



Annual Report

2020 - 2021



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

Acknowledgement of Country

Marrickville Legal Centre acknowledges the Gadigal, Wangal, Guringal, Wallumedegai and Cammeraygal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work. We acknowledge that this land holds structures of lore which were practiced for thousands of generations. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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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.

ENERGY AUSTRALIA TRY ONLY

Letter from the Chair of the Board

This has been another eventful and purposeful year in the life of Marrickville Legal Centre. It has also been another very successful year as we continue to provide high quality legal support and advocacy for some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

This letter marks my fifth year as Chair. Several board members also share that milestone and the last five years have seen some progressive changes at Marrickville Legal Centre. I would like to draw attention to two particular successes over the last twelve months, being the organisational restructure and the successful negotiation of MLC's Enterprise Agreement.

These changes were necessary to ensure that MLC could continue to effectively and efficiently serve the needs of our community. They were also important to maintaining and supporting a healthy and engaged workforce.

MLC staff had previously reported that the old structure provided poor career progression options while the limited flexibility within positions compromised team engagement. In line with MLC's commitment to continually review and deliver excellence, a new structure has been designed to address these concerns which enables improved career development, progression and employee engagement across all positions.

This new structure promotes collaboration across teams by creating opportunities for lawyers to practice in different areas of law. This is important because MLC clients often present with multiple legal issues and MLC staff are now better trained to identify and assist. This also helps satisfy the desire of our MLC people to make the biggest difference they can for the people and communities we serve.

Importantly, our recent staff survey reflects the success of this new approach with the overwhelming majority agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement "I am happy in my current role".

These are many of the same staff that worked tirelessly last year to ensure our Centre remained open during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the busiest periods our Centre has ever experienced. The composure and commitment demonstrated by MLC staff last year was exemplary.

The second success relates to the negotiation of our Enterprise Agreement. As a result of the approval of our Enterprise Agreement, our financial position is improving. Our Board acknowledges the excellent work of Finance Manager Greg Oong who budgets for multiple programs from a number of funding sources.

We also acknowledge our Managing Principal Solicitor, Vasili Maroulis who has continued to show leadership and innovation in addressing many challenges over the course of the year while creating an even more harmonious team.

I am of course extremely grateful for the work of my Board colleagues who continue to dedicate the energy and commitment to our issues as they arise. They bring diverse professional backgrounds and invest their valuable time and energy in making sure MLC has a clear vision and strategy in place to meet our charter of supporting the most vulnerable in our community. 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 rely on so heavily to respond to community need, often in challenging circumstances. I thank you all. Were it not for you advocating the rights of our clients, these vulnerable members of society would be grossly disadvantaged.

I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead as we continue to grow MLC's impact.

Graham Jenkins

Chair



Letter from the Managing Principal Solicitor

We are living in a world today where the very concept of community is under threat. This was evident even before the impact of COVID-19 however, its arrival has accelerated this decline. This past year we have worked hard to mitigate these challenges by ensuring our community bonds remain strong.

This is not something we can achieve in isolation, and we passionately believe that if we really want to make a positive change in our community then we - being not-for-profits and the public and private sector - need to work together. For MLC, collaboration is at the heart of our values, helping deliver the most effective service for our community.

That's what we are about at Marrickville Legal Centre – community, specifically providing a safety net for members of our community who experience disadvantage and need our help most. Now more than ever our Centre continues to promote a stronger community via smart and innovative funding choices to the community legal sector. This year we launched NALA with help from Department of Communities and Justice, co-created a referral pathway to help people connect to any CLC in New South Wales, amplified access to justice with Legal Aid NSW, State Library NSW and Johnson Winter Slattery, strengthened legal pathways for First Nations community with Deadly Connections and trained culturally and linguistically diverse community leaders in employment law to help end the exploitation of migrant workers.

We have been pleased to work with and support our sector to increase efficiencies so that we may access more people in need of vital legal help, particularly as we respond to the ongoing economic challenges as a consequence of COVID-19.

As we continue to meet the challenges of COVID-19, the year ahead will be about bringing community together.



Next year our Centre will move to the iconic Addison Road Community Centre where we'll join 43 organisations to strengthen community services. The move provides a unique opportunity to facilitate cross-sector and inter-agency collaboration with diverse services who support the most vulnerable members of the inner-west community.

We have all learned throughout the COVID-19 the importance of community bonds. Our Centre continues toward its vision to create access to #JusticeForUsAll and is excited to work together with partners new and existing at the grassroots level to create lasting change for the community. And so we invite everyone to join us on this journey to do our part to forge a stronger, more engaged and supportive community together.

Vasili Maroulis

Managing Principal Solicitor



Our year at a glance



July

MLC and USYD launched a public interest student internship program

MLC joins the national campaign to #RaiseTheAge of criminal responsibility



August

Domestic & Family Violence Support Service logs on to talk with young people in the community about healthy relationships



September

Team MLC put their runners on for Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival virtual run

MELS attended Addison Road Community Organisation's free weekly legal info & food outreach

The YLS hosted a live Zoom Q&A with Thrive LMA



October

As staff returned to the office we held our first Great Office Bake-off!



