alcohol or drugs	-	25	-	7	2
Being taken advantage of	7	-	4	4	2
Difficulties with billing and poor/untimely service	-	-	1	-	2
A reduction in benefit/change in benefit status	-	-	2	1	2
Not understanding the implications of credit contracts	10	-	-	4	2
Death of a family member	4	-	-	2	2
Suffered an injury or accident	-	6	9	5	2
Irregular income	2	-	-	1	2
Difficulties with council/planning subdivisions	3	5	-	3	1
Domestic violence	4	-	5	3	1
Base: All people with most serious problem	49	36	43	128	2069

² 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

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Solved the problem on own without the help of anyone	15	6	46	21	28
Agreement was reached with the other party	23	11	-	13	24
Solved the problem with the help of someone (other than mediator or family and friends)	19	-	5	9	10
The problem sorted itself out	9	11	12	11	10
After court or tribunal action	9	39	8	19	9
Solved the problem with the help of family and friends	10	-	12	7	7
Gave up trying to resolve the problem	16	24	15	18	6
Through mediation	-	8	-	3	4
Did nothing to resolve the problem	-	-	-	-	2
Base: Most serious problem over	28*	23*	21*	72	1016

Table: Current Problem Position

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Trying to solve it on own without help of anyone else	11	7	-	6	28
Trying to solve it with help of family and friends	24	-	-	10	16
Trying to solve it with the help of someone (other than mediator or family and friends)	20	22	52	33	15
Trying to reach agreement with the other party without court or tribunal action	12	6	11	10	10
Not trying to do anything because don't know what to do	19	-	19	15	9
Not trying to do anything because think it will resolve itself	7	42	-	12	7
Court or tribunal action is occurring	-	9	15	8	5
Court or tribunal action is about to occur	-	12	-	3	5
In the process of going through mediation	7	-	-	4	4
Base: Most serious problem still ongoing	21*	13*	22*	56	1052

Table: % Intend to or Have Sought Help

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Yes	56	16	37	39	44
Maybe	9	17	8	10	4
No	35	67	55	51	52
Base: Have problem	49	36	43	128	2069

Table: % Type of Help Wanted

Type of help wanted	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Information only, so they can sort problem out themselves	57	4	37	41	34
Information <u>and</u> basic support (e.g. help with filling in forms, help with contacting third parties to seek information)	17	9	46	24	35
Someone to help them deal with the problem (e.g. talking to the other side)	22	15	59	32	35
Someone to sort out problem for them	-	21	13	8	11
Someone to appear on their behalf and/or represent them before a court or tribunal	20	57	15	26	18
Base: Seeking help	32	12*	19*	63	981

Table: Services Accessed for Advice and Help

Service Provider	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Leaflet, booklet or other publication	6	6	11	8	10
Internet site	2	-	17	6	13
Local council of other public authority	22	15	11	17	12
Community law centre	8	44	31	22	11
Citizens Advice Bureau	9	52	14	19	16
Other local social services and advocacy organisation	17	-	11	12	13
Private lawyer	29	30	30	30	22
Lawyer doing pro bono work	-	-	24	7	5
Legal aid lawyer	-	-	24	7	10
Insurance company	-	-	-	-	3
Government agency or department	20	12	63	31	20 ³
Police	10	-	40	17	9
Doctor or other health professional	15	-	12	11	23
Mediation or reconciliation service	5	-	12	6	7
Member of parliament	-	-	25	8	6
Ombudsman	-	-	12	4	2
Friends of other family members	40	22	24	32	34
Trade Union	-	-	-	-	3
Court desk	5	-	17	8	3
Minister of religion	-	-	-	-	3
Māori organisation	3	-	4	3	4
Average number of sources used	1.9	1.8	3.8	2.5	2.5
Base: Seek help	32	12*	19*	63	981

Table: Preferred Methods of Access (All people)

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Personal visit	49	46	47	48	42
Telephone	36	48	36	39	36
Through a web site	3	3	7	4	7
By letter	-	1	2	1	3
By email	2	-	1	1	4
Some other way	2	-	3	2	2
Don't know/it depends	8	2	4	5	5
Base	164	96	140	400	7,200

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

Table: Main Reasons Provided for Not Seeking Help

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Dealt with it myself	48	26	27	32	33
The problem was sorted before got around to seeking help	-	4	14	7	13
Thought the problem would resolve itself	36	-	28	20	11
Did not think it was serious or important enough	15	-	6	6	9
Did not think it would make much difference	12	7	-	6	8
Couldn't be bothered	10	-	-	3	5
Didn't know what to do or where to go	-	10	21	11	4
Wanted to keep it in the family/whanau	-	-	4	2	4
Thought it would cost too much	-	-	-	-	4
Thought it would be too stressful to sort out	10	4	6	6	3
Tried to seek help or advice but they were unable to help	25	-	-	7	4
Was uncertain of my rights	5	-	-	1	3
Thought it would take too much time	-	-	6	2	2
Didn't trust anyone	-	10	-	4	2
Fear of government or official agencies/intimidated by them	-	-	-	-	2
The help or advice wanted was not available locally	-	-	-	-	2
Too embarrassed/shy	-	-	12	4	2
Confused by the legal process/intimidated by it	-	-	-	-	1
Thought that the other party was right	-	16	-	6	1
Too scared	-	-	12	4	1
Thought it would damage the relationship with the other party	-	-	-	-	1
Other	14	42	22	27	20
Base: All people not seeking help	17*	24*	24*	65	1087

Table: Impacts Reported by People with Problems

Impacts of problem	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Stress related illness	46	35	36	40	39
Loss of confidence	28	27	54	37	32
Loss of income	23	57	18	31	26
Physical ill health	22	29	21	23	20
Relationship breakdown	15	9	24	16	16
Loss of employment	14	19	8	13	14
Had to move home	4	12	5	7	10
Violence	10	3	5	6	6
Base	49	36	43	128	2069

Table: Awareness and Knowledge of Legal Aid

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Aware of legal aid and know where or how to apply for it	32	31	42	35	34
Aware of legal aid but don't know where or how to apply for it	52	60	49	53	51
Total awareness	84	91	91	88	85
Not aware of legal aid	16	9	9	12	15
Base: All people	164	96	140	400	7,200

Table: Awareness and Knowledge of Community Law Centres

	Nelson %	Blenheim %	Rural %	Total region %	NZ %
Aware of community law centres and know where they are located	18	44	45	34	23
Aware of community law centres but don't know where they are	36	42	25	34	25
Total awareness	54	86	70	68	48
Not aware of community law centres	46	14	30	32	52
Base: All people	164	96	140	400	7,200