



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

### **Summary Results for the Wellington Region**

**Prepared**

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## Key Highlights for the Wellington Region

In comparison with national results, the following differences are noted for people in the Wellington Region:<sup>12</sup>

1. **Wellington city** has fewer problems than other areas in the region, whilst the incidence of problems in the Hutt Valley, Porirua and Kapiti reflects the national average.
2. Wellington city is also noted for some other differences:
  - a. Much fewer welfare benefit and housing/land problems
  - b. Those with money/debt and employment problems are more likely to regard them as serious
  - c. Faulty goods and appliances and receiving incorrect information are key problem triggers
  - d. Problems are more likely to be solved by reaching agreement with the other party, or people are trying to solve the problem on their own without any help
  - e. Relatively few sources of help or advice are accessed
  - f. Accessing help electronically (i.e. via internet sites and email) has favour
  - g. Those not seeking help prefer to deal with any problems themselves
  - h. Awareness and knowledge of community law centres is higher than average
3. In the **Hutt Valley**, consumer related problems are more prevalent and more serious, with faulty goods and appliances a key trigger:
  - a. Friends and family are a key factor in problem resolution
  - b. Fewer people seek any type of help, although those that do are more likely to want someone to help them deal with the problem
  - c. Relatively few people reported suffering negative consequences as a result of their problem
4. In **Porirua**, a different picture emerges. Money/debt and housing/land problems are more common and more serious:
  - a. An inability to meet repayments is a greater trigger in Porirua
  - b. Fewer people, than average, seek help; with many wanting to keep it in the family/whanau
  - c. Personal visits are the preferred means to access help
  - d. Greater lack of awareness of legal aid and community law centres
5. **Kapiti** appears to have more family/relationship breakdown problems, and of a serious nature. Welfare benefit problems are also regarded seriously. Illness and poor health is more of a contributing factor.
  - a. Telephone access to help has a greater level of preference
  - b. Those not seeking help prefer to deal with the problem themselves, or they couldn't be bothered, or the help wanted was not available locally
  - c. Nevertheless, those with problems are more likely to suffer negative impacts, especially a health related illness (stress related or physical ill health).

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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.

<sup>2</sup> Note it was not possible to classify 10 respondents to a specific area, so the total for the region (800) is greater than the sum of the individual areas.

**Table: Prevalence of Problems Aggregated for the Wellington Region and New Zealand**

<b>Nature of Problem or Dispute</b>	<b>Hutt %</b>	<b>Wellington %</b>	<b>Porirua %</b>	<b>Kapiti %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Consumer related	12	8	7	8	9	<b>10</b>
Money or debt	9	7	11	6	8	<b>8</b>
Welfare benefits	6	4	5	6	5	<b>7</b>
Housing or land	6	3	11	7	5	<b>6</b>
Employment	3	5	5	5	5	<b>5</b>
Family/whanau or relationship breakdown	2	2	2	10	3	<b>5</b>
Immigration	-	-	1	1	-	<b>1</b>
Other	7	4	8	7	6	<b>6</b>
Nett have a problem	29	23	29	28	26	<b>29</b>
Nett do not have a problem	71	77	71	72	74	<b>71</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>7,200</b>

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

<b>Problem type</b>	<b>Main issues</b>	<b>Hutt %</b>	<b>Wellington %</b>	<b>Porirua %</b>	<b>Kapiti %</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	31	18	14	11	21	<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	20	26	23	-	22	<b>17</b>
Housing or land	Disputes with neighbours, disputes with councils and local authorities and tenant disputes with landlords	13	8	19	12	12	<b>11</b>
Welfare benefit	Difficulties trying to obtain entitlements and difficulties finding out what benefits, grants, loans or superannuation entitled to	7	9	2	19	9	<b>12</b>
Employment	Unfavourable changes to terms and conditions of employment, harassment at work, and discrimination	7	21	12	8	14	<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	8	11	7	34	11	<b>15</b>
Immigration	Difficulties obtaining NZ residency or citizenship and sponsoring a partner or other family members	-	1	1	-	1	<b>2</b>
Other	Traffic/driving offences and being the victim of a crime	14	5	20	16	11	<b>14</b>
<b>Base</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>26*</b>	<b>15*</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>2069</b>

