

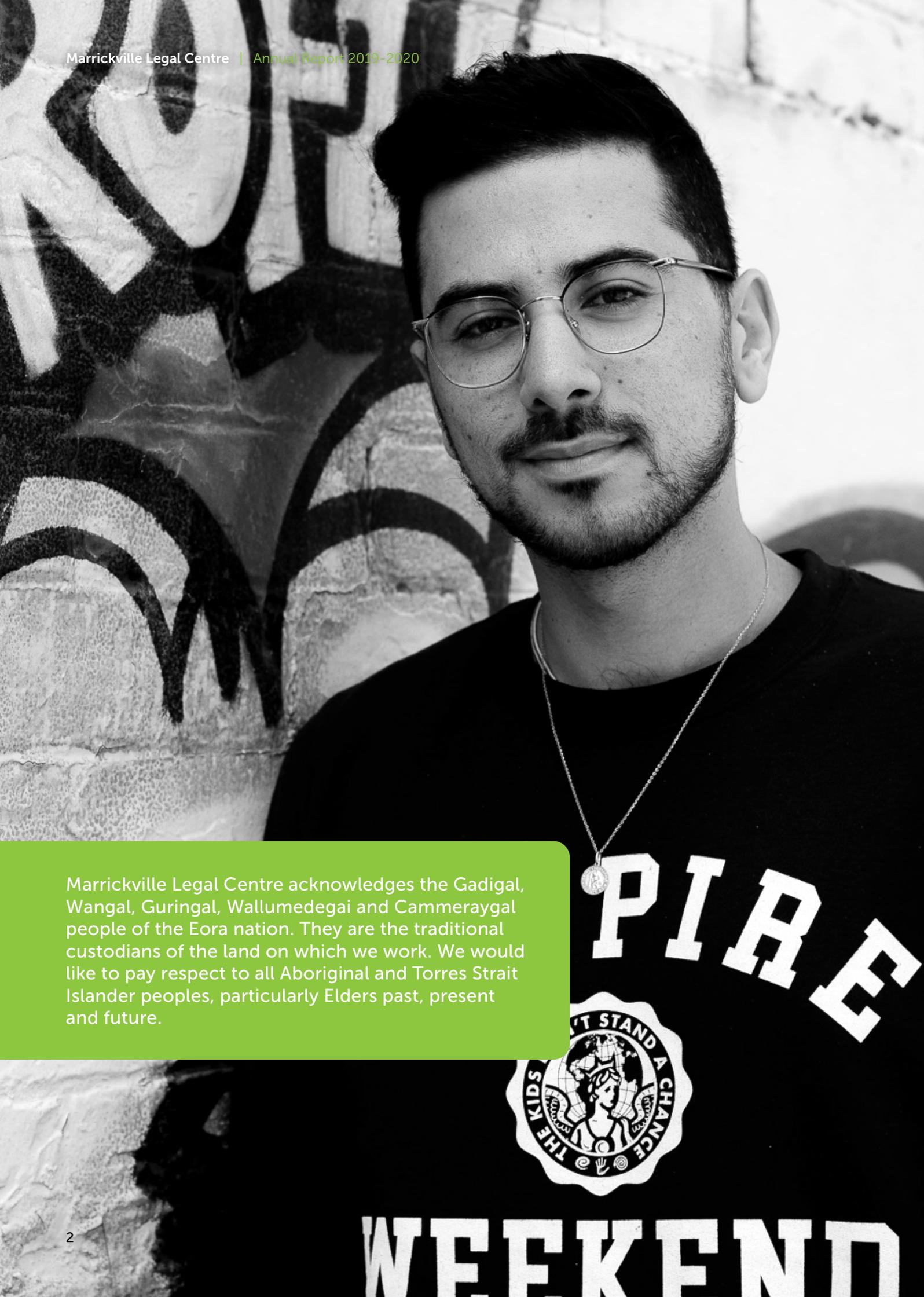


Annual Report

2019 - 2020



**Marrickville
Legal Centre**
From the inner west,
serving NSW



Marrickville Legal Centre acknowledges the Gadigal, Wangal, Guringal, Wallumedegai and Cammeraygal people of the Eora nation. They are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work. We would like to pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly Elders past, present and future.

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About us

Marrickville Legal Centre is a not-for-profit community legal centre. Located in Sydney's inner west, our services extend across New South Wales. For over 40 years Marrickville Legal Centre has provided free legal services and support to the most vulnerable in our community.

Knowing that some members of our community face greater difficulties accessing legal services than others, we prioritise providing access to justice to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, people with a mental illness, people with a disability, people who have experienced domestic and family violence, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, young people, and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. We assist clients towards better and fairer outcomes, from what can be the most challenging and traumatic experiences of their lives.

Since Marrickville Legal Centre was established in 1979, it has been imbued with a strong sense of social justice and a vision to advance the human rights of our community. That community has grown over time to include the inner-west, south-west, southern suburbs and beyond. Our key catchment encompasses over 30% of Sydney's total population: over 1.5 million people. We also provide state-wide legal support for young people, culturally and linguistically diverse workers, and owner-occupiers of strata schemes. The spirit of #JusticeForUsAll lives in each of our staff and volunteers and through the work we do that supports the wellbeing of our clients, their families, and our broader community.

Letter from the Chair of the Board

We have had another notable year at Marrickville Legal Centre as we have continued to provide high quality legal support and advocacy for some of the most vulnerable members of our community. We have been able to perform at a high level through the dedication of excellent staff and the support of pro-bono partners.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the last four months of the 2020 financial year brought unprecedented challenges for every business and individual around the world. Collectively at Marrickville Legal Centre we adapted, found solutions and put in place a response plan. Foremost in our minds was the need to safeguard the well-being of our staff and clients. We successfully continued our operation and doing so, learned new ways of working especially with the use of collaboration technology. We found that many of us enjoy working remotely, and that we can be just as productive.

Through the year the Board has been wrestling with the challenge of addressing our difficult financial circumstances. This has come about partly through reductions in our funding, certain programs that will shortly come to an end and partly through the financial burden imposed by our present Enterprise Agreement.

Our Enterprise Agreement expired in 2015, was slightly updated in 2017, and for many years the Board and staff have been engaged in negotiating a new one.

There are a number of problems with the present Agreement. One important issue is that it provides for high salaries for junior roles and unsustainable annual pay increases.

To help us formulate a new structure which meets the requirements of our funding bodies, during the year we engaged the services of PWC/Active Directions. Our subsequent restructure has provided some financial relief, although it has led to the loss of many experienced staff. The majority of our present staff are now on fixed-term contracts and this approach is safer than making permanent appointments at unsustainable salaries at this time.

Whilst financially prudent there are several downsides. For one thing, we acknowledge that it can lead to job insecurity for many members of staff. It can lead to staff turnover, more time spent recruiting, and more time spent training new staff. It does not help us build and maintain a stable, cohesive organisation. The Board believes that it would be much better to have a revised Enterprise Agreement with comprehensive reforms so we can make permanent appointments. We also believe that greater job security will improve staff wellbeing, and this in turn can lead to higher productivity.

The problems associated with the Enterprise Agreement are not limited to direct remuneration. There are a number of clauses that increase the difficulty of managing MLC, add to our costs, and work against creating the right culture.

I am pleased to say that in recent months we have collaborated effectively with staff representatives - with a degree of urgency - to create consensus on an Enterprise Agreement that preserves MLC's future and provides more stability.

Considering the last twelve months, our Board acknowledges the excellent work of two particular staff members: Managing Principal Solicitor Vasili Maroulis who has faced many challenges this year and Finance Manager Greg Oong who budgets for multiple programs from a number of funding sources.

I am extremely grateful for the work of my Board colleagues who dedicate the energy and commitment to our issues as they arise. They bring diverse professional backgrounds and this year we have added new members with experience in the community sector. My sincere and heartfelt thanks go to MLC's dedicated staff and volunteers who we can rely on to respond to community need, often in challenging circumstances. I thank you all. Were it not for you advocating the rights of our clients, those vulnerable members of society would be grossly disadvantaged.

I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead.

Graham Jenkins

Chair





Letter from the Managing Principal Solicitor

This year, like many in our community, Marrickville Legal Centre faced incredible challenges in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am very pleased to report that we rose to this challenge.

In what seems like a lifetime ago, at our Centre's 40th anniversary in August last year, I delivered the following words to the audience:

"We recognise the legal sector is changing and so too our communities legal needs. Our response to this is ambitious, but we aim to make Justice For Us All a reality by bringing our Centre, and the CLC sector, into the 21st century. We plan to do this by developing innovative tech solutions to deliver legal services more efficiently and, most importantly, collaboratively with our community partners."

We followed through on our commitment and our Centre's preparation work in transitioning to a digital workplace was already well underway before the lockdown restrictions were imposed this year. This innovative work – with the help of our pro bono partners - enabled our staff and volunteers to seamlessly transition to remote working, thereby providing minimal disruption to service delivery at a time when our community needed us the most. This year our Centre:

- transitioned all paper filing systems to paperless and have helped many Centres to do the same;
- developed and deployed a Client Referral Pathway through CLC Connect, which is being successfully piloted with our friends at Western Sydney Community Legal Centre; and
- deployed an online virtual assistant during the lockdown to streamline our client intake process, which also provided our clients with an alternate means of contacting the centre.

But rising to this challenge was not just about the technological innovation, it was about the people that are the backbone of our Centre. The composure and commitment demonstrated by our staff and volunteers this year is one of the proudest moments I have witnessed in my professional career.

For those volunteers who continued assisting Marrickville Legal Centre during the lockdown, I would like to express that we – myself, our staff, and our community – are extraordinarily grateful. As a small organisation that relies strongly on the power of our volunteers, this support made an incredible difference.

And this impact is borne out in our figures: our Centre's Employment Law Service experienced a 71.7% increase and the Civil Law Service a 73.9% increase in demand from 1 February to 20 August 2019 compared to the same period in 2020. In the three months from April to July our Centre assisted over 3000 clients, which is over 1000 more than the same period last year.

But make no mistake, the challenge is far from over for our Centre. The fallout from the economic carnage that COVID-19 is having will continue and we need to stand ready to be there for our community. Roy Morgan Research commissioned by Good Shepherd tracked close to 6000 working Australians since April and found those already on low-to-average incomes were most likely to have suffered negative impacts to their employment during the pandemic. The research found that 60% of working Australians on low-to-average incomes experienced employment changes including reduced hours, pay cuts, being stood down or made redundant, creating a new class of economically vulnerable people.

The Centre remains committed to prioritising the needs of the community, and we will continue to work collaboratively with our community, corporate and government partners to deliver legal and support services to those in our community who need it most. This year our Centre also launched the Duty Lawyer Service at Burwood Local Court, which Chief Justice Henson noted is "invaluable in the current climate as the Court begins addressing the backlog of matters arising from necessary COVID-19 pandemic arrangements." The Debt Crisis Legal Service was also launched, a critical service needed now more than ever that has already assisted in freeing countless clients from their oppressive debts.

We are pleased to work with and guide our sector to increase efficiencies so that we may access more people in need of vital legal help, particularly as we venture into an economic downturn.

We recognise the uncertainty and challenges ahead and we want our community to know we will continue to do our best to adapt to new and different circumstances.

Together I am confident our community will meet the challenges ahead and we will be stronger as a result.

Yours faithfully,

Vasili Maroulis

Managing Principal Solicitor

Our year at a glance



July

MLC celebrated NAIDOC Week at Addison Road Community Centre



August

MLC celebrated its history and future at its 40th Anniversary Gala



September

MLC and Canterbury Hospital announced a new Health Justice Partnership



October

MLC participated in the University of Sydney's 'Double Time' seminar on criminal records and employment



November

MLC launched the new Migrant Employment Legal Service in partnership with ICLC, KLC, and RLC



December

We reflected on and celebrated our Centre's achievements in 2019 with the team



January

MLC attended Yabun Festival 2020 with our fellow CLCs to talk legal with community



February

MLC hosted its annual Volunteer Thank You Party



March

The rise of COVID-19 led to an influx of new legal concerns and MLC's Duty Lawyer Service at Burwood Local Court launched



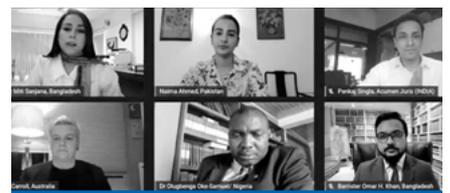
April

MLC Tenants' Advocate Sousan Ghecham participated in a Facebook Live Q&A with Summer Hill MP Jo Haylen



May

Young People's Q&A about Covid-19 held in collaboration with the Multicultural Youth Affairs network



June

MLC solicitor Lucy Carroll was invited to an expert panel on Bangladeshi TV about the global impact of COVID-19 on employment law

Our vision and pillars

Our vision

Our vision is to help people forward towards better and fairer outcomes, and to create access to justice for us all.

Our pillars

Our pillars represent the four core values that guide how we serve our community.



For all people

Justice shouldn't be the privilege of the few. We're proud to stand alongside individuals who are disadvantaged by our justice system, helping them toward better & fairer outcomes.



For progress

Positive change takes action. We work with community partners to make sure the voices of disadvantaged people are heard in the processes that lead to policy reform.



For working together

We work with our clients to help them forward towards a better future. We are proud to bring people together to promote justice and protect human rights.



For lasting change

We aim to resolve any immediate legal issues, but also to link our clients to resources and services that will support them towards positive and lasting change in their lives, and in our community.



Strategic framework

Our strategic priorities reflect on the work we do and look forward to how we improve the way we help. These priorities are focused, achievable and measure how successfully we achieve our mission to improve access to #JusticeForUsAll in 2020-2023.



For all people

1. We provide integrated, holistic support through all MLC services that responds to the complexity of community need. This ability for responsiveness was proven during COVID-19 as we managed the huge influx of tenancy, employment and civil matters.
2. We continue to provide an integrated legal and non-legal domestic and family violence support service.
3. Our new 'low-bono' service is providing accessible fee-for-service legal assistance to people who are financially locked out of private and community legal assistance. The service recovered \$147,877.39 for clients in just two months of FY 2019-2020.
4. Migrants who have been in Australia less than five years were far more likely to have had their work negatively impacted by COVID-19, compared with longer term migrants and Australian-born¹. We are focused on delivering services to migrant workers and culturally and linguistically diverse groups experiencing employment exploitation through the Migrant Employment Legal Service in partnership with Inner City, Kingsford and Redfern Legal Centres.
5. We have set new targets to increase scope and capacity of our state-wide Youth Legal Service for people aged twenty-five and under. Young people in the workforce were among the most financially impacted from COVID-19, with half of those aged 14 to 24 in Australia now economically vulnerable².

