

FCVic Advocacy Priorities 2024

Priority	Focus Areas
<p>Priority 1: Increasing funding to the sector, and public awareness of the importance of financial counsellors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing sector funding through government advocacy • Media engagement to promote the role of financial counsellors • Community sector engagement to promote service referrals and integration
<p>Priority 2: Addressing barriers to safe, secure and affordable housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale housing market reform, with a focus on affordable housing • Long-term bank relief options addressing mortgage stress • Reform of rental standards including rental increase limits and relief options • Quality of housing stock, including energy efficiency of properties and access to affordable insurance for residences
<p>Priority 3: Addressing the rising cost of living, including insufficient wages and social security payments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #RaisetheRate – including related Services Australia issues • Increasing wage growth in response to increased cost of living • Reducing the cost of basics and general living expenses, including insurance • Improving access to concessions, grants and relief schemes across all essential services, including fines and infringements
<p>Priority 4: Influencing change in responsible lending and compassionate hardship practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation of BNPL providers and other non-bank lenders, and enhancing enforceability of existing regulations • Promoting consistency of compassionate hardship practices across all providers, tailored to the unique needs and experiences of the client (e.g. experiences of family violence or natural disasters, cultural background) • Changing the handling of debts that are the result of vulnerability to scams, economic abuse, or similar • Promoting responsible gambling practices and enhancing protections for those experiencing gambling harm
<p>Priority 5: Supporting and promoting the professionalism of the financial counselling sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with industry to promote understanding of the important professional role of financial counsellors • Engaging with agencies to support the professional development, health and wellbeing of financial counsellors • Promoting upskilling of financial counsellors in key areas of identified cohort need – family violence, disaster recovery, gambling harm, small business • Promoting and supporting sector-wide professional practice and ethical standards

How will we act on these priorities?

- We will **lead** on sector-specific issues, campaigns, and needs.
- We will **liaise** with industry, regulators, government and decision-makers.
- We will **leverage insights** from our members and share our sector's unique expertise.
- We will **lend support** where there are already leading campaigners.

