



A FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR CAN HELP ...

Anyone can find themselves in financial difficulty. You might lose your job, get sick, or your relationship might break down. You may simply not have enough money to make ends meet. **If this happens to you, a financial counsellor can help.**

Financial counsellors are non-judgmental, qualified professionals who provide information, support and advocacy to people in financial difficulty. Based in community organisations, financial counselling services are free, independent and confidential.

When you speak to a **financial counsellor** you'll feel informed, understood and know your options.

What a financial counsellor will do...

- Understand **which debts are priorities**. This will be very important if legal action has commenced.
- Understand **other factors affecting your situation** such as health, abuse, stability of employment, relationship status, housing situation.
- Develop a **money plan** (possibly looking for ways for increasing your disposable income).
- **Identify your options** and their advantages and disadvantages.
- **Advocate and negotiate** e.g. reduce/defer/waive payments with creditors, access grants or concessions, access to dispute resolution schemes.
- **Information** e.g. your rights under the National Credit Code to apply for a hardship variation, how the credit reporting system works or what is acceptable behaviour from debt collectors, the impact of bankruptcy.
- Identify if you need **referral** for legal advice or other services.
- Provide emotional **support**.



Financial counsellors have specific knowledge about the credit, bankruptcy and debt collection laws, concession frameworks and industry hardship practices. They are also trained in negotiation and counselling.