¹ Good Shepherd (2020) 'Pandemic's economic pain worse for the young, migrants and women'

² Good Shepherd (2020) 'Pandemic's economic pain worse for the young, migrants and women'



For progress

1. We are committed to optimising organisational processes for digital efficiency so that resources can be better channelled to service delivery. This commitment has enabled us to quickly pivot to remote service delivery in 2020 before assisting other CLCs to build up their own tech capacities.
2. We have developed and launched a digital solution for client intake using artificial intelligence, thanks to funding from Department of Communities and Justice. The virtual assistant streamlines client intake and provides basic legal information for traffic matters on Marrickville Legal Centre's website. The virtual assistant lite was launched ahead of schedule in response to increased community demand from the pandemic, for COVID-19-impacted matters.
3. We are establishing smoother referral pathways through shared CLC resources to reduce waiting time for vulnerable clients, connecting metropolitan and RRR to timely assistance across NSW through our Client Referral Pathway.
4. Strengthen ties between MLC and health care professionals for the benefit of the community through health justice partnerships, with a focus on legal issues arising from mental health.
5. We are improving the quality and consistency of training for volunteers through human-centred design.
6. We embrace research-based digital solutions to improve access to justice, e.g. in our transition to a paperless legal centre.
7. With the help of community experts, academics and pro bono partners, we continue to identify systemic areas of injustice to spearhead policy evolution and law reform.



For working together

1. Objectively review the accessibility of our Centre and how it supports clients in the identification, understanding and solution of legal problems.
2. We actively contribute to national reconciliation through development and implementation of Marrickville Legal Centre's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).
3. We engage our staff and volunteers in a healthy, supportive and well-resourced environment.
4. We provide a clear and compelling rationale for people to support the Centre financially through transparent communication and various fundraising initiatives.
5. We are proud to consistently encourage people to support our Centre as volunteers.



For lasting change

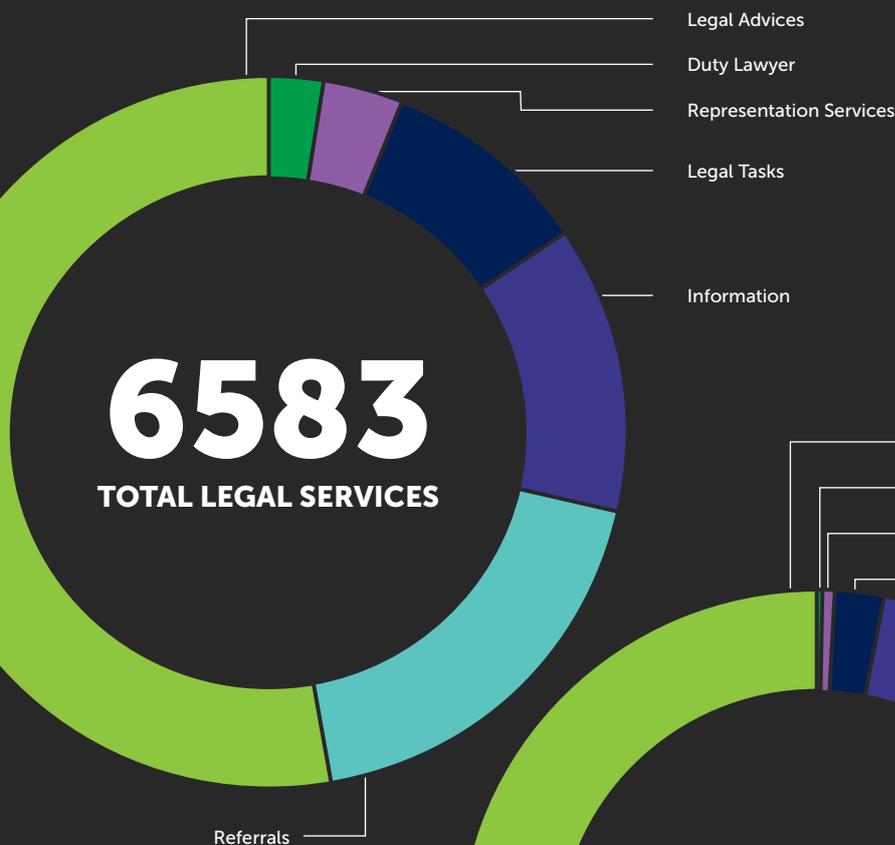
1. We build community capacity for people to identify and resolve general legal problems encountered in everyday life through targeted Community Legal Education.
2. We are delivering research-based programs about respectful relationships targeted at young people to prevent family and domestic violence.
3. We are developing a digital program about financial literacy for women and girls at risk of financial abuse in the greater Sydney region.
4. We link with strategic partners to identify and address systemic issues that create barriers to accessing justice and regularly evaluate how we work together.



Our impact

From the inner west and serving New South Wales, Marrickville Legal Centre works hard to achieve better and fairer outcomes for our community. The impact we create for lasting change in our community is made possible thanks to the continuous assistance of our funders, donors, members, partners and volunteers.

6452
TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED

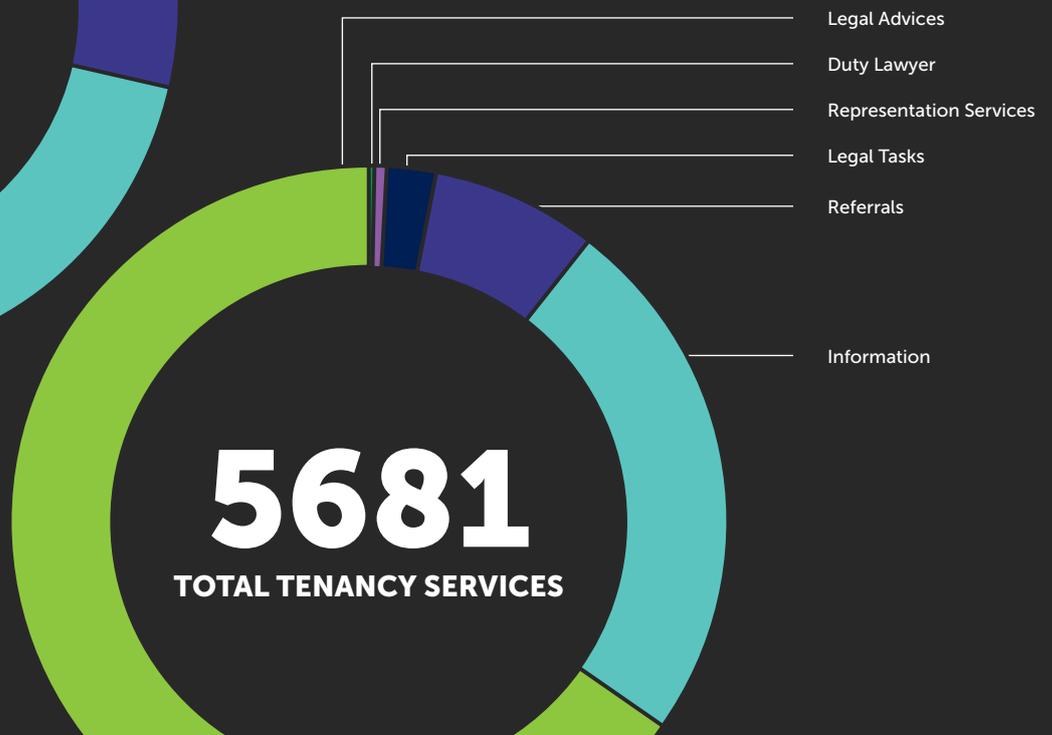


\$147,877

Recovered for employment clients through Low Bono between May-June 2020

44

Community legal education sessions overall





General Legal Service

Marrickville Legal Centre's General Legal Service had an extremely busy and productive year in 2019-2020. Throughout the year, the General Legal Service assisted 970 clients with holistic legal support.

The General Legal Service continued to provide services targeted at members of the community facing the most significant barriers to accessing justice, including people living with a disability and people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Key legal issues addressed

Motor vehicle accidents (property damage), traffic, minor crime, AVOs, domestic violence matters, credit and debt matters and consumer complaints in relation to goods and services.

Key partners

- Gilbert & Tobin
- Sparke Helmore
- Johnson, Winter & Slattery
- Law Access NSW and Legal Aid NSW
- HWL Ebsworth
- Hall & Willcox
- 7 Wentworth Chambers
- David Parish, Barrister

Key events and achievements

The General Legal Service successfully commenced a health justice partnership with the Sydney Local Health District at Canterbury Hospital's Drug Health Services, which has improved access to justice for clients requiring legal assistance in south-west Sydney.

The new Debt Crisis Legal Service was established this year, thanks to funding from the Office of Responsible Gambling. The service provides legal advice and targeted referrals for clients who present with gambling related issues, or are affected by family members who gamble. The service is an important part of Marrickville Legal Centre's holistic legal and support service, allowing clients who may be affected by problem gambling problem to access additional specialist advice and vice versa.

The Duty Lawyer Service (DLS) is a new outreach service providing direct assistance, advice and representation to people appearing at Burwood Local Court. The service supports people attending Court with minor (summary) crime, traffic, Apprehended Violence Orders and domestic violence matters.

The Duty Lawyer team have been instrumental in the development of MLC's virtual legal assistant. The team provided clarity on COVID-19 restrictions when they were introduced in NSW on TV and online. When #blacklivesmatter protests peaked globally in June, MLC Legal Observers attended the Sydney BLM rally to provide information to demonstrators and observe and document police behaviour.

Law reform

Submission on the Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2020



General Legal Service

Advice clinics

Motor Vehicle Accident clinic

10am-12pm Tuesdays fortnightly

Key partners: Hall & Wilcox

Our newly established motor vehicle accident advocacy and representation project with Hall & Willcox achieved several successes during the year for vulnerable clients. The project has developed from the long running Hall & Wilcox motor vehicle clinic and was set up to meet an identified gap in service delivery, to assist vulnerable clients with ongoing representation in their small claims motor vehicle matters. The Hall & Wilcox team are currently assisting to litigate several matters through the project.

General law advice clinic

6:30pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Key partners: Gilbert + Tobin

Advice on civil and employment law every Tuesday night

Sparke Helmore advice clinic

10am-1pm Thursdays fortnightly

Key partners: Sparke Helmore

The fortnightly daytime advice clinic began in February this year providing remote telephone support for clients on civil and employment matters. The MLC clinic is staffed by a roster of up to 12 Sparke Helmore pro bono lawyers each fortnight.

Civil daytime clinic

2-4pm Mondays

Key partners: HWL Ebsworth

The daytime clinic offers drop-in and telephone assistance by appointment and is rostered by pro bono lawyers from HWL Ebsworth.

Debt Crisis Legal Service clinic

2-5pm Tuesdays

Key partners: HWL Ebsworth

The new Debt Crisis Legal Service has launched a specialist 'gambling' advice clinic operating by appointment from our Dulwich Hill office.

Community legal education

The service undertook a number of community legal education sessions during this reporting period including training sessions for caseworkers at Marrickville Community Health.

Key partners

Advance Diversity Services

The service continues to operate its successful outreach clinic for culturally and linguistically diverse communities at Advance Diversity Services which has this year relocated to Hurstville, formerly in Rockdale.

Muslim Women's Association

The service continues to operate successful outreach in areas of high legal need including Muslim Women's Association in Lakemba, including remote support due to COVID-19. The outreach has since begun facilitating email referrals.

Canterbury Hospital Drug Health Services

The new health justice partnership with the Sydney Local Health District at Canterbury Hospital's Drug Health Services is cross-facilitating access to justice for patients in need of general legal assistance in south-west Sydney.

"It's my rights back" - Liana

Liana is a 40-year-old culturally and linguistically diverse client who was recently involved in a motor vehicle accident. Liana had been 'run off the road' by a delivery truck. Her vehicle was deemed a write-off and all attempts at negotiation had failed. Through the assistance of our service, Liana was able to recover \$11,500 at the small claims division of the Local Court for her motor vehicle accident. Liana has since used the money to pay the bills for her father's new retirement accommodation.



Key Statistics

General Legal Service

970

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



559

Identify as male



394

Identify as female



3

Identify as non-binary



380

Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



243

Living with a disability



899

Experiencing financial disadvantage



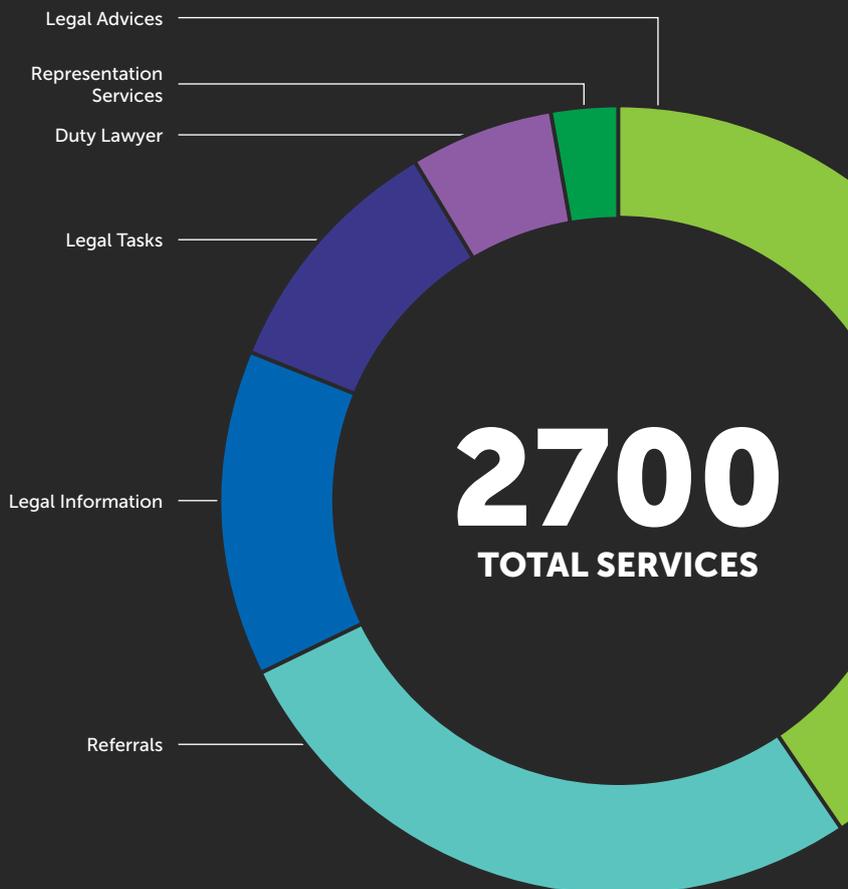
170

Have experienced domestic & family violence



28

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



A brighter, safer outlook

Priscilla is a 35-year-old survivor of domestic violence who was recently released from prison. Priscilla is a carer for two children and her parents. Priscilla approached our Centre overwhelmed with unresolved debts and demands from debt collectors, banks, telecommunication providers and pay-day lenders. MLC assisted Priscilla with dispute resolution processes with relevant companies including negotiations which resulted in the discontinuance of more than \$30,000 in debt. To date, Priscilla has had approximately \$45,000 worth of outstanding debts waived with the assistance of the GLS. MLC continues to assist her with other outstanding debts and will also continue to assist Priscilla with dispute resolution services with credit reporting bodies.

Representation in court

Pamela is a mother of three young children, two of whom have special needs. She received a penalty notice for disobeying a no parking sign in a school zone when dropping her child at school. Pamela, who suffers from severe postnatal depression, was experiencing financial difficulties and planned to plead 'not guilty' to the offence. When Pamela approached the DLS at Burwood Local Court, she was highly distressed to the extent of feeling suicidal. Duty lawyers explained the consequences of a not guilty plea and the court process that followed. Pamela was advised that a 'guilty' plea would likely receive leniency and see her matter finalised on the day. The DLS appeared for Pamela, the Local Court accepted Pamela's plea and the matter was finalised without a recorded conviction. Pamela did not have to pay a fine and did not receive demerit points. Pamela was overjoyed at the outcome and is now receiving mental health support.



