



Outcome 8: Expert and engaged team making a real-world difference

Blaine's story: Finding meaning in community law



After years working with horses, 34-year-old Blaine Perkins never imagined he'd find his true calling in the law.

A decision to study as a mature-age student set him on a path that brought together his empathy, intellect and curiosity to help family violence victim-survivors every day.

Originally from Melbourne, Blaine moved to central Victoria in his 20s to work in the equine industry, training horses and running his own small business.

By 28, he was ready for a new challenge. *"I loved the work, but it wasn't sustainable long term,"* he said. *"I'd always enjoyed legal studies at school, so I decided to go to uni."*

Blaine began his degree at La Trobe University in Bendigo, balancing study with part-time work.

Like many mature-age students, he didn't have a clear plan for where the degree would lead. *"I just knew I wanted to do something meaningful,"* he said. That direction came late in his studies, when a volunteer role at ARC Justice introduced him to community law.

"I was helping with a client survey, calling people and hearing how much the lawyers had changed their lives. I remember thinking, 'Wouldn't it be amazing to be that person one day?'"

That experience led Blaine to a role with the intake team, where he was often the first point of contact for people facing family violence, housing stress and other complex issues.

After completing his practical legal training while working full-time in intake, Blaine joined ARC Justice's Family Violence team as a lawyer in January 2024.

He now appears in both Specialist Family Violence Courts and general Magistrates' Court lists across central Victoria as a duty lawyer, as well as providing advice and ongoing support for clients with complex, intersecting legal issues.

"The more time I spend in court, the more I see where systems could be improved. At its core, this sector is people supporting people," he said.

Blaine's journey reflects Outcome 8 in practice. Supported through clear pathways for learning, trusted with responsibility early and encouraged to grow within a connected team, he has built a rewarding career that aligns with his values.

His story shows how investing in staff development, wellbeing and shared purpose helps ARC Justice build a motivated, skilled team and why our people are proud to work for the organisation.