November

Report launch webinar: Young people, criminal records and employment discrimination hosted speakers Keenan Mundine, Dean Lloyd and Eleni Psillakis

For NAIDOC 2020 we joined the virtual Sea of Hands

MLC launched the New Age Legal Assistant

MLC coordinates Keeping Women & Children safe forum with Inner West Domestic Violence Liaison Committee

Ordinary members of MLC joined our Annual General Meeting virtually on Zoom



December

Our team worked together at our Centre-wide strategic planning held at Hall & Wilcox

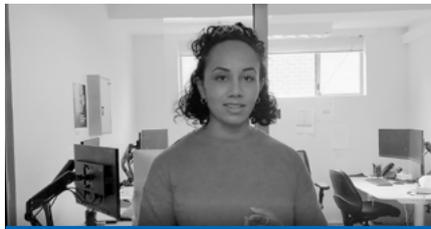
To farewell 2020, our hard-working staff celebrated at tenpin bowling





January

Aboriginal community-controlled justice organisation Deadly Connections joined our Dulwich Hill office for a community justice colocation



February

MLC participated in a Fair Day 2021 video with Immigration Advice Rights Centre, Inner City Legal Centre, HIV AIDS Legal Centre and Refugee Advice & Casework Service



March

IWTAAS established a new tenancy outreach at Alice Street Newtown
Our DVSS and Family Law Service joined the International Women's Day fair at Newtown Neighbourhood Centre
MLC celebrated the invaluable contribution of our volllies at the annual Volunteer Thank You party



April

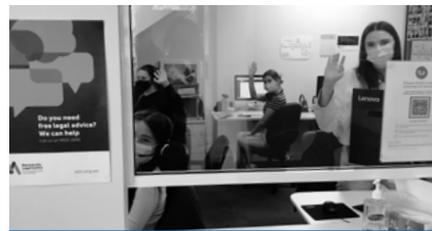
Lucy Carroll and Justin Abi-Daher were nominated for Lawyers Weekly 30 under 30

The YLS released an online Police Powers quiz for Youth Week NSW
Strata Service NSW held online info sessions with TAFE, Georges River Council and Advance Diversity
Low Bono Employment Service reached over half a million dollars recovered for workers



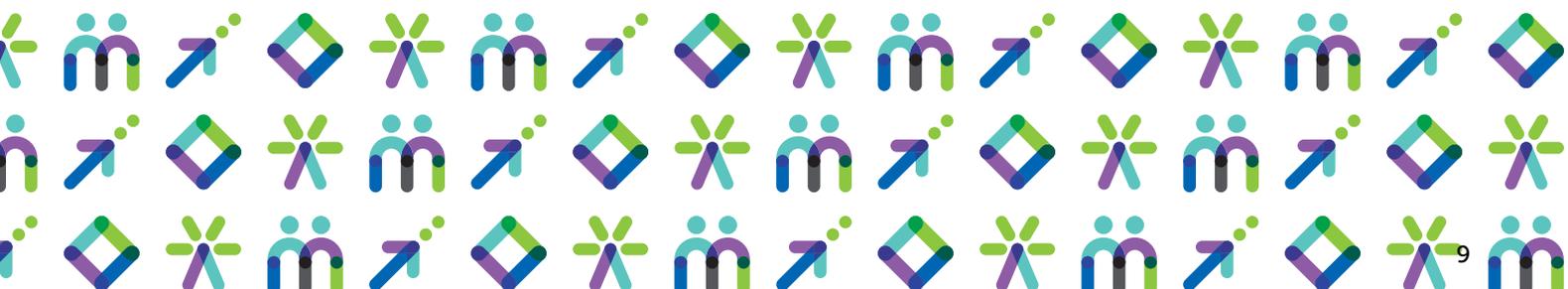
May

MLC hosted Law Week Trivia at Golden Barley Hotel for NSW Law Week 2021
MLC and Deadly Connections worked together to create a sea of hands on National Reconciliation Week for community display



June

Stay-at-home orders come into effect for another Greater Sydney lockdown
Marrickville renovated the reception of its Illawarra Road office thanks to NSW Government's Community Building Partnership and Jo Haylen MP



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 team meets each year to plan and update our Centre's strategic priorities. Each year we reflect on the progress of our Strategic Framework 2020-2023 to track how successfully we're meeting our objectives and continually improve how we help our community and create access to #JusticeForUsAll.



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. Now in its second year, the Low Bono Employment Service is successfully providing accessible fee-for-service legal assistance to people who are financially locked out of private and community legal assistance. The service recovered \$833,215.24 for clients in FY 2020-2021. The Family Law Service is also trialling its own Low Bono service to recover fees for clients in parenting, divorce and property matters.
4. COVID-19 has intensified workplace exploitation for temporary migrants with reported increases in sham contracting and offers of unpaid trial shifts¹. In partnership with Inner City, Kingsford and Redfern Legal Centres, we delivered services to migrant workers and culturally and linguistically diverse groups experiencing employment exploitation through the Migrant Employment Legal Service including with migration law assistance through Baker McKenzie.
5. 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. To better support young people we increased scope and capacity of our state-wide Youth Legal Service for people aged twenty-five and under with the help of Colin Biggers & Paisley.

¹Unions NSW 2020, Wage Theft, The Shadow Market

²<https://goodshep.org.au/news-events/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. We have advanced our digital capacity in FY2021 with the launch of NALA and are working closely with other CLCs to connect people to appropriate legal support in real time through smoother referral pathways (see no. 3).
2. NALA, the New Age Legal Assistant, has delivered 1442 support sessions since its launch, thanks to the Department of Communities and Justice Access to Justice Innovation Fund. The virtual assistant streamlines client intake and provides basic legal information for traffic, tenancy and strata matters on Marrickville Legal Centre's website.
3. We continue to facilitate smoother referral pathways through shared CLC resources to reduce waiting time for vulnerable clients, connecting metropolitan and western Sydney to timely through our growing Client Referral Pathway.
4. We're strengthening ties between MLC and health care professionals in the Sydney Local Health District 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, and incentivising careers in the community legal sector through our volunteer progression policy.
6. We embrace research-based digital solutions to improve access to justice, from virtual service delivery to sustainable paperless practices.
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. We 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 of Marrickville Legal Centre's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our partnership with Deadly Connections is connecting young First Nations people to justice and healing.
3. We engage our staff and volunteers in a healthy, supportive and well-resourced environment. 100% staff are confident of what's expected of them at work (↑ 20%) and 100% staff reported that they feel respected in the workplace (↑ 90%).
4. We provide a clear and compelling rationale for people to support the Centre financially through transparent communication and fundraising initiatives like our June 2021 duty lawyer appeal supporting better outcomes for court users.
5. We are proud to consistently encourage people to support our Centre as volunteers, promoting community engagement and professional development across law and administration.