Family Law Service

The Family Law Service aims to provide quality legal advice to the people in the inner west, south west and south Sydney and assist with legal tasks and representation in Legally Assisted Mediation.

Key legal issues addressed

Parenting arrangements, divorce, property and financial issues, Family Court process, pre-litigation mediation.

Key partners

- Interrelate Caringbah
- Uniting Fairfield
- Burwood Community Welfare Service

Key events and achievements

The Family Law Service has begun participating in Legally Assisted Mediations in property matters. This effectively expands the level of assistance and support we can provide clients in our catchment area.

The FLS has added two new weekly daytime advice clinics, in addition to our regular Thursday evening advice clinic, to uplift the timeliness of family law advice.

The service has renewed and strengthened its partnership with Interrelate Caringbah, by meeting with their Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners for a Q&A, updating our referral procedure and exploring new ways for partnership. MLC now receives a steady stream of referrals each week through this partnership. The Family Law Service is also establishing a partnership with Uniting Fairfield on the same terms. Burwood Community Welfare Service has recently reached out to MLC to develop a referral pathway and for our family law solicitor

to provide legal information to women affected by domestic violence, who are predominately of CALD background.

The Family Law Service has successfully recruited 6 additional volunteer solicitors to assist with our evening advice clinics, easing the pressure on our existing volunteers and expanding the breadth of experience in our evening advice clinic.

Advice clinics

Family Law Evening Advice Clinic

6.30pm Thursdays

The clinic has 19 volunteer solicitors at present with different backgrounds, experience and knowledge areas. The clinic advises clients in relation to divorce, parenting arrangements, child support matters, property issues and spousal maintenance. Clients requiring further legal advice, provision of legal tasks and/or assistance at mediation are followed up by the family law solicitor.

Community legal education

Our family law solicitor trained as a facilitator for NAPCAN's 'Love Bites' program, co-organised by Inner West Council, to facilitate CLEs on healthy relationships. Workshops were conducted at local inner west schools including Rivendell High School and Fort Street High School.

Community outreach

Lebanese Muslim Association, Lakemba

The Family Law Service was pleased to secure a valuable partnership with Lebanese Muslim Association for the provision of a fortnightly family law outreach, assisting women with divorce law for Islamic marriage in concert with our tenants' service. Through this partnership with LMA, MLC has seen further collaborations through Thrive LMA and our Youth Legal Service.



Key Statistics

Family Law Service

248

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



91
Identify as male



152
Identify as female



75
Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



37
Living with a disability



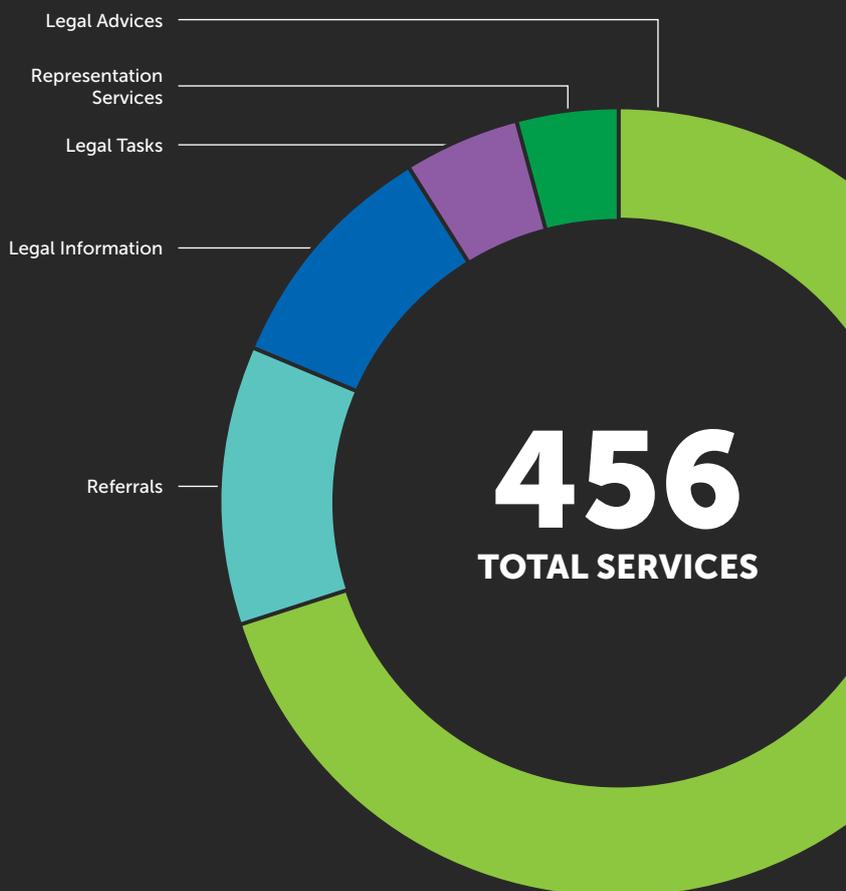
235
Experiencing financial disadvantage



108
Have experienced domestic & family violence



6
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



Child safety

Jenny is the primary carer of her child. She contacted the Family Law Service when her former partner removed their three-year-old child from day care and would not indicate when the child would be returned to her. The FLS provided immediate legal advice, support and practical guidance to Jenny, as her ex-partner, as the other parent had significant mental health and substance abuse issues. The child was returned to Jenny and the FLS then provided further practical guidance to creating a safe environment for the child, working with a strong support network, and provided legal advice about the next steps. Finally, Jenny was referred to a private solicitor to assist with filing an urgent application seeking interim parenting orders.

Parenting arrangements

Lucy contacted our Centre after she was served with an urgent application in the Family Court by her former partner to change parenting arrangements that had been in place for over 7 years. The application concerned their two children, one of whom has special needs. Under his proposal, Lucy would have to abandon her studies and her only source of income. Lucy did not have the financial capacity to engage a private solicitor however was ineligible for Legal Aid. The Family Law Service assisted Lucy in drafting her response documents and provided advice up to and including the date of the interim hearing. On the date of the interim hearing, the Judge adjourned the matter and appointed an Independent Children's Lawyer in line with the advice provided by the Family Law Service.

Safe from bullying

Sarah contacted our Family Law Service when her 8-year-old son was being bullied and harassed by the child's other parent whilst spending time with him, resulting in great distress. The other parent also threatened to call the police on Sarah, the primary carer, if visitations ceased. The FLS provided ongoing advice to Sarah and assisted with a referral to a mediation service.

The child continues to have a relationship with both of his parents and spends most of his time in Sarah's care. Sarah now feels more confident about her rights as primary carer.



Domestic & Family Violence Support Service

The Domestic Violence Support Service (DVSS) offers a community based, accessible, and integrated socio-legal response to clients who have experienced domestic and family violence (DFV). The DFV Worker provides non-legal casework and support such as risk assessments; safety planning; advocacy and referrals.

Key legal issues addressed

- Completing risk assessments
- Assisting with safety planning
- Support/advocacy at Court, or with Police, relating to Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders
- Applying for Victims Services
- Applying for Centrelink support
- Applying for DCJ Housing assistance
- Working with partner organisations and government bodies to ensure survivors and/or their loved ones receive appropriate care and support

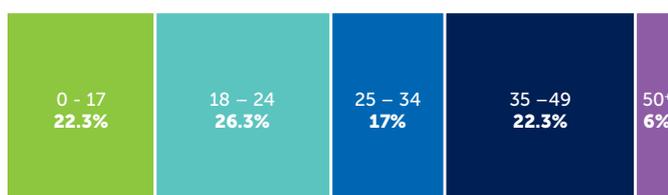
Key partners

- Inner West Domestic Violence Liaison Committee;
- Canterbury Bankstown Domestic Violence Liaison Committee.

Key events and achievements

In 2019, the DVSS was pleased to be the recipients of the Bid for Good grant by the Sydney Community Foundation and Sydney Airport. This award will go towards the development and delivery of the Savvy Finance Program. Savvy Finance will provide educational online workshops to reduce the risk of financial abuse and foster financial literacy to women and girls living in the Greater Sydney region.

Clients' age breakdown



Community legal education

Love Bites

A respectful relationship program where workers from various agencies come together to deliver interactive workshops to young people who are at risk of, or are, experiencing abusive and unhealthy relationships.

Safe Relationships

Understanding people's rights and responsibilities within relationships; understanding barriers to having healthy relationships; identifying abusive behaviours; exploring the traits within respectful relationships.

Flagging financial abuse and building financial literacy

Identifying financial challenges; recognising financially abusive behaviours; understanding money personalities; money stories; where to seek support to build financial literacy.

Community outreach

The DVSS participated in 14 community events throughout this financial year. Highlights included the 2019 WDVACS' Conference and the Inner West Domestic Violence Liaison Committee's 16 Days of Activism Interagency Forum in 2019.

Holistic socio-legal support

Jacqueline is a 50-year-old woman from a CALD background. Jacqueline and her three children witnessed and experienced physical and emotional abuse which resulted in an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) being drawn for their protection. Jacqueline and her family moved into alternative accommodation to escape her ex-partner's violence but experienced verbal abuse from their next-door neighbour.

Jacqueline approached MLC for domestic violence support and family law advice. MLC referred Jacqueline and her child to receive court support for an upcoming criminal hearing. The DVSS also internally referred Jacqueline to MLC's tenancy and strata services to receive advice on how to address the issues with their abusive neighbour. Through MLC's holistic legal and non-legal support, Jacqueline was guided on how to best protect herself and her children. She was able to exit her tenancy without penalty and move into a new home supported by the Department of Communities & Justice's Start Safely Scheme. Jacqueline and her children are now living safely and are well engaged with their professional and personal support networks.

Key Statistics

Domestic & Family Violence Support Service

99

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



46%

Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



30%

Living with a disability



47%

Experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness



7%

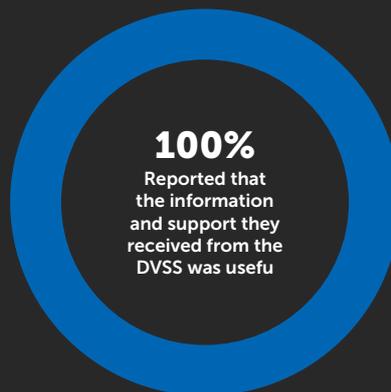
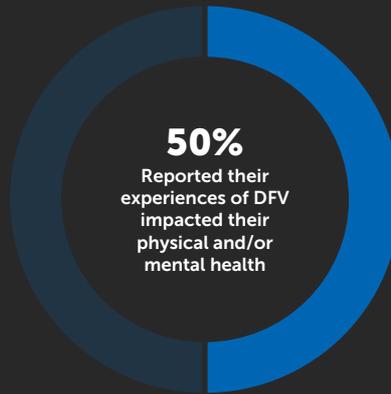
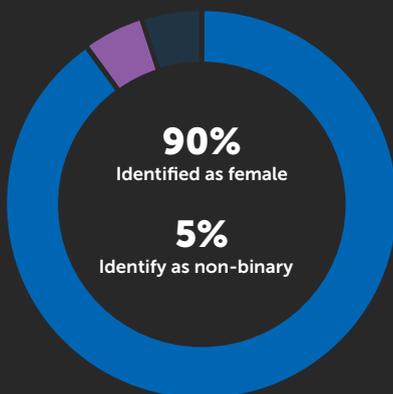
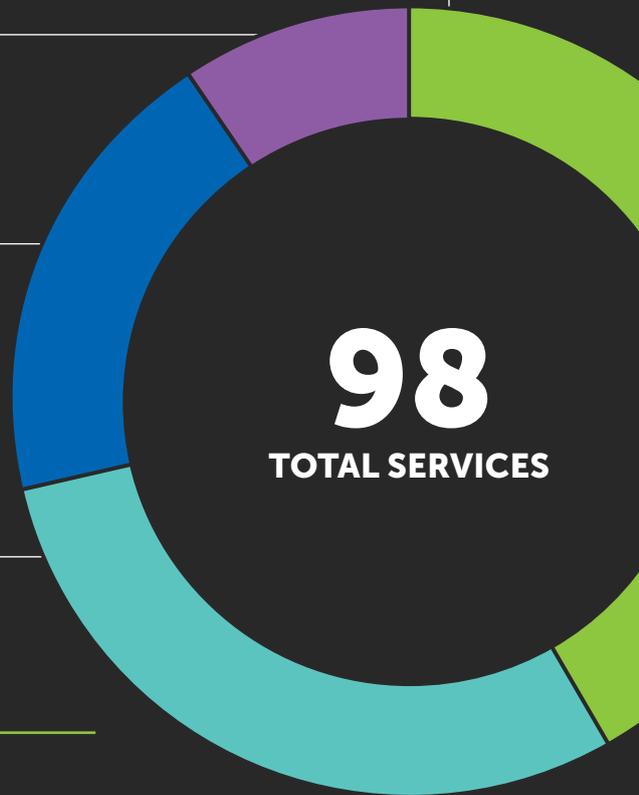
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples

Short-term Social Support

Information

Referrals

Ongoing Case Management





Employment Law Service

Due to COVID-19, the Employment Law Service saw a huge increase in demand. In this financial year, the ELS provided 572 legal advices and opened 33 new representation matters relating to employment law.

Key legal issues addressed

Underpayments, unfair dismissals, general protection applications and discrimination, and emerging JobKeeper issues in light of COVID-19.

Key partners

- Fair Work Commission (Workplace Advice Service)
- Minter Ellison
- Santone Lawyers
- Sparke Helmore

Key events and achievements

The Employment Law Service offered advice and advocacy across a range of employment matters. ELS clients are still primarily individuals who experience financial disadvantage, people living with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. There has also been an increase in less vulnerable clients seeking assistance from the Employment Law Service in light of COVID-19 and the overwhelming amount of companies restructuring due to a down-turn in business.

Advice clinics

Employment advice night

6.30pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Key partners: Sparke Helmore

The Employment Law Service successfully expanded its evening advice clinics and has also transitioned all clinics to a telephone basis in light of COVID-19.

Employment advice day clinic

9.30am-1pm Thursdays

Key partners: Minter Ellison, Santone Lawyers, Sparke Helmore

The Employment Law Service successfully expanded its daytime advice clinics and has also transitioned all clinics to a telephone basis in light of COVID-19. The clinic is grateful to receive ongoing support and assistance from its pro bono partners Minter Ellison, Santone Lawyers and Sparke Helmore who provide regular legal support to MLC clients.

Community outreach

The ELS has expanded its outreach service at the Fair Work Commission's Workplace Advice Service (delivered in partnership with Legal Aid NSW). The Service has been running in partnership with MLC since 2018, and MLC is now the largest service provided to the outreach in NSW.