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

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Receiving incorrect information/being misled/false advertising	5	15	1	-	8	9
Other (non income) job related such as bullying, overwork etc	7	10	7	4	8	9
Faulty goods and appliances	17	13	11	-	13	8
Relationship break up, e.g. separation or divorce	1	4	-	6	3	6
Being the victim of a crime, e.g. theft, burglary, assault	2	1	3	9	2	5
Low income/wages	-	8	-	-	3	5
Taking on too much debt	9	3	2	-	5	4
Unable to meet (re)payments	5	3	13	-	5	4
Illness or poor health	-	1	3	12	3	4
Being overcharged for a good or service	3	1	-	-	2	3
Difficulties with a government agency or department <sup>3</sup>	3	3	-	4	3	3
Loss of/breakdown in communication	1	2	4	11	2	3
Committed a traffic or driving offence	-	2	6	-	2	3
Problems with neighbours	7	-	8	7	4	3
Loss or change of job	2	6	-	-	3	3
Conflicts/disputes with partners, ex-partners, children or other family	9	1	3	-	4	3
Alcohol or drugs	2	1	2	-	1	2
Being taken advantage of	-	-	7	9	2	2
Difficulties with billing and poor/untimely service	3	1	3	5	2	2
A reduction in benefit/change in benefit status	-	3	-	-	1	2
Not understanding the implications of credit contracts	-	-	-	11	1	2
Death of a family member	-	3	-	-	1	2
Suffered an injury or accident	3	-	4	-	2	2
Irregular income	-	5	-	-	2	2
Difficulties with council/planning subdivisions	2	-	-	-	1	1
Domestic violence	-	-	4	-	1	1
<b>Base: All people with most serious problem</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>26*</b>	<b>15*</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>2069</b>

<sup>3</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**

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Solved the problem on own without the help of anyone	24	29	16	39	26	28
Agreement was reached with the other party	26	47	48	8	36	24
Solved the problem with the help of someone (other than mediator or family and friends)	5	1	11	-	4	10
The problem sorted itself out	1	6	4	21	6	10
After court or tribunal action	15	4	18	8	10	9
Solved the problem with the help of family and friends	21	7	3	-	11	7
Gave up trying to resolve the problem	3	2	-	25	4	6
Through mediation	3	4	-	-	3	4
Did nothing to resolve the problem	2	-	-	-	1	2
<b>Base: Most serious problem over</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>16*</b>	<b>9**</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>1016</b>

**Table: Current Problem Position**

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Trying to solve it on own without help of anyone else	12	40	19	23	25	28
Trying to solve it with help of family and friends	16	20	18	-	17	16
Trying to solve it with the help of someone (other than mediator or family and friends)	6	19	23	18	14	15
Trying to reach agreement with the other party without court or tribunal action	32	3	18	13	16	10
Not trying to do anything because don't know what to do	13	6	15	23	11	9
Not trying to do anything because think it will resolve itself	12	1	-	-	5	7
Court or tribunal action is occurring	8	5	6	6	8	5
Court or tribunal action is about to occur	-	6	-	4	3	5
In the process of going through mediation	2	-	-	12	1	4
<b>Base: Most serious problem still ongoing</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>11**</b>	<b>6**</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1052</b>

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

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Yes	31	46	33	46	40	44
Maybe	7	4	7	1	4	4
No	62	50	60	53	56	52
<b>Base: Have problem</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>26*</b>	<b>15*</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>2069</b>

**Table: % Type of Help Wanted**

Type of help wanted	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Information only, so they can sort problem out themselves	35	33	48	9	34	34
Information <u>and</u> basic support (e.g. help with filling in forms, help with contacting third parties to seek information)	34	33	9	66	32	35
Someone to help them deal with the problem (e.g. talking to the other side)	51	27	43	62	40	35
Someone to sort out problem for them	2	11	-	12	7	11
Someone to appear on their behalf and/or represent them before a court or tribunal	15	17	-	46	16	18
<b>Base: Seeking help</b>	<b>29*</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>10**</b>	<b>7**</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>981</b>