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 including virtually.
2. We are delivering research-based programs about respectful relationships targeted at young people to prevent family and domestic violence.
3. We are launching Savvy Finance, an e-learning program to help women identify and overcome financial abusen.
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. This year we proudly established new partnerships across government, corporate and community sectors.



Chat with NALA

Launched in November 2020 on mlc.org.au, online chatbot New Age Legal Assistant (NALA) is a self-help tool helping clients to make informed choices about their legal matters through artificially intelligent legal support.

Funded by the Access to Justice Innovation Fund from the Department of Communities and Justice, NALA ensures our solicitors and tenants' advocates can attend to the most critical incoming matters from our community's most vulnerable by alleviating much of the high-volume, low complexity issues we receive online.

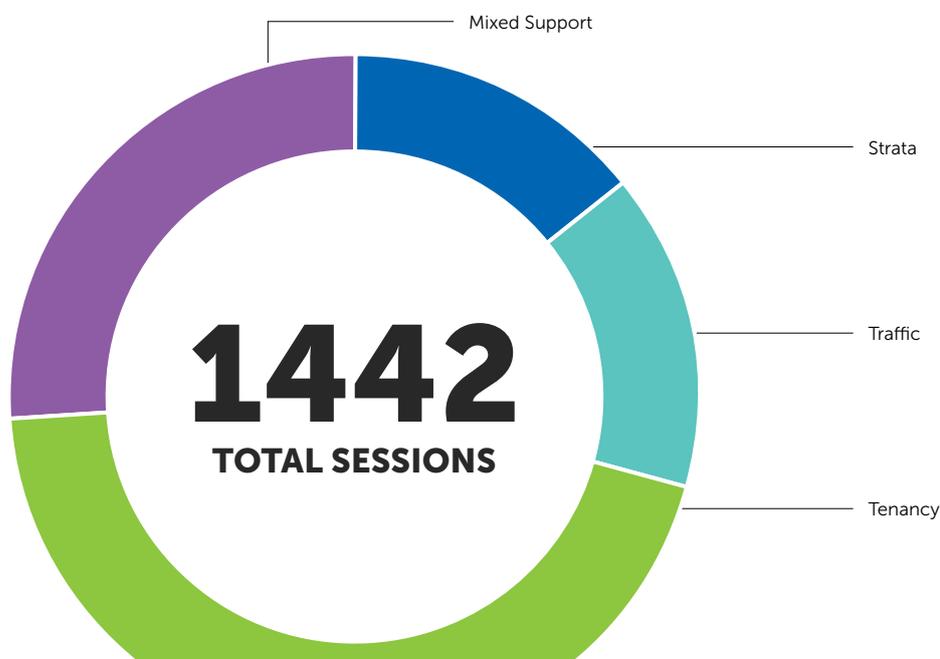
For users with everyday tenancy, strata or traffic law issues, NALA answers commonly asked legal questions in real-time and can even auto-generate legal documents. NALA is programmed to interact with people who have legal questions about traffic fines such as license suspensions and traffic-related court attendance notices, or tenancy matters such as repairs, bonds, landlord access, terminations, and basic strata enquiries. In addition to legal assistance, NALA is optimising organisational efficiencies by streamlining our client intake services, capturing key demographic information and booking appointments or referrals for clients with partners like Western Sydney Community Legal Centre or Eastern Area Tenants' Service. This helps our Centre focus our resources where they're needed most – talking with our clients.



Key achievements and outcomes

Since its launch in November 2020 NALA provided resources to clients in 1442 NALA sessions and has allowed MLC to;

- Increase access to self-help and self-resolution functions, enabling clients to engage with relevant legal information and inform their decision-making process more efficiently.
- Improve client understanding and preparation in advice sessions by providing access to important resources such as factsheets and sample letters.
- Streamline the client intake process by facilitating quick and easy bookings and referrals. NALA sessions complete an intake in an average of 4.97 minutes, compared to client intake officers averaging 45-50 minutes.
- Decrease front desk call volume to ensure the prioritisation of vulnerable client needs and complex issues as 81.44% of clients who used NALA between Nov 2020 - July 2021 indicated that they would have contacted the centre had NALA not existed.





Our impact

7102

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



8338

Total legal services



6875

Total tenancy & strata services



64+

Community legal education sessions delivered



221

Legal resources shared



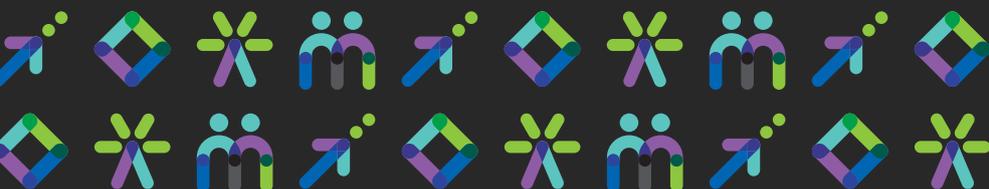
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Law reform submissions

In this financial year, the Low Bono Employment Service has recovered **\$833,215.24** in compensation back in employees' hands.