Between January-June 2020:

43.3%

of surveyed clients indicated that they were now quite or very confident to deal with their employment issue after advice receiving advice

95.2%

said that the ELS helped them to understand their workplace rights and obligations

52.9%

of clients surveyed said that after receiving advice from MLC their feelings of connection to support services improved after having received advice

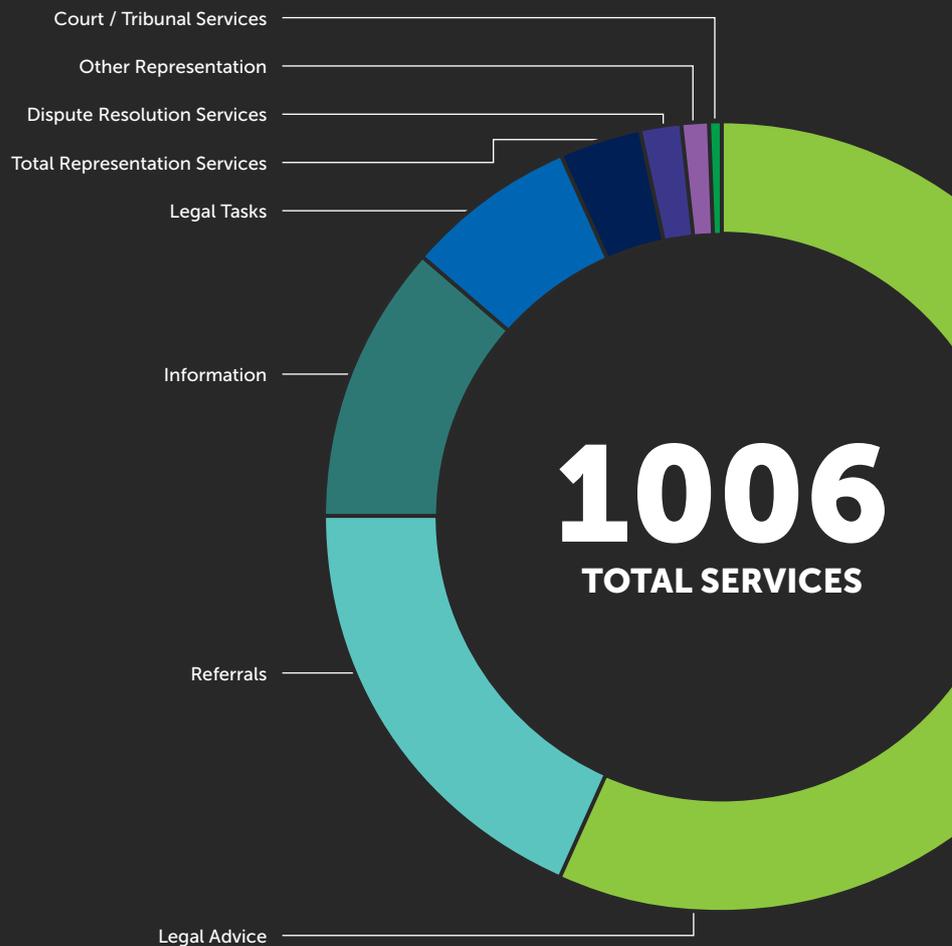


Key Statistics

Employment Law Service

534
TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED

-  **231**
Identify as male
-  **298**
Identify as female
-  **4**
Identify as non-binary
-  **75**
Culturally & linguistically diverse clients
-  **75**
Living with a disability
-  **97**
Experiencing financial disadvantage
-  **14**
Have experienced domestic & family violence
-  **10**
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



Parental leave entitlements

Charlie worked for a catering company that contracted her in aged care facilities. Charlie had been working there for four years and had never experienced a shortage of work. She had recently informed her employer that she was pregnant. After COVID-19 restrictions hit aged care facilities, her employer internally restructured the team, making her role redundant. Although Charlie followed her employer up, she was never placed into the new role she was promised. Charlie had just moved into a new home to prepare an now had no job and no paid parental leave entitlements.

The ELS took legal action against the employer for illegally dismissing her, because they had failed to redeploy her into the alternative position they had offered. Her employer denied liability, saying it had complied with its obligations and that Charlie could interview for the position. After negotiations, Charlie was reinstated into the vacant position to work until she was ready to go on her paid parental leave.

Fighting employer exploitation

Suzy worked in a Northern Sydney factory for nearly 6 years. She felt she was respected and valued there, as she trained most newcomers, was asked to do difficult jobs by her boss and worked at night and on weekends. Suzy's boss told her that she could not afford to pay her. She was told to not come to work anymore and to go see Centrelink. A few days later, Suzy received her Separation Certificate from her boss – which said that Suzy had left because she didn't want to work in the factory anymore. Her boss paid her one week's pay and her holidays, but no long service leave or termination pay. Suzy came to MLC for help but had no pay slips or other evidence of work she had done, just a few handwritten papers. The ELS took legal action for Suzy after using her papers to estimate Suzy's correct weekly and overtime pay. Although the employer denied any liability, after meeting with the employer's lawyer, Suzy received over \$20,000 in redundancy pay, as well as \$10,000 in superannuation contributions from the employer.



Migrant Employment Legal Service

The Migrant Employment Legal Service (MELS) was established in 2019 as a joint initiative of Inner City, Kingsford, Marrickville and Redfern Legal Centres to help end migrant worker exploitation by providing free and confidential employment legal advice and representation to temporary visa holders and migrant workers in NSW.

Key legal issues addressed

Employment law issues, including, but not limited to, unfair dismissal, underpayments, discrimination and sexual harassment matters.

Key partners

- Clayton Utz

Key events and achievements

- Piloted the Migrant Employment Legal Service Pathways Project in partnership with Clayton Utz, which enables pro bono solicitors to provide both legal advice and ongoing representation to eligible clients, under the supervision of the MELS/MLC
- Delivered Community Legal Education in partnership with TAFE Ultimo, Settlement Service International, and Legal Aid NSW addressing employment rights for culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Recovered over \$125,000 in compensation for MELS/MLC clients in unfair dismissal, underpayments, discrimination, and other matters from 1 September 2019 to 1 September 2020
- Worked closely with community organisations to build referral pathways and holistically support clients with multiple and complex legal needs

Advice clinics

Migrant Employment Legal Service Pathways Project

Key partners: Clayton Utz

The Migrant Employment Legal Service Pathways Project enables pro bono solicitors to provide both legal advice and ongoing representation to eligible clients, under the supervision of the MELS and Marrickville Legal Centre.

The purpose of the Pathways Project is to provide continuing support to particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged clients, who would not be able or willing to engage in court or legal processes by themselves.

Unfair dismissal

Debra worked for a cleaning company for 15 years. At the end of a shift Debra's manager called her to speak about a complaint that had been raised against her. Over next three days, Debra's employer required her to respond to allegations, justify why she should not be dismissed, and ultimately terminated her employment. Shocked at the pace of the investigation process, and devastated at the loss of her job, Debra contacted Marrickville Legal Centre.

MELS assisted Debra to file an unfair dismissal application with the Fair Work Commission and represented her in a Conciliation conference. With MELS' assistance, Debra's employer was put on notice about the significant procedural defects in its investigation and dismissal processes. MELS also pointed out that, due to Debra's longevity of service, she would be entitled to a significant sum of compensation should the matter proceed to arbitration. Debra accepted a settlement of \$17,500, representing about five months' wages, and a statement of service and reference. Debra, whose second language was English, was grateful for MELS' support as she understood that she had been treated unfairly but did not feel confident arguing her case before the Commission.



Key Statistics*

Migrant Employment Legal Service

225

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



107

Identify as male



109

Identify as female



1

Identify as non-binary



123

Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



22

Living with a disability



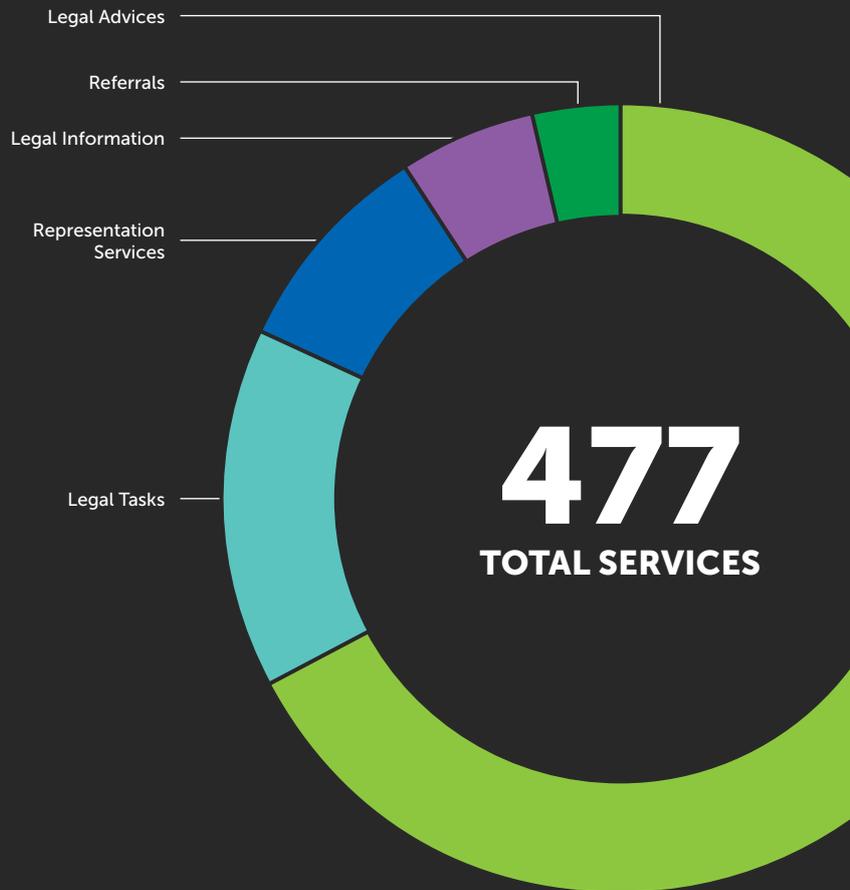
207

Experiencing financial disadvantage



5

Have experienced domestic & family violence



*Marrickville Legal Centre's contribution to the Migrant Employment Legal Service

Ending international student exploitation

Braven was an international student who worked part-time at a restaurant to support himself during his studies. Braven noticed a discrepancy in his pay compared to his co-workers and asked his employer if he was being paid correctly. In response, Braven's employer asked Braven about his work entitlements under his student visa and suggested that Braven should be grateful to have a job. Braven lost shifts and had his duties cut, leaving him without regular income for several weeks. Confused about his employment and residency rights, and the impact that taking legal action could have on his visa, Braven sought assistance from MELS. MELS assisted Braven with obtaining pro bono migration advice and filed a general protections application with the Fair Work Commission. Following settlement discussions, Braven's employer agreed to backpay \$6,000 in unpaid wages plus \$3,000 in recognition of the civil penalties that could have been imposed had Braven wished to take the matter to Court. Braven was pleased with the prompt resolution of his matter and grateful for the additional monies, which he used to pay debts he had accumulated when he lost his job.

Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individual.

Debunking the hospitality wage myth

Malee commenced proceedings in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia to recover unpaid wages owed to her from a restaurant that employed her several years ago. Malee knew she was being underpaid but thought "that was just how the industry operated". When she lost her new job due to the impact of COVID-19, Malee's partner encouraged her to take legal action against her old employer. As Malee's matter progressed, she became confused and started to feel less confident. Shortly before her hearing, Malee contacted MELS for legal advice and assistance. After reviewing Malee's case, MELS identified several issues which needed to be urgently resolved before the matter went to hearing. MELS assisted Malee to file additional evidence and submissions with the Court to help her prove her case and agreed to represent Malee at the hearing. On the day before the hearing, Malee's former employer stated it would pay Malee all her unpaid wages, plus interest. Malee was relieved that she did not have to go to Court and was grateful for MELS' assistance in the lead-up to the hearing.



Youth Legal Service

The Youth Legal Service offers free legal information, advice and assistance to young people 25 years and younger, across New South Wales.

Key legal issues addressed

Fines, motor vehicle accidents, minor crime, employment, credit and debt issues, problems at home.

Key partners

- Colin, Biggers and Paisley
- M'Alinson D'Apice
- Hall and Wilcox
- Sparke Helmore
- Baker McKenzie
- Johnson Winters Slattery
- Holman Webb

Advice clinics

Youth advice clinic

Monday nights

Key partners: Colin, Biggers and Paisley

Usually held at the offices of Colin Biggers & Paisley in Sydney CBD, the youth clinic has recently shifted to remote telephone advice. The clinic provides free legal advice to young people on a range of issues including fines, motor vehicle accidents, minor crime, employment and credit and debt issues.

Community legal education

- Discrimination law CLE at Rivendell School (Concord Hospital)
- Zoom CLE to residents of Nick Kearns and Allum House youth refuges with a focus on COVID-19 and policing
- CLE with Headspace Liverpool staff on common civil and criminal law issues for youth workers and how to refer to the YLS
- CLE with Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network
- Video CLE Tempe high school on Covid-19, policing and the law
- The YLS collaborated with Canterbury Bankstown Council in delivering police powers workshops to young people in Bankstown and Belmore
- Suspension and expulsion consultation with Just Reinvest
- Meetings with Redfern Legal Centre on Covid-19 and policing.

Community outreach

Headspace Liverpool & Bankstown

The YLS attended regular outreach at Headspace Liverpool and Bankstown to offer drop-in legal support to young people attending Headspace for mental health services.

Law reform

As convenors of the NSW Youth Justice Coalition (YJC), the YLS contributed to a submission about raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility.

The YLS submitted a response to the AHRC Free and Equal Inquiry calling for reform to Federal Anti-Discrimination laws to better prevent discrimination arising from criminal records.



Key Statistics

Youth Legal Service

710

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



404

Identify as male



259

Identify as female



2

Identify as non-binary



67

Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



97

Living with a disability



618

Experiencing financial disadvantage



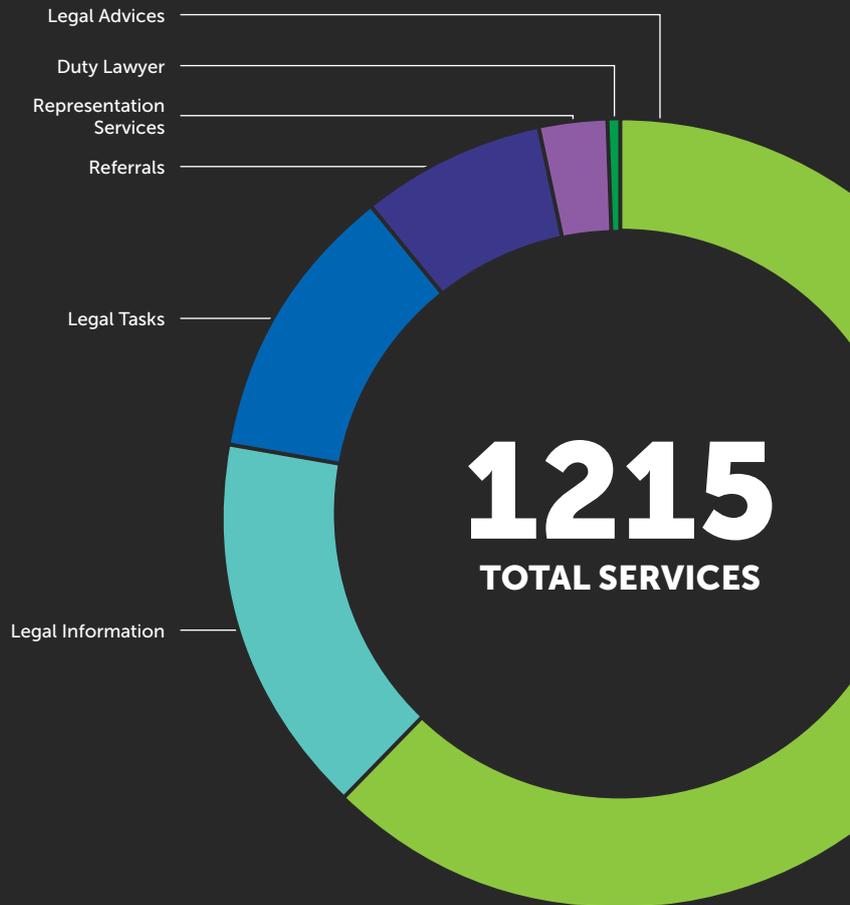
76

Have experienced domestic & family violence



22

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



1215

TOTAL SERVICES

A better chance forward

Aisha voluntarily attended a hospital due to mental health issues she was experiencing. Her friend gave her some illicit drugs, but Aisha did not want to take them and surrendered the drugs to a nurse. The nurse reported the incident to NSW Police although not required by law to do this. Aisha was charged with drug possession. Given the circumstances of the offence, the Magistrate did not convict Aisha and the charges were unconditionally dismissed.