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

Service Provider	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Leaflet, booklet or other publication	8	2	-	46	7	10
Internet site	8	9	-	37	10	13
Local council of other public authority	25	6	-	29	13	12
Community law centre	13	-	16	41	11	11
Citizens Advice Bureau	25	8	10	41	17	16
Other local social services and advocacy organisation	8	10	-	31	10	13
Private lawyer	7	17	25	37	16	22
Lawyer doing pro bono work	7	-	-	10	3	5
Legal aid lawyer	10	1	-	10	6	10
Insurance company	-	-	-	0	-	3
Government agency or department	8	24	-	41	19	20 <sup>4</sup>
Police	4	2	4	24	5	9
Doctor or other health professional	10	20	22	28	19	23
Mediation or reconciliation service	2	5	-	31	6	7
Member of parliament	2	1	-	4	1	6
Ombudsman	2	1	-	-	1	2
Friends of other family members	39	40	38	47	41	34
Trade Union	-	-	1	-	1	3
Court desk	6	5	-	-	4	3
Minister of religion	-	-	-	-	2	3
Māori organisation	6	-	-	-	4	4
Average number of sources used	1.9	1.5	1.2	4.2	2.0	2.5
<b>Base: Seek help</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>10**</b>	<b>7**</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>981</b>

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

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Personal visit	37	36	49	41	39	42
Telephone	38	35	31	46	36	36
Through a web site	9	12	4	6	10	7
By letter	3	2	1	2	2	3
By email	5	7	4	2	5	4
Some other way	2	2	7	3	2	2
Don't know/it depends	6	7	5	-	6	5
<b>Base</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>7,200</b>

<sup>4</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**

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Dealt with it myself	20	59	15	30	35	33
The problem was sorted before got around to seeking help	13	20	9	9	15	13
Thought the problem would resolve itself	13	15	15	-	13	11
Did not think it was serious or important enough	2	12	6	-	6	9
Did not think it would make much difference	1	3	-	8	2	8
Couldn't be bothered	8	2	2	16	5	5
Didn't know what to do or where to go	4	-	1	8	3	4
Wanted to keep it in the family/whanau	5	-	22	-	5	4
Thought it would cost too much	7	1	5	-	4	4
Thought it would be too stressful to sort out	1	6	-	-	3	3
Tried to seek help or advice but they were unable to help	-	1	8	7	2	4
Was uncertain of my rights	-	-	1	-	-	3
Thought it would take too much time	-	3	-	-	1	2
Didn't trust anyone	-	-	2	-	-	2
Fear of government or official agencies/intimidated by them	-	3	4	-	2	2
The help or advice wanted was not available locally	-	-	-	20	1	2
Too embarrassed/shy	-	-	10	-	1	2
Confused by the legal process/intimidated by it	-	-	-	-	-	1
Thought that the other party was right	-	-	-	-	-	1
Too scared	-	1	-	-	-	1
Thought it would damage the relationship with the other party	-	1	-	-	-	1
Other	31	8	38	29	23	20
<b>Base: All people not seeking help</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16*</b>	<b>8**</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>1087</b>

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

<b>Impacts of problem</b>	<b>Hutt %</b>	<b>Wellington %</b>	<b>Porirua %</b>	<b>Kapiti %</b>	<b>Total region %</b>	<b>NZ %</b>
Stress related illness	21	30	44	74	32	<b>39</b>
Loss of confidence	18	34	31	36	29	<b>32</b>
Loss of income	13	23	11	31	19	<b>26</b>
Physical ill health	10	14	6	27	13	<b>20</b>
Relationship breakdown	9	10	4	2	9	<b>16</b>
Loss of employment	9	9	19	4	10	<b>14</b>
Had to move home	7	6	-	14	7	<b>10</b>
Violence	10	6	9	2	9	<b>6</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>26*</b>	<b>15*</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>2069</b>

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

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Aware of legal aid and know where or how to apply for it	38	34	25	42	35	34
Aware of legal aid but don't know where or how to apply for it	52	54	46	49	52	51
<b>Total awareness</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>85</b>
Not aware of legal aid	10	12	29	9	13	15
<b>Base: All people</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>7,200</b>

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

	Hutt %	Wellington %	Porirua %	Kapiti %	Total region %	NZ %
Aware of community law centres and know where they are located	24	31	30	27	28	23
Aware of community law centres but don't know where they are	30	33	15	43	31	25
<b>Total awareness</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>48</b>
Not aware of community law centres	46	36	55	30	41	52
<b>Base: All people</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>7,200</b>