In the 2020-2021 period, the General Legal Service gained **\$97,132.65** for our clients and saved our clients **\$148,481.02** including write offs.

The Migrant Employment Legal Service recovered over **\$56,000** in compensation for clients in unfair dismissal, underpayments, discrimination, and other matters (in 6 months until December 2020).



COVID-19 funding

As our community faced hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government stepped in to support the community legal centre (CLC) sector to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and the increased demand for legal assistance. The NSW Government allocated over \$5.4 million of Commonwealth COVID-19 Legal Assistance Funding to CLCs in NSW including over \$4.3m in funding for frontline service delivery to address increased demand due to COVID-19. This much-needed additional funding strengthened the support provided by our General Legal Service in areas including employment, civil and family law, all with thanks to the Community Legal Centres Program (CLCP) Unit at Legal Aid NSW.

Legal impact data

400

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



219
Identify as male



159
Identify as female



2
Identify as other



12
Experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness



88
Main language not english



15
Clients using an interpreter



125
Living with a disability



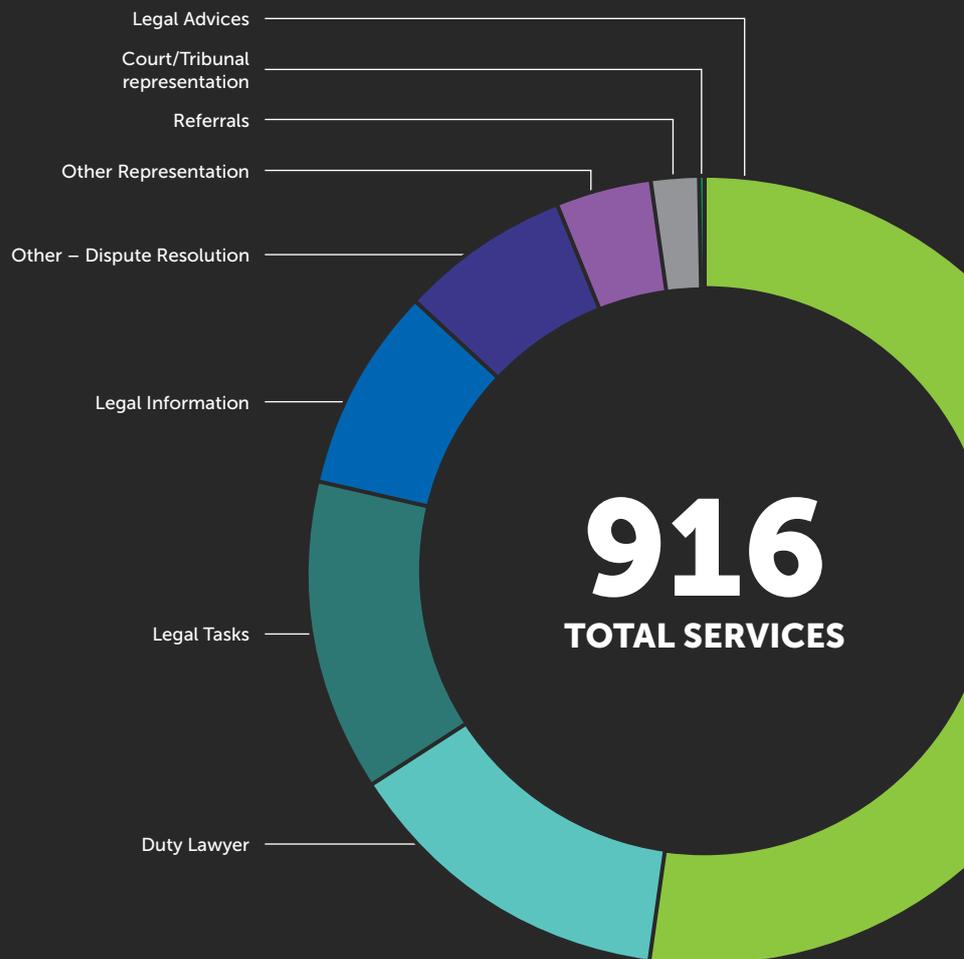
384
Experiencing financial disadvantage



58
Have experienced domestic & family violence



19
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



General Legal Service



Key legal issues addressed

Credit and debt disputes, motor vehicle accidents (property damage), traffic, minor crime, AVOs, domestic violence matters, victims compensation and consumer complaints in relation to goods and services.

Key partners

Hall & Willcox, Johnson Winter & Slattery, Gilbert & Tobin, Bartier Perry, Legal Aid NSW, Sydney Local Health District (Canterbury Hospital & Marrickville Canterbury Croydon Mental Health), Western Sydney Community Legal Centre, South West Sydney Legal Centre, University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney, Clayton Utz, HWLE Ebsworth

Key events and achievements

Throughout COVID-19, the General Legal Service continued to provide direct legal 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. 1669 clients were provided with legal support, which is a significant increase from the 2019-2020 period.

In the 2020-2021 period, the General Legal Service gained \$97,132.65 for our clients and saved our clients \$148,481.02 including write offs.

The General Legal Service continued to operate its health justice partnership with Sydney Local Health District at Canterbury Hospital's Drug Health Services during COVID-19. The service also extended its health justice commitment with a new MOU signed for a commitment to legal services in Marrickville, Canterbury and Croydon mental health services.

The Debt Crisis Legal Service (DCLS) continued to operate successfully, providing legal advice and assistance for clients with debt related issues. The service remains a vital part of the Centre's holistic legal and support services.

The Duty Lawyer Service (DLS) continued its operation this year, providing advice and representation to people appearing at Burwood Local Court, as well as expanding into Sutherland Local Court in February 2021. The service has had a significant impact in providing access to justice and contributing to the effective operation of the courts.