The YLS continued to assist Aisha with a privacy complaint against the hospital as the healthcare worker had a duty of confidentiality. Consequently, the hospital apologised to Aisha and undertook to amend their internal policy and provide staff with further training to prevent this incident from recurring.

Finding a young adult

Guillem is a young man who came to Australia with his parents as a child, was granted refugee status and, eventually, citizenship. However, Guillem's relationship with his parents broke down and Guillem found himself experiencing homelessness.

During this time, he lost his vital personal documents. This meant that he was unable to provide any form of primary ID. Without this, Guillem was excluded from participating in many activities and prevented from gaining employment.

By getting in touch with his social worker and former school, the YLS successfully assisted Guillem in obtaining sufficient supporting documents to obtain proof of identity, which evidence his citizenship.

Northern Sydney Area Tenants' Service

The Northern Sydney Area Tenants' Service (NSATS) is a free legal service for private and social housing tenants, boarders and residential community residents living in the Northern Sydney Area. Our advocates provide telephone advice, advocacy and representation in NCAT. The service also engages in law reform and systemic work to improve the rights of tenants in NSW.

Key legal issues addressed

Tenancy rights and obligations including repairs/renovations, termination, rent arrears, access and privacy, strata scheme tenants, social housing and community housing tenants, ending a tenancy early, share housing, locks and security, uncollected goods, sale of premises.

Key partners

- NSW Fair Trading
- Tenants' Union of NSW
- TAAP Network

Key events and achievements

The Northern Sydney Area Tenants Service established a new secondment program with pro bono partners Johnson, Winter and Slattery. Under the program, secondee lawyers have assisted our tenants' service with advices and casework.

Advice clinics

Duty Advocacy at NCAT

Thursdays

NSATS tenants' advocates attend NCAT, making themselves available to unrepresented tenants. Our advocates provide assistance with research, advice and conciliation through to formal hearing.

Community legal education

- NSATS attended DV interagency meeting in April and provided a short presentation on COVID-19 related changes.
- NSATS conducted a Facebook Live Q&A on the Evictions Moratorium for tenants in NSW
- NSATS conducted a Facebook live session with Jo Haylen MP on new changes to tenancy laws, which had over 1.7k views.
- COVID-19 – Facebook posts and factsheets
- NSATS presented at Tenants' Union of NSW training as 'experienced advocates' for new tenant advocates.

Community outreach

Greenway Tenants Complex, Kirribilli

NSATS held a drop-in advice clinic at Greenway Tenants community centre. The service has been trying to build a relationship with the Greenway tenants' group for a number of years and this is a very positive step forward that will increase access to our services for some very vulnerable social housing tenants.

Link Housing Clinic, West Ryde

Link Housing Clinic for link housing tenants in West Ryde Link Housing office – run independently from Link Housing and is available to both public housing and private tenants. Run every Friday and has made our service more accessible to vulnerable social housing tenants.

Dougherty Centre, Chatswood

NSATS attended a weekly outreach at Dougherty Community Centre in Chatswood providing advice to tenants for legal information, advocacy and representation to ensure their rights are upheld and their obligations are understood.

Law reform

NSATS participated in the Boarding Houses Act round table network discussion and provided a submission to the review of the Boarding Houses Act 2012 in October 2019. Our Tenants' Advocates contributed to the Social Housing Management Transfer Working Group and held regular liaison meetings with Link Housing.

COVID-19 impacted-tenant security

Adit lived in a private tenancy in Northern Sydney but was overseas in Sri Lanka when COVID-19 hit. The landlord acted to end Adit’s tenancy for unpaid rent and argued that the moratorium on eviction for COVID-19 impacted tenants did not apply to Adit because he was stuck in Sri Lanka and couldn’t return due to travel restrictions. NSATS successfully argued that the tenant was impacted by COVID-19 and secured a new fixed term agreement for Chris for when he returns to Australia.

Community housing

Jane is an elderly Aboriginal woman who was navigating the public housing system and was to be placed on a priority list. Jane was approved for priority housing but also told she had to find her own property in the private rental market. NSATS assisted Jane with a priority housing appeal and advocated on her behalf, arguing that this was not a suitable housing option. The housing provider later made an offer of housing to Jane. Jane and her family are now permanently housed in a suitable community housing property.

Key Statistics

Northern Sydney Area Tenants’ Service

2004

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



811
Identify as male



1192
Identify as female



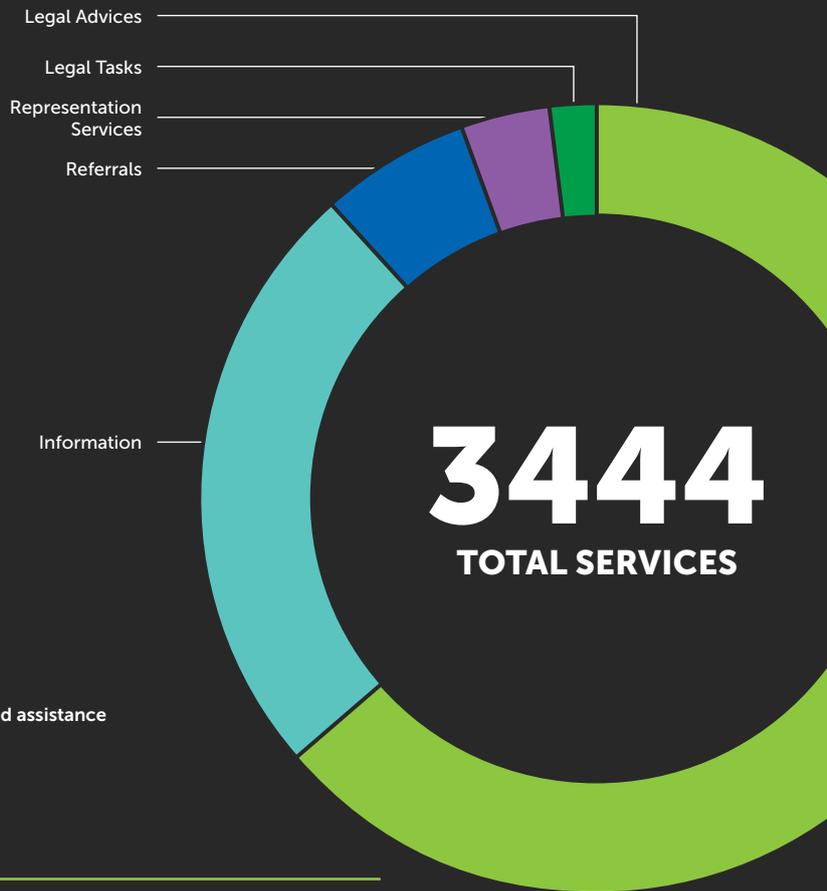
0.5%
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



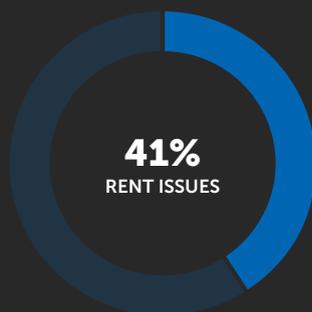
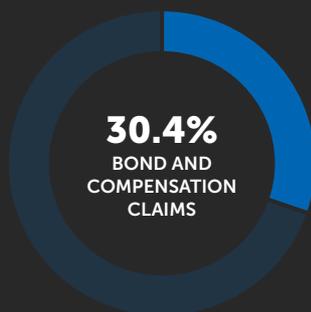
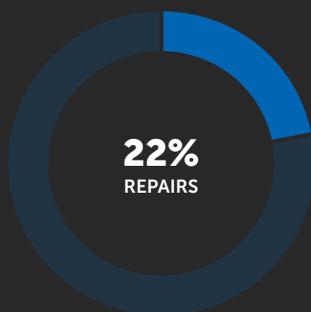
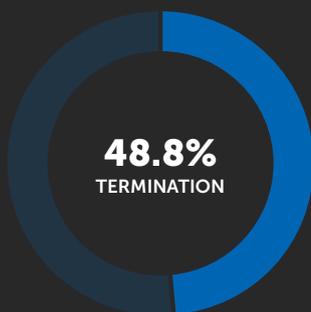
92.9%
Of tenants had a positive resolution rate where NSATS provided assistance



2013
Advices provided to clients



BREAKDOWN OF ISSUES



Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service

The Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service (IWTAAS) is a free legal service for private and social housing tenants, boarders and residential community residents living in the inner west of Sydney. Our advocates provide telephone advice, advocacy and representation in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). The service also engages in law reform and systemic work to improve the rights of tenants in NSW.

Key legal issues addressed

Tenancy rights and obligations including repairs/renovations, termination, rent arrears, access and privacy, strata scheme tenants, social housing and community housing tenants, ending a tenancy early, share housing, locks and security, uncollected goods, sale of premises.

Key partners

- NSW Fair Trading
- Tenants Union of NSW

Key events and achievements

The Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service have received timely assistance from Johnson, Winter and Slattery, which began when tenants' were overwhelmed by the impact of COVID-19. Under the program, secondee lawyers have assisted our tenants' services to meet the greatly increased community demand.

IWTAAS are a part of Inner West Council's Housing and Affordability Advisory Committee. The service partners with Marian Centre to assist refugee workers, facilitating direct referrals for women who have tenancy issues relating to domestic and family violence.

Advice clinics

One Stop Shop

First Thursday of each month

Key partners: Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

IWTAAS attends a regular One Stop Shop hosted by Newtown Neighbourhood Centre. The community hub brings together essential services including IWTAAS and Centrelink to provide face-to-face assistance to all members of the community.

Duty Advocacy

Tuesdays

Key partners: Duty advocacy at NCAT

IWTAAS tenants' advocates attend NCAT make themselves available to unrepresented tenants. Our advocates provide assistance with research, advice and conciliation through to formal hearing.

Community legal education

IWTAAS presented a session at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre community forum on new DV provisions in the RTA attended by sector workers, and a tenancy information session for a group of asylum seekers who were preparing to leave supported accommodation in Marrickville and enter the private rental market. Later this year our community legal education went digital. An excellent MLC resource for tenants is found on the MLC and Tenants Union NSW website. The factsheet responds to FAQs about tenancy legislation and the Evictions Moratorium in light of COVID-19.

Law reform

IWTAAS provided submissions to reviews of RTA 2010 and the Regulations. The service was also involved in targeted feedback sessions to NSW Fair Trading about DV and family violence reforms and a Boarding Houses Act round table network discussion.

In October 2018 IWTAAS advocate Julia Murray wrote to NCAT raising an issue where our client who had an AVO against her ex-partner was put in position where she had to be in the waiting room and hearing room with this person. There was no protocol on how to deal with this issue even though it had been raised with NCAT before our client attended. The Tenants' Union raised this issue on our behalf at an NCAT Consultative Forum. The Registrar replied regarding the particular case but decided to deal more formally with the issue. There is now a DV protocol on the NCAT website to ensure that women can safely attend Tribunal hearings.

Appeal for suitable housing

IWTAAS assisted Claudia, a social housing tenant, who was facing termination of her tenancy due to refusing what the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) considered a reasonable offer of an alternative property. The property did not meet her housing needs and the DCJ failed to comply with their own policies related to these types of offers. IWTAAS successfully appealed the decision. Subsequently, the DCJ located a suitable property for Claudia in a few days where she has since been transferred.

Keeping family together

IWTAAS assisted a young Aboriginal woman, Kira, living in a DCJ Housing property. She requested a transfer because she needed family assistance to help care for her daughter. Kira's daughter lives with disabilities and had been contemplating self-harm. DCJ Housing rejected the transfer request. IWTAAS lodged a first-tier review for Kira seeking a change of that decision and categorisation of the transfer as "at risk." The review was successful, and Kira has moved to be closer to her daughter.

Key Statistics

Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service

1528

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



629
Identify as male



890
Identify as female



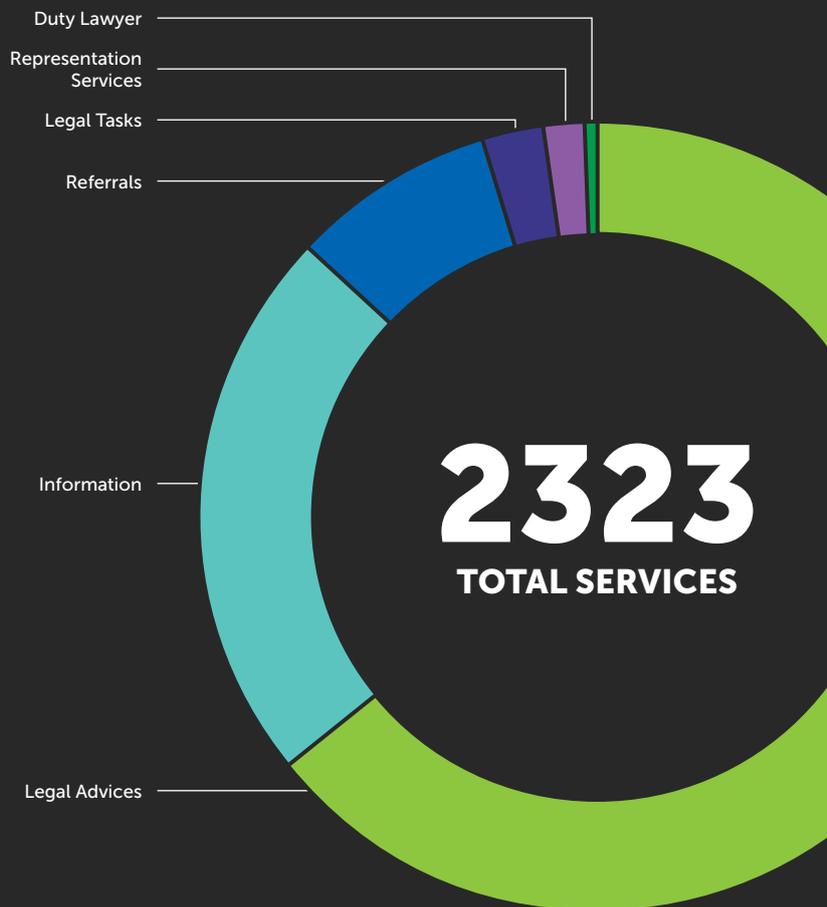
3
Identify as non-binary



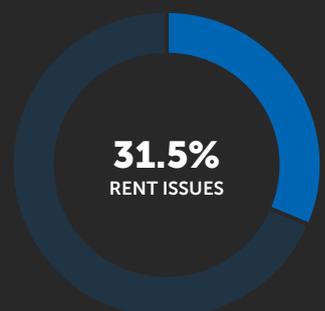
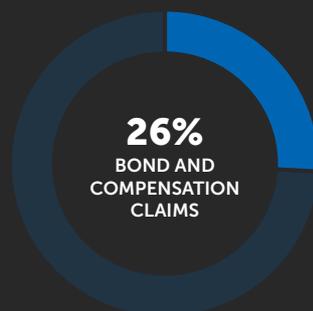
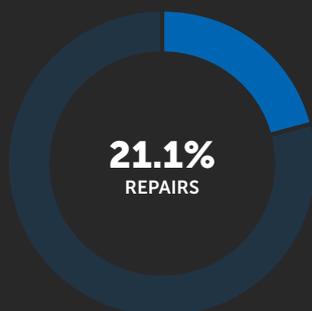
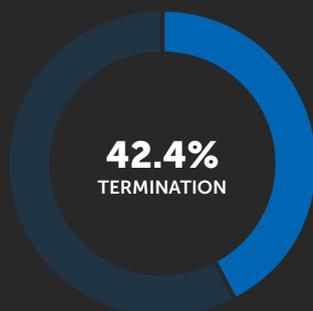
2.2%
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



86.2%
Of tenants had a positive resolution rate where IWTAAS provided assistance



BREAKDOWN OF ISSUES



Strata Collective Sales Advocacy Service

2019-2020 saw the Strata Collective Sales Advocacy Service (SCSAS) continue to provide effective and efficient legal advice, casework assistance, legal representation and community legal education to owner-occupiers of strata schemes throughout NSW. From 1 July 2019, the SCSAS has experienced a strong level of growth in demand for the service with a 60.7% increase in services provided compared to 2018-2019.