The Service entered into new pro bono collaborations with law firms including Sparke Helmore who assisted in creating legal factsheets and Bartier Perry, who provided legal advice and assistance to our clients during advice clinics.

Advice clinics

- Traffic, Crime & AVO clinic – Mondays
- Civil Debt Crisis Legal Clinic - Tuesdays
- Motor Vehicle Accident Clinic – Tuesdays fortnightly
- Civil Evening Advice Clinic – Tuesdays & Wednesdays
- Sparke Helmore Advice Clinic – Thursdays fortnightly

Community legal education

Our GLS provided community legal education (CLE) to Marrickville Mental Health in July 2021 on MLC services upon the establishment of a warm referral pathway. Solicitors also attended the St George Multicultural Network Meeting by Advance Diversity.

CLE to Marrickville Mental Health on 12 July 2021 on MLC services and creation of a warm referral pathway.

Attendance to St George Multicultural Network Meeting by Advance Diversity

On 10 March 2021, GLS conducted a CLE to Mid North Coast CLC on Guardianship and Financial Management

DCLS in collaboration with Domestic Violence Support Service provided a zoom CLE 90-minute interactive workshop on Financial Abuse and literacy to women residing at Detour House on 22 October. Many of the residents had credit and debt legal issues.

Community outreach

Burwood & Sutherland Local Court

Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays

Our duty lawyer service provides direct assistance, advice, and representation to people appearing at Burwood and Sutherland Local Court. The service supports people attending Court with minor (summary) crime, traffic, Apprehended Violence Orders, and domestic violence matters.

Canterbury Hospital – Drug Health Clinic

Weekly - Fridays

The 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.

Advance Diversity Services

Hurstville

The service continues to operate its successful outreach clinic for culturally and linguistically diverse communities at Advance Diversity Services.

General Legal Service

Alleviating debt crisis

John is a 61-year-old Aboriginal client from Marrickville who approached the centre with three debts: one from a motor vehicle accident, one from a pay day lender, and one from a major bank. John was on the Carer's Pension and had obtained the two personal loans due to recent death in his family and for Sorry Business expenses, including travel to regional locations and for funerals. Through dispute resolution processes, all these debts have been completely waived for John in full and final settlement and he is not required to make any repayments.

Victims' compensation

Priscilla is vulnerable young client who was a victim of attempted sexual assault which inflicted serious psychological injury. The service assisted Priscilla in lodging an internal review in relation to a Victim Services decision she had obtained. This included submission as to how assistance animal expenses were to constitute a medical expense. The review was successful, and Priscilla obtained significant additional funds. The service further assisted Priscilla with an out of time NCAT appeal for the recognition payment to properly compensate her for being a victim of a crime. The matter was settled prior to the formal hearing and Priscilla obtained the extra funds to assist her to move forward. The client accepted and this finalised the client's dealings with Victim Services NSW after six years.

Independence through NDIS

Marie is a culturally and linguistically diverse client who lives with a physical disability after being a victim of a hit-and-run. Marie was unable to cook for or clean herself and relied heavily on family and friends as support. The service assisted Marie to overturn the decision to refuse her access to the NDIS. After an 18-month long battle from original application, to internal review and then the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, access to the scheme was granted and a support plan is being put in place to assist her with mobility, and self-care – providing her with necessary supports, and the ability to regain her independence.

Mental health court support

Sarah was charged with common assault. She was referred to the DLS by a Magistrate at Burwood Court. Sarah was self-represented. It was evident that Sarah had mental health issues. MLC obtained an adjournment and applied for the matter to be dealt with under mental health provisions (known as a section 32). Duty lawyers obtained a report from Sarah's psychologist and represented her at the hearing. The application was successful, and Sarah's matter was diverted away from the criminal justice system and instead handled with under the mental health legislation.