Key legal issues addressed

Issues with repairs and renovations, administration and management of a strata scheme and the operation and enforcement of by-laws, including neighbourhood disputes.

Our partners

- NSW Fair Trading
- Seniors Rights Service – Robert Lollbach, Mitchell Harvey
- Law Access NSW
- Alex Ilkin & Co
- Bannermans Lawyers
- Turnbull Bowles Lawyers
- Watson & Watson Lawyers
- Ian McKnight
- Legal Aid NSW
- Collin, Biggers & Paisley

Key events and achievements

The service has had successful outcomes through both dispute resolution and the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). Our strata service has a focus on owner-occupiers who live with a disability and are financially or socially vulnerable and disadvantaged. During the COVID-19 pandemic, SCSAS continued to deliver direct legal services to owner-occupiers and explored alternative methods of providing advice such as by email.

A new tenancy-strata solicitor combined position has effectively allowed the service to provide a holistic and efficient service for strata-scheme tenants in collaboration with NSATS and IWTAAS. The new position has allowed

Marrickville Legal Centre to avoid the 'referral roundabout' for clients by providing tenancy and strata law advice to clients within one session.

The service also welcomed three University of Sydney Public Interest placement students for 13 weeks. The students assisted SCSAS with obtaining client instructions, conducting legal research, preparing advices and with law reform projects. In addition, the service worked with two secondees from Johnston Winter & Slattery in June 2020 who assisted the service with client intake, advice, advocacy and legal research.

SCSAS has continued to ensure stakeholder engagement throughout this period and has remained engaged with the NCAT, Law Access NSW, Legal Aid NSW and other community legal services including the Home Building Advocacy Service and the strata service at Seniors Rights Centre. The SCSAS also continues to be a part of the NCAT Consultative Forum for the Strata Division to ensure that the interests of owner-occupiers are heard.

The SCSAS service continued to develop its networks. The SCSAS continues to have a private solicitor referral list with specialised strata law firms that we can provide to clients who we are unable to represent.

Community legal education

The service continued its strong focus on conducting community legal education (CLE) throughout NSW to better educate vulnerable and disadvantaged owners within strata schemes. With COVID-19 limiting outreach, the service delivered a number of sessions online via Facebook, Instagram and the Centre's website. The service was involved in several CLE sessions including:

- Attendance at the Tenants' Union of NSW training as 'strata experts' to assist in training new tenant advocates' in relation to strata scheme tenants.
- Publishing 'legal tips' CLE on the Marrickville Legal Centre Facebook Page and Website in April, May and June 2020, which included information on:
 - How best to deal with strata levies and strata debts during COVID-19 with a special focus on the possibility of waiving interest and entering into payment plans
 - Strata scheme tenants and by-laws
 - The impact of COVID-19 on repairs, renovations and access in strata schemes

Key Statistics

Strata Collective Sales Advocacy Service

403

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



167
Identify as male



234
Identify as female



94
Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



124
Living with a disability



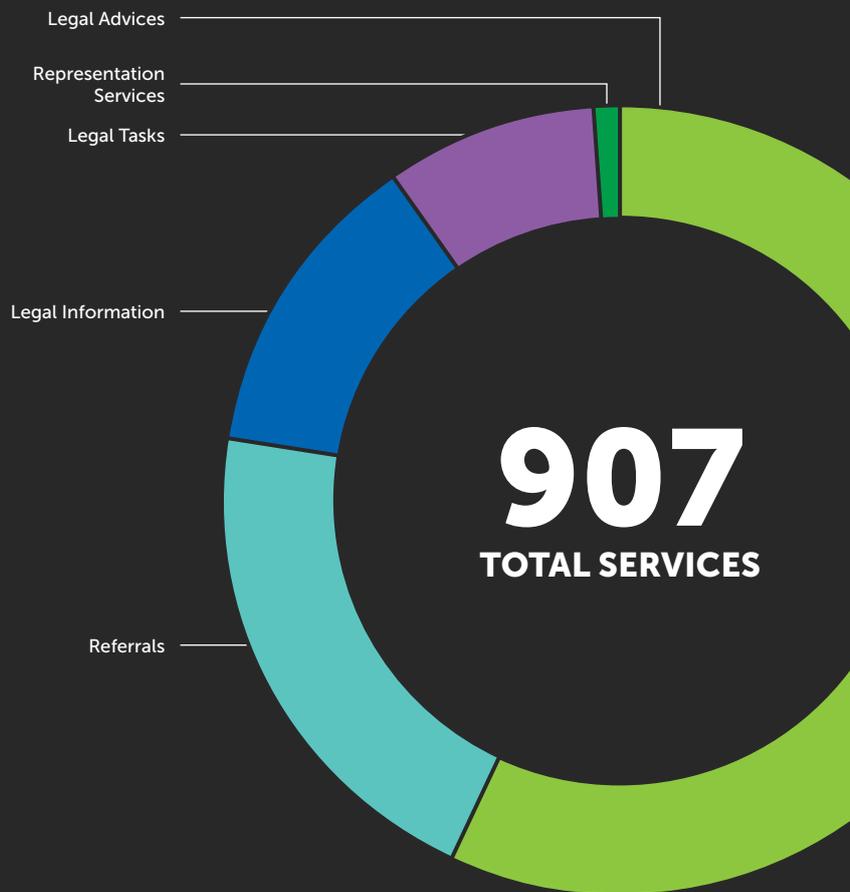
362
Experiencing financial disadvantage



20
Have experienced domestic & family violence



1
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander client



Safety in a strata scheme

Sandra is a 45-year-old owner-occupier in a strata scheme from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. She is a survivor of domestic violence. Sandra was assisted by SCSAS in resolving an issue concerning unapproved renovations and a by-law compliance issue. She installed a safety screen door years ago due to fears for her safety, but it was not compliant with by-laws. She did not seek approval for this as it was a common property alteration. The service assisted Sandra with ongoing dispute resolution with the Owners Corporation. The service arranged for three locks and a stronger mesh to be installed to the client's proposed screen door, which was stronger than the door she installed years ago. The Owner's Corporation did this at no cost to Sandra and no further action was taken against our client for the unapproved installation.

Long-term security planning

Morgan is a 25-year-old vulnerable owner-occupier who's only asset was her 1-bedroom unit in Sydney. Morgan suffered from physical and psychological disabilities and was being pursued in the Local Court for an unpaid strata debt. Due to her mental health, Morgan had ignored a statement of claim for a few months. Morgan approached the SCSAS when the Owners Corporation notified her, they were applying for default judgment and serving her a bankruptcy notice the next day. SCSAS urgently applied to the Local Court for a payment plan on the same day with an explanatory email to the registry. The Local Court immediately approved the plan and the client was able to avoid any further litigation or threats of bankruptcy.





Team MLC gets active for access to justice

For the first time in September 2019, Marrickville Legal Centre joined the Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival in partnership with pro bono partners Hall & Wilcox.

Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival regularly involves over 40,000 participants from over 66 countries. The festival offers a glimpse of the best parts of being a Sydneysider, allowing marathon runners, casual exercisers and families to get active while enjoying the beautiful Sydney Harbour. The Festival also raises money for dozens of charity partners each year, giving runners the chance to make their race count.

On Sunday 15 September, members from Team MLC pounded the pavement from Bradfield Park in Milsons Point to the Sydney Opera House in the 3.5km Fun Run, 10km Bridge Run, Half Marathon and Full Marathon. In doing so, our team raised over \$5000 to help our Employment Law Service achieve great outcomes for exploited workers.

Thank you to all the fundraisers and special individuals who donated to our cause, and to Hall & Wilcox who made it all possible. Your support enables us to provide free legal services to the most vulnerable in our community.

Our board



Graham Jenkins | Chair

Graham has over twenty years' experience running businesses. Until recently, he chaired the Board of a private company. As a consultant and investor, he advises clients on many business issues. He lends that experience as a judge for the Telstra Business Awards. Graham is a former Board Member of the Recruitment and Consulting Services Association and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He has an Honours Degree in Economics, a Diploma in Human Resources and a Masters in Labour Law from Sydney University.



Brent Goldman | Treasurer

Brent has worked as a specialist in corporate finance for over 20 years and is currently a Corporate Advisory Partner with Nexia Australia. Brent gained his experience as a Corporate Finance Partner in one of the world's largest accounting firms where he spent 10 years in the London office before returning to their Sydney office. Brent has also worked on the client side, working in the corporate development and strategy team in an ASX 20 company. Brent is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants in Australia & New Zealand, a Business Valuation Specialist of Chartered Accountants in Australia & New Zealand, a Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australasia, an AFSL Authorised Representative and a Graduate of the Institute of Company Directors.



Lainie Anderson | Secretary

Lainie works for Sydney Local Health District as a Business Manager, currently based at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. She has worked in the public health system for several years, rotating through local, State and Federal organisations. Lainie previously worked as a mentor with the University of Wollongong, educating socioeconomically disadvantaged children and adolescents about their potential to complete tertiary education. She has completed a Bachelor of Psychology with the University of Wollongong, a Postgraduate Certificate in Criminology from Charles Sturt University and a Masters in Health Service Management with the University of Sydney.



Simon Fitzpatrick

Simon works as a barrister at 7 Wentworth Selborne chambers, and joined the MLC board in June 2016 to further an initiative to encourage junior barristers to provide pro bono assistance to MLC's clients. Since the relationship between MLC and 7 Wentworth Selborne commenced, barristers from the chambers have assisted numerous MLC clients in both criminal and civil matters and provided pro bono advice to the Centre. Before joining the New South Wales Bar in 2010, Simon worked in New York for eight years, taught at the Sydney University Law School, and was an associate at the High Court. He studied Arts and Law at Sydney University, and has a Master's degree from Harvard Law School.



Ian Bennett

Ian is an experienced workplace Senior Associate with Sparke Helmore Lawyers specialising in employee relations, work health and safety and coronial inquests. Ian has been involved and affiliated with the Marrickville Legal Centre for over five years through various pro-bono initiatives including the employment law advice service and evening advice sessions. He also frequently accepts referrals to provide ongoing pro-bono assistance and support to clients introduced through the Legal Centre. Ian has recently been recognised as one of Australia's highest achieving lawyers when he won the 2016 Lawyers Weekly 30 under 30 Award in the Workplace Relations category.



Alexandra Conroy

Alexandra is the founder and CEO of Reliant Healthcare, an ACHS-accredited business focused on providing professional and heartfelt care to communities in need. Alexandra has extensive experience as a company director leading and advising organisations that operate commercially and provide a tangible social benefit. She sits on advisory committees for the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards and Pride in Health + Wellbeing and has been awarded the Australian Institute of Management's Young Manager of the Year. Alexandra has graduated from the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds a Bachelor of Economic and Social Sciences and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Sydney.



David Johnson

David operates his own accountancy firm and has been a Chartered Accountant since 1981. His practice assists individuals and families with businesses and investments. David also has experience as a director of both public and private companies and has been an accountant in the community sector for both a community centre and a disability support centre. He has a particular interest in promoting financial literacy amongst disadvantaged individuals and community groups.



Peter Hunt

Peter has been a Solicitor since 1993, specialising in motor accident litigation. Peter is a Law Society Accredited Specialist in personal injury. Peter was a Director of Curwoods Legal Services before the merger of Curwoods and McCabes on 1 July 2018. He is now a Director of McCabe Curwood Pty Ltd. Peter is also a Voluntary Director of IDEAS (Information on Disability, Education and Awareness Services). Peter is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has training as a Mediator.



Melissa Marshall

Melissa works at Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia in law reform and policy. Prior to this role, she commenced her legal career in private practice working in family law and domestic violence; and has held a Board Director position at the Central Coast Community Legal Centre and Chaired the Central Coast Young Lawyers Sub-Committee. She has also had extensive experience in the community legal sector working as a volunteer, practical legal training student and solicitor in several centres. Melissa holds a Bachelor of Social Science (Criminology and Social Science and Policy), Juris Doctor (Graduate Law) and a Master of Laws (Family Law). Melissa was recently a finalist in three categories at the NSW Women Lawyers Achievement Awards.



Margie Martin

Margie Martin worked as a solicitor at Marrickville Legal Centre for 18 years, where she held various roles starting as generalist solicitor. In 2009 Margie started MLC's first family law mediation service working with family relationship centres including key partnerships in Sydney's south. Prior to her time at Marrickville Legal Centre, Margie practiced in Melbourne including at private practice Walsh Johnstone & Associates, and at Monash University community legal centre, auspiced at the time by the students' union. Margie studied at Sydney University and Melbourne University, graduating in 1985 with a Bachelor Arts/Law with Honours in Sociology.