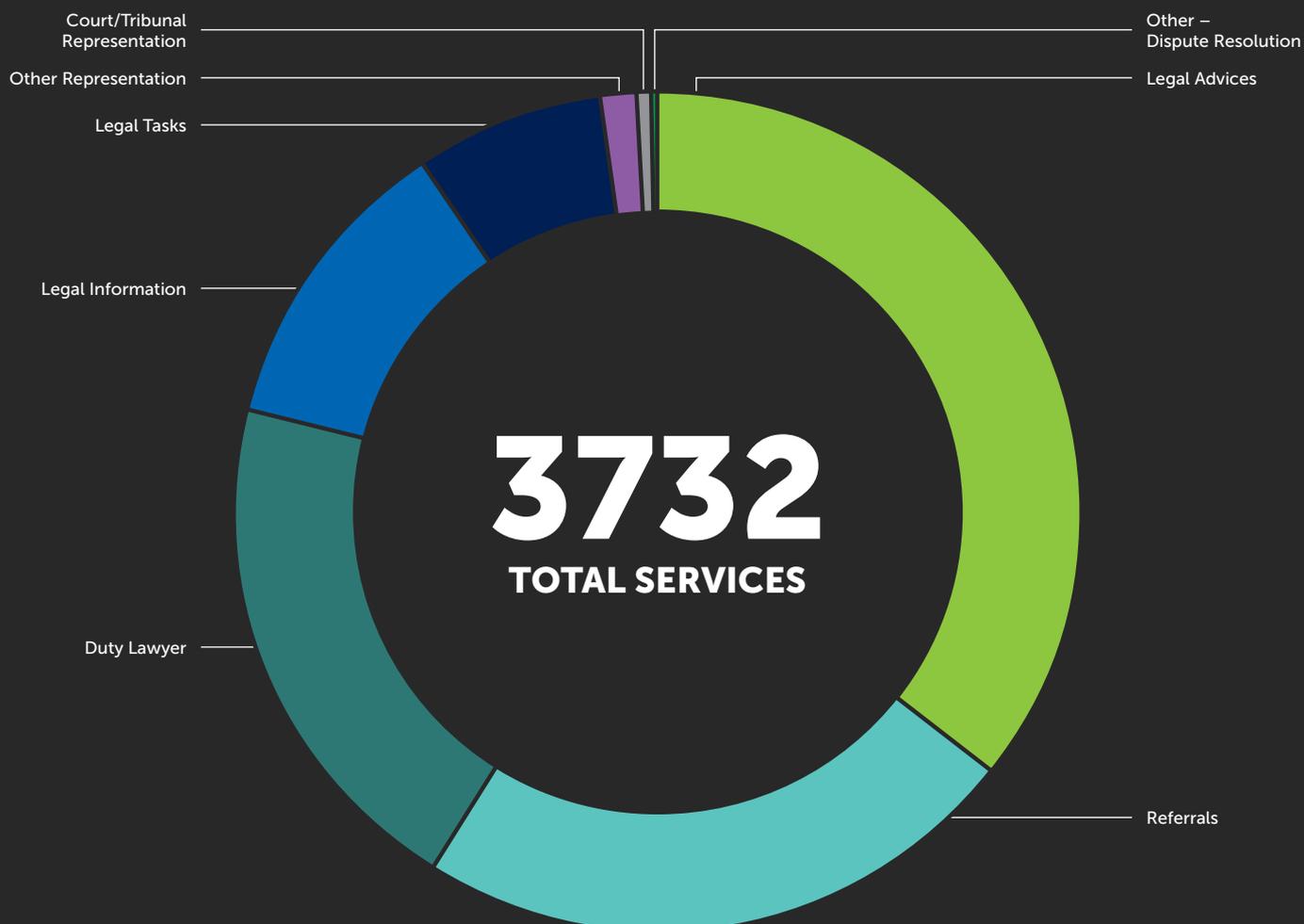
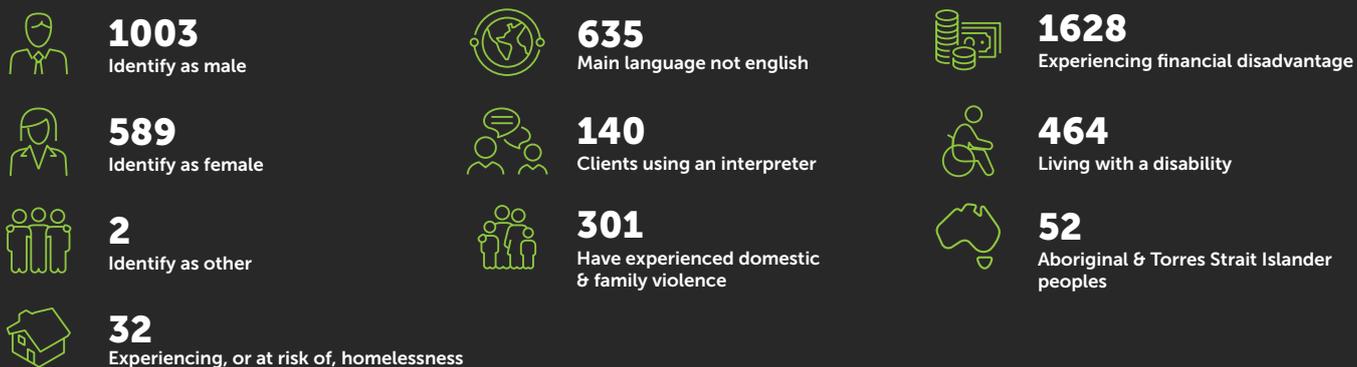
Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individual.



Key Statistics

General Legal Service

1669
TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED





Youth Legal Service NSW

The Youth Legal Service NSW 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, consumer disputes, credit and debt issues, problems at home.

Key partners

Colin Biggers Paisley, Baker McKenzie, IAG, M'Alkinson D'Apice, Johnson Winters Slattery, Holman Webb, Sparke Helmore, Hall & Wilcox

Key events and achievements

Thanks to Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation's contribution and ongoing support of Marrickville Legal Centre's Youth Legal Service NSW (YLS), the service has increased capacity through the employment of a dedicated youth solicitor to provide advice and casework to young people across New South Wales, as well as through its ongoing graduate secondment program.

The Youth Legal Service NSW recently established the Youth Law Collaborative, working together with Western Sydney CLC, Youth Law Australia, Advocacy Law Alliance, Hunter CLC, Hume Riverina CLC and Shopfront. The Collaborative is a referral and exchange network which champions the 'no wrong door' approach, improving access to legal services and legal education programs for young people across NSW.

Advice clinics

Youth Evening Advice Clinic

Mondays

Like all MLC advice clinics during COVID-19, the Youth Evening Advice Clinic has continued remotely with relative ease thanks to its 98 volunteer solicitors and legal assistants, advising 675 young people across the year.

Community legal education

The Youth Legal Service NSW is proud to play an educative role in the community to promote justice and protect human rights. Our youth solicitors provide training and education sessions on request for young people and youth workers including:

- Online and in-person CLE to residents of Nick Kearns and Allum House youth refuges on various topics such as:
 - Police powers
 - Employment rights
 - Tenancy rights
 - Safe relationships and laws around consent
- CLE on AOD and police powers at Waranara Junior School, Marrickville
- CLE on Alcohol & Other Drugs (AOD) and police powers at Waranara Junior School, Marrickville

Community outreach

Headspace Liverpool & Bankstown

The Headspace outreach has been suspended during the pandemic. In the interim clinicians at Headspace identify clients with legal issues and regularly refer matters to the YLS.

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

Law reform

Report: Young People, Criminal Records and Discrimination in Employment.

The YLS provided a report on the impact of a criminal conviction on future employment with recommendations to:

- Amend the anti-discrimination laws to provide additional safeguards against criminal record discrimination;
- Increase oversight of criminal record checks, Working With Children Checks (WWCC), clearances and NDIS screening checks so that requests that have no relevance to the role are refused; and
- Enable NCAT or the ADB to hear discrimination complaints about employers and training providers obtaining

The report was launched in November 2020 via an online seminar discussing lived experience of criminal records discrimination featuring Keenan Mundine and Dean Lloyd of Deadly Connections and Eleni Psillakis of Dress for Success.

Key Statistics

Youth Legal Service

676

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



348
Identify as male



256
Identify as female



2
Identify as other



87
Main language not english



8
Clients using an interpreter



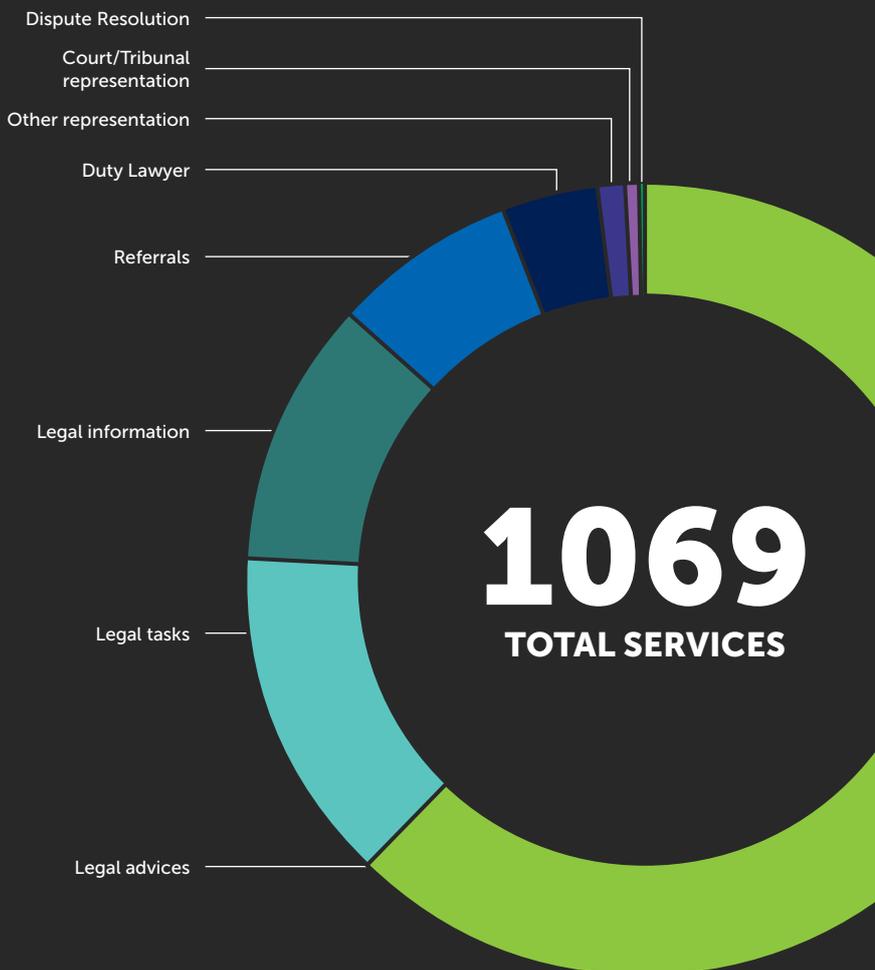
643
Experiencing financial disadvantage



41
Have experienced domestic & family violence



21
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



1069

TOTAL SERVICES

Expulsion injustice

Chantelle, 17 years old, sought assistance from Youth Legal Service NSW when she was expelled from school because of poor attendance. She really wanted to return to school and did not understand what options were available to her. The YLS reached out to the school to request for copies of Chantelle’s documents relating to her expulsion as it appeared that the correct procedures were not followed by the school. While the documents were never provided, Chantelle’s youth solicitor successfully facilitated a meeting was facilitated between her and the school. As a result of this intervention, the school allowed Chantelle to return to school the next day.

Criminal record discrimination

James, a 23-year-old young professional, approached our Centre when he experienced a roadblock with his employment in the financial sector. When applying for a job at a bank, he disclosed his criminal history although it had no relevance to the role. He was offered the job and commenced working. James was later asked to obtain membership with the professional association. His membership application was refused based on his criminal record and, as a result, he was subsequently dismissed from his new job.

With help from the YLS, James’ matter was settled through conciliation at the Australian Human Rights Commission with general damages and a statement of service. The employer also agreed to change James’ end of employment from termination to resignation, to protect James’ professional reputation. In addition, James successfully appealed the refusal of his membership for future opportunities.



Employment Law Service

Key legal issues addressed

Underpayments, unfair dismissals, general protections, discrimination, COVID-19 related issues and workplace bullying.

Key partners

- Fair Work Commission (Workplace Advice Service)
- Hall & Wilcox
- Sparke Helmore
- Santone Lawyers
- Minter Ellison
- Australian Catholic University

Key events and achievements

The Employment Law Service (ELS) offered advice and advocacy across a wide range of employment matters. In response to COVID-19, the Employment Law Service expanded its offering to launch the Low Bono Employment Service (**Low Bono**).