Our staff

Vasili Maroulis | Managing Principal Solicitor
Justin Abi-Daher | Assistant Principal Solicitor
Chris Anderson | Operations Manager
Greg Oong | Finance Manager
Maeve Redmond | Fundraising & Communications Manager

Legal

Lucy Carroll | Solicitor
Bill Clarke | Solicitor
Jake Edwards | Solicitor
Vivian Galanis | Solicitor
Katie Green | Solicitor
Anastasia Kalos | Solicitor
Dr Maree Livermore | Solicitor
Metin Ozmen | Solicitor
Shann Preece | Solicitor
Danny Shaw | Solicitor
Frankie Sullivan | Solicitor
Nicholas Taradilis | Solicitor
Jason Teoh | Solicitor
Susan Winfield | Solicitor
Lisa Woodgate | Solicitor
Naomi Wootton | Solicitor

Tenancy

Martin Barker | Tenants' Advocate
Sarah Broughton-Stalbow | Tenants' Advocate
Elizabeth De Freitas | Tenants' Advocate
Charlie Faulder | Tenants' Advocate
Sousan Ghecham | Tenants' Advocate
Jevan Griffiths | Tenants' Advocate
Elizabeth Hunt | Tenants' Advocate
Julia Murray | Tenants' Advocate
Olivia Nielsen-Gurung | Tenants' Advocate
Leanne O'Reilly | Tenants' Advocate
Eloise Parrab | Tenants' Advocate
Janice Yeung | Tenants' Advocate

Domestic & Family Violence Service

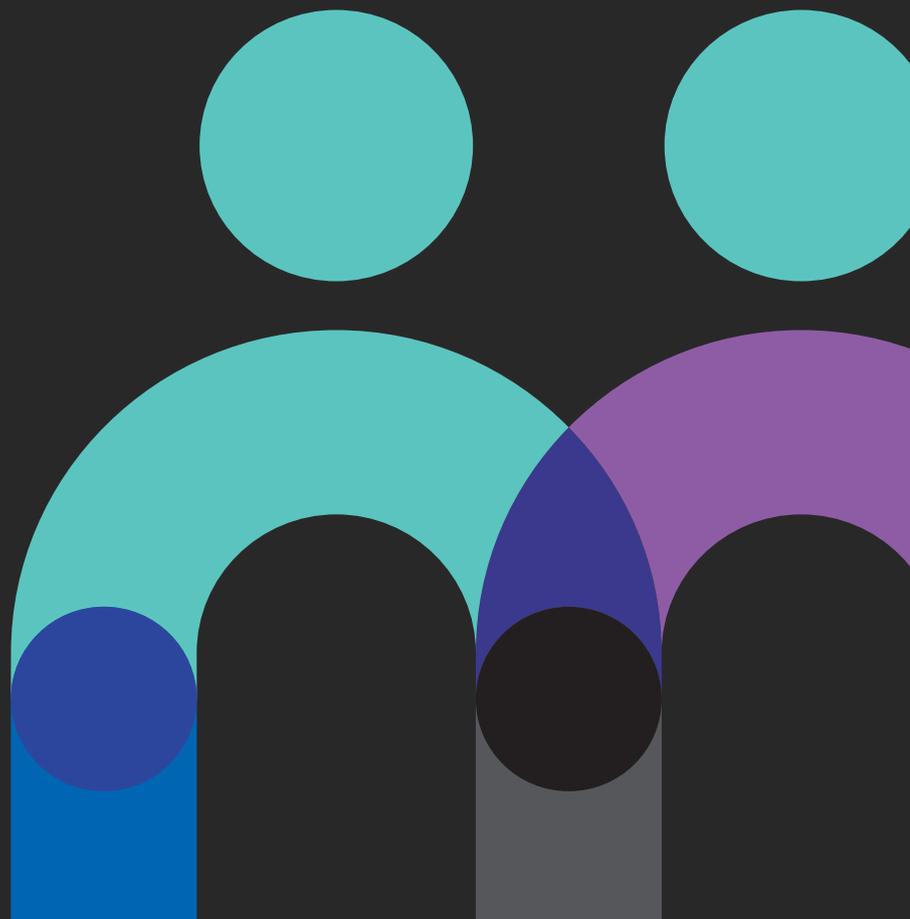
Loren Katafono | Domestic Violence Worker
Zoe McMillan | Domestic Violence Worker

Migrant Employment Legal Service

Tu Le | Community Worker
Justin Pen | Solicitor

Admin

Vasileios Bebedelis | Admin Assistant
Emma Fitzpatrick | Client Intake Supervisor
Alexander Kalos | Client Intake Supervisor
Rachael Polt-Cai | Project Assistant
Kristen Tsiamis | Client Intake Supervisor



Our volunteers

Our volunteers and supporters are the lifeblood of Marrickville Legal Centre. Their hard work helps us to connect people to justice. MLC volunteers are a vibrant and diverse group, just like the community we serve.



90
Front Desk Volunteers



28
Practice Legal Training students



251
Evening Advice Volunteers



12+
Community languages are spoken by our volunteers



5
Daytime Advice Volunteers



12
PLTs were placed through MLC volunteer pathways





Our volunteers

Volunteer solicitors & legal assistants

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Sydney Abba | Marion Carthew | Kate Gillingham |
| Benjamin Adams | Ashleigh Chen | Rebecca Goh |
| Kassandra Adams | Lucy Chen | Julie Gordon |
| Tiara Agarwal | Melissa Chen | Matthew Gradidge |
| Ella Alexander | Rui Chen | Hannah Gray |
| Chris Anderson | Brianna Clark | Simon Grey |
| Maria Andreou | Taylah Cochrane | Maria Guarnieri |
| Cassandra Andrews | Renee Compain-Helsloot | Grace Gunn |
| Phil Andrews | James Connell | Adam Guy |
| Simon Angello | Lisa Cooke-Dolan | Fevzi Halil |
| Christopher Aoun | Glennis Court | Cara Hammerton |
| Azira Arif | Amelia Couttes | Louise Hang |
| Gareth Austin | Robyn Coyle | Tania Hanna |
| Samantha Auty | Max Dalton | Anna Harley |
| Monique Azzopardi | Anne Day | Christopher Hartcher |
| Briana Bakaric | Erika De Pellegrin | Therese Hartcher |
| Penelope Baker | Sahar Dickson | Isabelle Hazell |
| Shinelle Baker | Georgina Dodd | Caroline He |
| Christina Barnsley | Steven Doupe | Mindy Hemakumara |
| Genevieve Barry | Magaret Driscoll | Myfanwy Henry-Jones |
| Vasilios Bebidilas | Eva Dumbrell | Susan Heyne |
| Ian Bennett | Kailen Durrant | Tom Hillyard |
| Jade Bond | Robert Eaves | Kate Hinchcliffe |
| Paul Bonjour | Katherine Edwards | Amanda Hioe |
| Gabrielle Bower | Assil El-Ali | Susannah Hoffman |
| Olivia Boyages | Zoe Elliot | Kayt Hogan |
| Nick Boyce | Regina Featherstone | Art Honeysett |
| Andrea Boyd-Boland | Eugene Fedoseev | Anthony Hong |
| Rachel Le Branksy | Sonali Fernando | Daniel Hu |
| Myles Bryant | Kim Fisher | Peter Hughes |
| Anna Bryson | Olivia Fisher | Sebastian Huynh |
| Andrea Buritica Toro | Hannah Fordham | Seun Idowu |
| Antonia Cacopardo | Ellen Fulthorp | Tarang Immidi |
| Margaret Cameron | Sabrina Garcia | Louise Jackson |
| Sonya Campbell | Corey Gauci | Shardai Jiminez |
| Lucy Caroll | Jayde Gillard | Ashlee Johnson |

Volunteer solicitors & legal assistants

Elizabeth Jones	Barnaby McDonald	Cheryl Po	Jason Teoh
Jennifer Kakakios	Madeleine McIntosh	Rachel Polt Cai	Francesco Terranova
Alexander Kalos	Conor McNair	Shann Preece	Hugo Thomas
Marie Karykis	Jessica Meech	Douglas Prime	Ajaratu Thomas
Rebecca Kazzi	Essi Merivaara	Thomas Primrose	Samantha Thornely
Amber Kelly	Zac Mills	Deone Provera	Lana Tian
Brendan Kennedy	Sana Minhas	Joanne Queiros	Sebastian Tonkin
Georgia Kennedy	Nadica Mirceska	Raymond Quinn	Ivy Tran
Joe Kennedy	Rob Muir	Fareed Qureshi	Samantha Treflietti
Nathan Kennedy	Tara Mulholand	Sam Rabin	Bahar Turkmener
Clare Kerley	Patrick Mullane	Stephanie Raciti	Lydia Turman
Zynal Khan	Jean Mullick	Kara Ramsay	Joanna Turnbull
Eileen King	Darcy Munce	Alanna Rennie	Holly Turner
Johnny Kong	Lisa Munro	Holly Ritson	Kasey Tyler
Sheldon Korneluk	Georgina Murphy-Haste	Jeremy Roby	Elizabeth Utting
Jelena Kovacevic	Teagan Naidu	Sandra Rodriguez	Andrea van der Kuijlen
Jacinta Lagana	William Nash	Kym Roylance	Abby van der Velde
Carina Lam	Danny Nguyen	Marcela Salgado	Jodie Vella
Kenneth Lau	Mai Nguyen	Osman Samin	Marcus Vella
Rachel le Branksy	Quyen Nguyen	Sarita Samleerangkul	Matthew Vickers
Rosetta Lee	Vivian Nguyen	Lauren Sanderson	Antonia Vo
Jeremy Leith	Jackie Nicholas	Marie Selim	Sarah Walsh
Bethan Lewis	Timothy Nicholls	Sanjay Selvakumaran	Steven Wang
Justin Liang	Jonathan Nigro	Matthew Shepherd	Eden Weller
Claire Limbach	John Nolan	Scott Sherwen	Alisa Wicks
Caitlin Lloyd	Kerry O'Brien	Sarah Shin	Guy Williams
Jessica Luker	Mollie O'Connor	Natalie Sinclair	Jennifer Williams
Oksana Lutak	Conor O'Gorman	Emma Slaytor	Tineka Winter
Olivia Lynch	Terence O'Riain	Jaye Smale	Alicia Wong
Andrew M	Marco Olea	Jordan Smith	Jessica Xu
Lynley Mackay	Lindsay Owen-Taylor	Nicole Smith	Ashleigh Xuereb
Angela Manson	Dan Payne	Candice Sng	Andrew Yahl
Zach Marrett	Justin Pen	Emmanuel Sokias	Erina Yip
Nicholas Masias	Monica Perotti	Stephen Somerville	James Zhao
Francis Maxwell	Marlo Perry	James Stalan	Yingzhou (Judy) Zhou
Kate McCallum	Helen Pham	Kate Sullivan	Codie Croasdale

Our volunteers

Client intake volunteers

Suma Agastya	Jacky Jam
Benedict Akunor	Marcus James
Cassandra Ang	Sue Jenkins
Harris Aziz	Joshua Johnson
Caitlin Blackley	Nicholas Jones
Portia Brajkovic	May Karim
Marco Angelo Canu	Denise Katidis
Alaa Chami	Paul Libreri
Tanya Chen	Gemma Liles
Vickie Chen	Julia Lim
Lily Chester	Ying Yi Lim
Tutti Copping	Michael Lim-Howe
Emma Cottle	Ellen Loh
Chloe Courtenay	Casper Lu
Hannah Coward	Brian Massone
Sanjeev Desai	Elena McNiece
Kate Edmondson	Eden McSheffrey
Sajja El Assaad	Stephanie Mitrovska
Nicole Ellul-Thorn	Maria Angelica Monica Molina
Therese Findlay	Darcy Munce
Samuel Fitzgerald	Vishnu Narayanan
Bridget Flaherty	Edna Ng
Panagiotis Fountotos	Tze Choong Nge
Jonell Georges	Thuy Ngan Ha Nguyen
Nathaniel Gleeson	Rebecca Noonan
Sebastian Gray	Eloise Ottery
Chelsea Hao	Seren Ozdemir
George Hartley-Wilson	Sian Pannach
Harrison Hendriks	Danisha Pogai
Beatrice Ho	Miranda Ramjattan
Olivia Hoe	Julia Saab
Adelaide Holm	Mrithika Shankarla
Andy (Zeyu) Hu	Alan Shen
Liewen (Levi) Hu	Aakriti Shoree
Miranda Hutchesson	Shivam Singh

Daytime advice volunteers

Rod Stockell
 Ken Pogson
 Jackie Nicholas
 Naomi Wootton
 Lucy Carroll

Practical Legal Training volunteers

Alexandra Alder
 Chris Anderson
 Sarah Barth
 Michael Can
 Liam Casey
 Nicholas Chambers
 James Cole
 Derek Dao
 Pranali Das
 Kate Edmondson
 Emma Fitzpatrick
 Katharine Fu
 Armity Hashkavaei
 Samantha Lawford
 Colin Maher
 Samantha Marsh
 Kaori Nihsioka-Lopez
 Nikki Perry
 Delphine Rabet
 Nicholas Taradilis
 Jason Teoh
 Kristen Tsiamis
 Pamela Vassil
 Rika Verma
 Te Raina Watego
 Danielle Wilson
 Donny Wright

Communications volunteers

Jimmy Atkinson
 Dylan Berg
 Nikita Bhatia
 Dash Buxton
 Cate Evans
 Helena Grima-Barraza
 Amishi Handoo
 Anna Lombardo
 Laura Polito
 Adam Rothwell
 Eileesha Smith
 Kayleigh Yap



In memoriam

In memory of Zachariah Varghese Marrett

2 October 2019

Many of you would remember Zach Marrett, who volunteered at the Centre for well over a decade. Zach was an employment solicitor on the Tuesday night roster. Zach was a totally committed volunteer, he rarely missed an evening advice session and could be counted upon when we were short of volunteers on other nights.

One night the evening advice supervisor received a call from Zach, who was being treated at RPA emergency, having had an accident earlier with his bandsaw (Zach was keen on DIY). Zach was calling to say he might be running late but he would still be coming for his shift. It was only after the Emergency Doctor got on the phone that Zach could be persuaded to go home and recuperate instead of attending his Marrickville Legal Centre evening advice shift.

Zach initially trained as an engineer and later in life he qualified as a solicitor. Zach was always willing to go the extra mile to help disadvantaged people and did a lot of pro bono work for clients of the Centre. Zach really enjoyed the camaraderie of evening advice sessions and being able to assist vulnerable people with their employment problems. Zach was a truly original character, and he is sadly missed by the Tuesday night team and all the staff at the Centre.

Special thanks

Marrickville Legal Centre is thankful to the indispensable support of its partners. With the additional challenges brought by COVID-19 this year, many partners went the extra mile as we worked hard to meet our community's fast-growing need for legal services.

These partners assist with our Centre's legal needs through our Pro Bono Program freeing up resources so we can direct focus to our most vulnerable clients.

Baker McKenzie

This year, our partners Baker McKenzie continued to provide our Centre with pro bono assistance. Baker McKenzie lends its support through the provision of fortnightly solicitors at MLC's Youth Legal Service Advice Clinic. MLC is additionally grateful to Baker McKenzie for donating laptops from their offices. The repurposed tech helped our team to transition to working from home quickly and safely in the face of COVID-19.

Colin Biggers & Paisley Lawyers

Colin Biggers & Paisley hosts Marrickville Legal Centre's weekly Youth Legal Service Advice Clinic. The Monday night clinic provides advice to people 25 and under. The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation also includes MLC in their workplace giving program. They also lent their expertise to MLC COVID-19 factsheets on legal issues with tenancy and strata. To better enable MLC staff to continue working remotely without disruption, Colin Biggers & Paisley kindly donated several work phones. Colin Biggers & Paisley have also kindly provided a part-time secondee lawyer to our Youth Legal Service.

Gilbert + Tobin

Gilbert + Tobin provide ongoing pro bono assistance at Marrickville Legal Centre's General Law Evening Advice Clinic on Tuesdays, supported by referral pathways for pro bono assistance. Strengthening our strategic priority to drive innovation for access to justice, Gilbert + Tobin have offered their expertise in scoping and planning of Marrickville Legal Centre's first virtual legal assistant. The design team at Gilbert + Tobin are keeping MLC looking professional through ongoing pro bono design.

Hall & Wilcox

Hall & Wilcox this year continued their support to our Centre by regularly supplying lawyers at our Youth Legal Service Advice Clinic as well as advice and ongoing representation to clients at our fortnightly Motor Accident Clinic on Tuesdays through their pre established pro bono referral pathway. Our organisational systems have benefited greatly from Hall & Wilcox's legal knowledge team, and ongoing pro bono referral pathways. A graduate secondment program, which commenced this financial year, has provided crucial support to our civil law team. Hall & Wilcox has also generously provided laptops to the team at our Centre to help everyone work remotely during COVID-19.

HWL Ebsworth Lawyers

Marrickville Legal Centre have continued to develop their partnership with HWL Ebsworth Lawyers through MLC's daytime Civil Law Clinic, which takes place on Tuesdays. Additionally, MLC is grateful to HWL Ebsworth Lawyers for the successful graduate secondee program which has already hosted several wonderful secondees at our offices.

Johnson Winter & Slattery

Marrickville Legal Centre and Johnson Winter & Slattery commenced their pro bono partnership this year. During the height of COVID-19, MLC was greatly impacted by rapidly increasing requests for free legal assistance. Johnson Winter & Slattery stepped in quickly to offer two full time secondees to our Centre to help our elevated demand for tenants' services.

Our funding partners

Attorney-General NSW
Department of Communities and Justice
Fair Trading NSW
Legal Aid NSW
Office of Responsible Gambling Manager

Minter Ellison

Marrickville Legal Centre continued to receive pro bono support from Minter Ellison in the past financial year. Minter Ellison lawyers provided assistance to the Employment Legal Service through research and advice for casework at MLC's Thursday Employment Law Clinic.

Santone Lawyers

Santone Lawyers offer assistance to Marrickville Legal Centre's Employment Law Clinic, held weekly on Thursdays. The clinic assists workers who have faced unfair dismissal, wage theft, or workplace discrimination. Santone Lawyers supports this partnership through a referral pathway for client's needing workers' compensation advice and casework.

Sparke Helmore Lawyers

Marrickville Legal Centre enjoys Sparke Helmore's ongoing assistance with our Civil and Employment Law Clinic, General Advice Clinic, and Family Law Advice Clinic. Sparke Helmore Lawyers also assist our Youth Legal Service and provide ad hoc workplace law advice. Together Sparke Helmore Lawyers and Marrickville Legal Centre have launched a 'Low Bono Project' which aims to assist people who cannot afford private solicitors and do not meet requirements for Legal Aid or community legal assistance. This program was significant given increasing demand for MLC's Employment Law Service due to the impact of COVID-19. Sparke Helmore helped MLC on more projects including Legal Health Checks and policies for fundraising and governance. Sparke Helmore also provided three secondees to Marrickville Legal Centre this past year.

Barristers

We would like to acknowledge and pay special tribute to the many barristers and solicitors who have donated hours of pro bono assistance to the Centre.

7 Wentworth Selborne

Simon Fitzpatrick
Julie Granger
Shanaka Jayasuriya
Nathan Li
Mark Sheldon
Rhea Thrift
Michael Wells

9 Wentworth Selborne

David Parish

12 Wentworth Selborne

Vanja Bulut

Maurice Byers Chambers

Zoe Alderton
Simon Grey

HB Higgins Chambers

Adam Guy

Henry Parkes Chambers

Kayt Hogan



Financial overview

The 2019/2020 was another successful financial year and builds on the strong financial base that has been developed over the last five years.

This is highlighted below with gross revenues increasing from \$1.6M in 2015 to over \$2.8M for the year. There was an operating surplus of \$242K for the year and was higher than the previous year of \$142K. There was a change in accounting policy during the year which required the recognition of program funding surpluses at end of year to be recognised as income for the year rather than in the following year. There was \$147K of these program surpluses and these have been included in budgets for the 2020/2021 year plus the \$50K from the Federal Government coronavirus boosting cash flow for Employers payment. These program surpluses resulted from the write back of staff provisions on staff leaving and some short-term gaps in employment from staff changes. It has been forecast that these surpluses and the Federal Government coronavirus payment will be utilised in the 2020/2021 year and that the 2020/2021 year is forecast to operate in deficit with expenditure to be incurred against these surpluses.

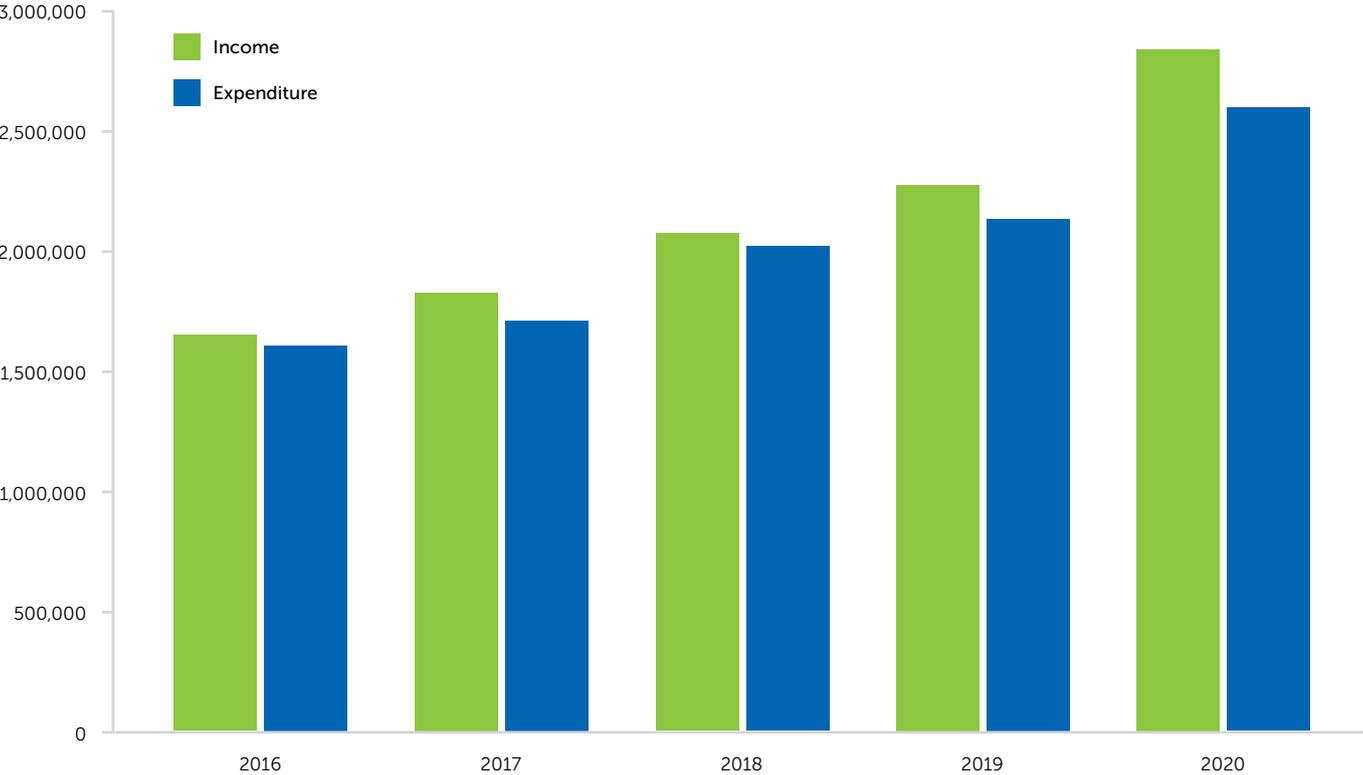
MLC received \$2.86M in income during the year and \$2.68M was from Federal and State Government. We are also starting to develop other sources of income through fundraising and donations and a legal low bono pilot program and we envisage these income sources will develop over the next five to ten years.

MLC's major asset and expense is staffing, and it accounts for over 86% of total expenditure. All other costs including overheads comprises of less than 14% of total expenditure and the cost of overheads (excluding all direct and indirect salary related costs) is generally between 11% to 13% of program funding.

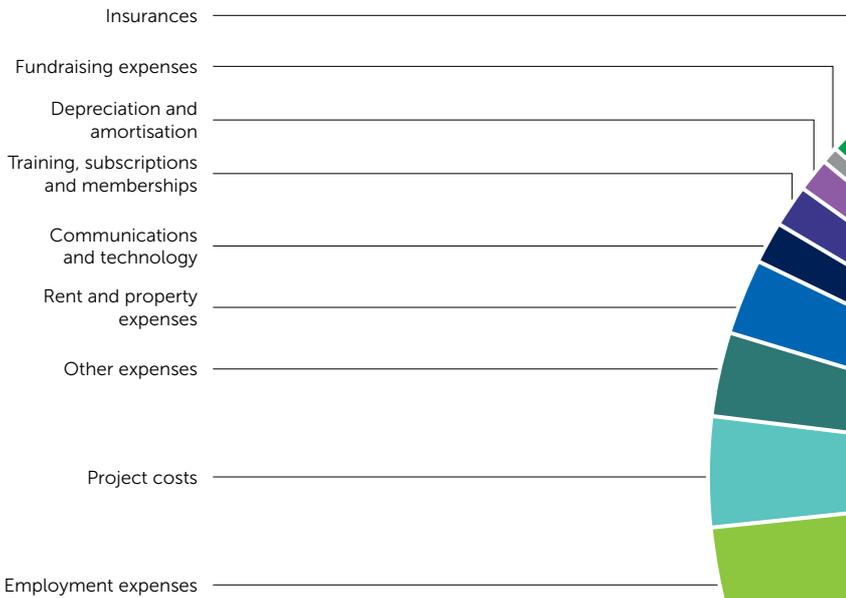
The financial position remains strong with \$752K in retained earnings and strong liquidity ratios with working capital being 1.77x and liquidity at 1.71x.

Greg Oong
Finance Manager

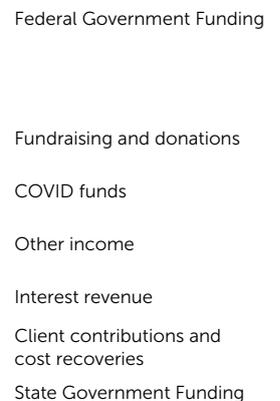
Income v Expenditure



HOW OUR FUNDS ARE USED



WHERE OUR FUNDS COME FROM



Copies of the full financial report can be accessed at www.mlc.org.au

Get involved

Join the movement to create #JusticeForUsAll and get involved at Marrickville Legal Centre

Donate

Support Marrickville Legal Centre by donating at www.mlc.org.au/donate

Volunteer

The Centre regularly seeks daytime volunteers, evening solicitors, and admin volunteers.

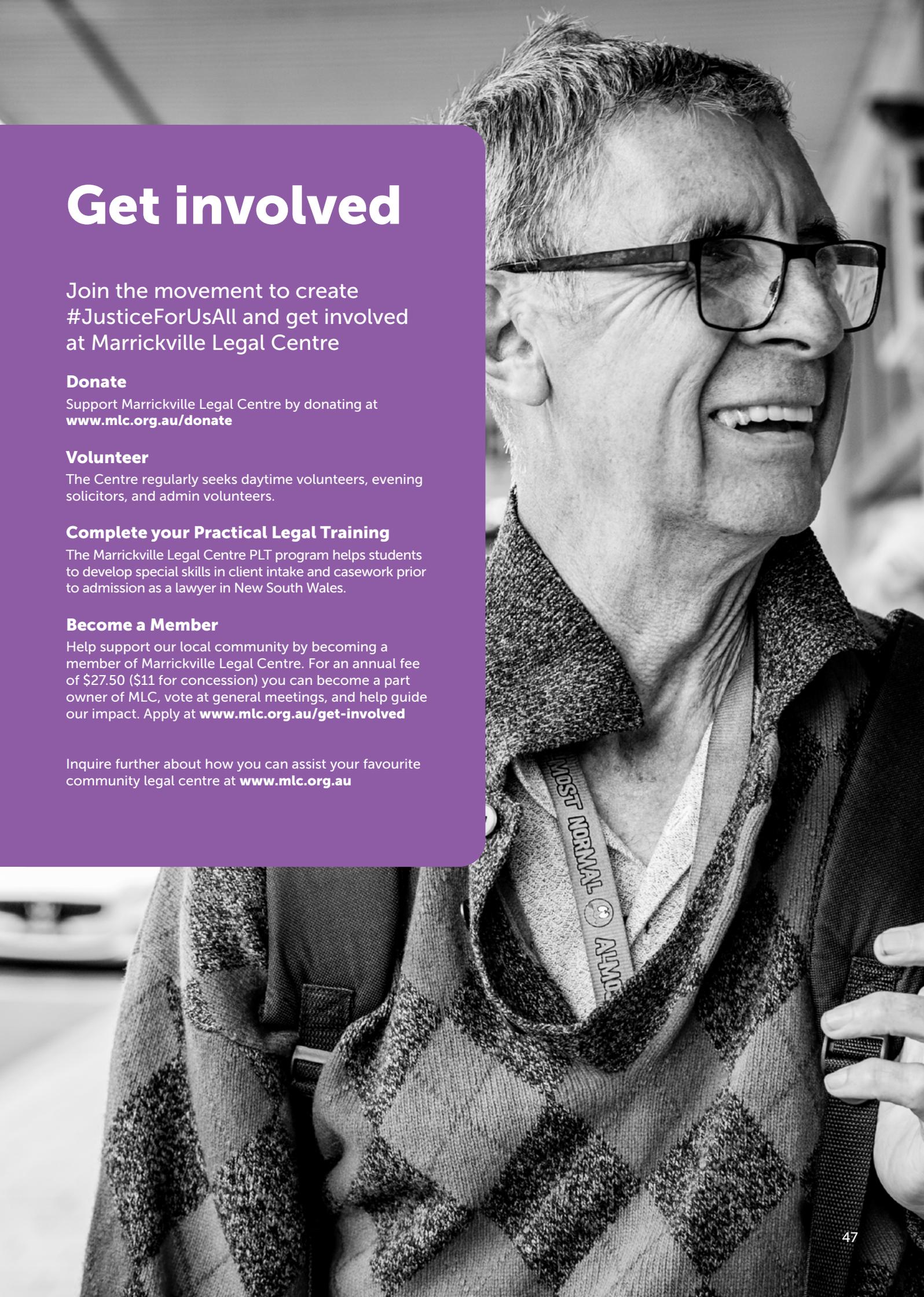
Complete your Practical Legal Training

The Marrickville Legal Centre PLT program helps students to develop special skills in client intake and casework prior to admission as a lawyer in New South Wales.

Become a Member

Help support our local community by becoming a member of Marrickville Legal Centre. For an annual fee of \$27.50 (\$11 for concession) you can become a part owner of MLC, vote at general meetings, and help guide our impact. Apply at www.mlc.org.au/get-involved

Inquire further about how you can assist your favourite community legal centre at www.mlc.org.au



MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE

338 Illawarra Road, Marrickville NSW 2204

ABN: 533 699 012 017

E info@mlc.org.au | **P** 02 9559 2899



**Marrickville
Legal Centre**

From the inner west,
serving NSW

www.mlc.org.au