Low Bono provides affordable fixed fee assistance to clients who may not be eligible for free services either through Legal Aid or the Centre. The money generated through Low Bono goes to self-funding the solicitor who undertakes the casework for Low Bono. In this fiscal year, Low Bono has recovered \$833,215.24 in compensation back in employees' hands.

Advice clinics

Employment advice daytime clinic

Thursdays 9.30am – 1pm

Key partners: Sparke Helmore, Minter Ellison and Santone Lawyers

Underpayment clinic

Alternating Fridays 9am – 1pm

Key partner: Australian Catholic University

Community legal education

Session delivered: 7

Audiences: General public, TAFE students, MELS Train the Trainer program.

Topics:

COVID-19, Redundancy, workplace rights, Employment Law 101, discrimination in the workplace

Community outreach

Virtually

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

The ELS has expanded its outreach service with the Fair Work Commission Workplace Advice Service. The service has been running in partnership with MLC since 2018, and MLC is one of the largest contributors in NSW to the service.

Free from pregnancy discrimination

Sherry is a 24-year-old expecting mum who was recently dismissed from her full-time job. She had been working for her employer for about two years. Sherry was subject to bullying at her workplace and then dismissed unfairly without warning. She had been working overtime most days even whilst pregnant and was unsure if she would receive paid parental leave entitlements from her employer. Although Sherry followed up with her employer regarding taking sick leave for doctors' appointments or providing medical certificates for her absences, she was never provided with fair work rights with her employer. Through the assistance of the ELS, legal action was taken against her employer for dismissing Sherry for exercising her workplace rights and discrimination about her pregnancy. Her employer denied the allegations and asserted underperformance as the reason for dismissal. ELS lead Lucy Carroll negotiated an exit strategy with Sherry's former employer. She received \$11,000 in contractual and statutory entitlements plus an additional \$5,000 ex gratia. She has since resigned and received a statement of service from her employer, preparing her for a positive next chapter with any future employers.

Key Statistics

Employment Law Service

781

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



221
Identify as male



335
Identify as female



2
Identify as other



1
Experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness



85
Main language not english



8
Clients using an interpreter



85
Living with a disability



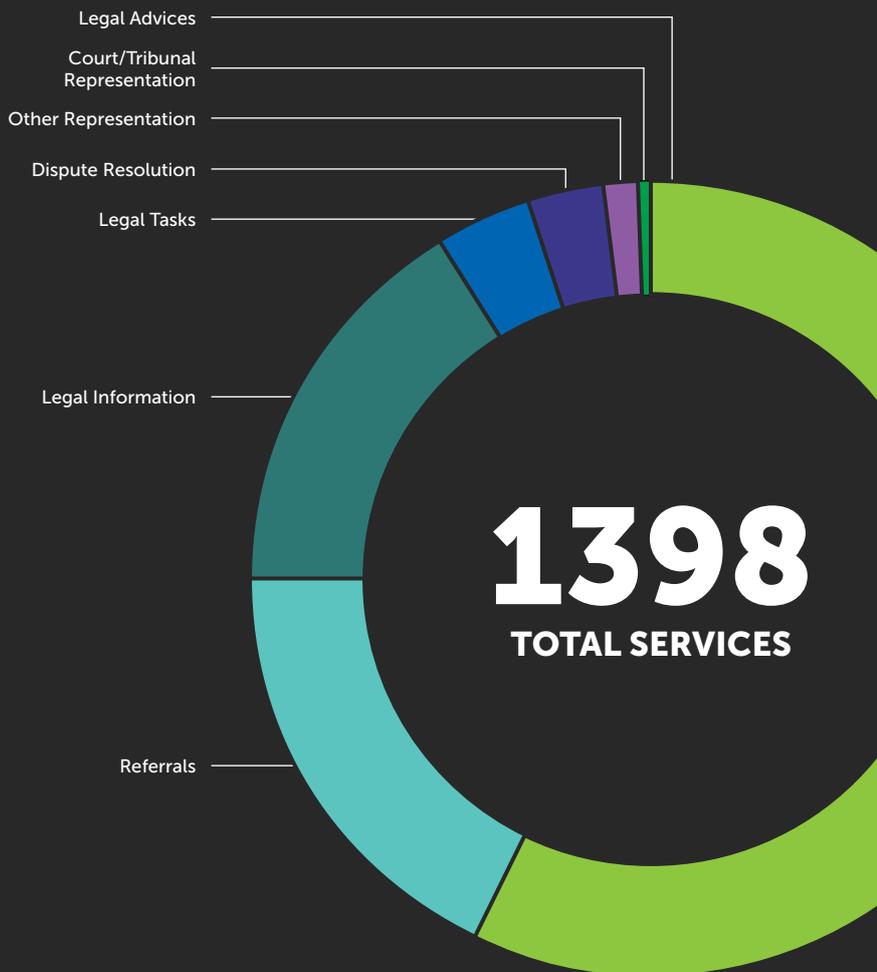
762
Experiencing financial disadvantage



1
Have experienced domestic & family violence



9
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



Anti-discrimination settlement

Jennifer experienced bullying and racial discrimination in the workplace. She attempted to deal with the issues herself at first, lodging a formal complaint with her employer about the treatment she experienced. Unfortunately, the employer failed to deal with the complaints in a timely manner, which left Jennifer waiting over 7 months for the investigation to commence. During that period, Jennifer became distressed. She tried to seek assistance through her union, which did not eventuate. She also lodged a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW before finally seeking legal advice at MLC. ELS solicitor Genevieve Barry advised Jennifer on her prospects in the Anti-Discrimination jurisdiction but also identified another course of action for Jennifer to pursue through the Fair Work Commission. Genevieve assisted Jennifer withdraw her complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW and represented her in a complaint through the Fair Work Commission. With Genevieve’s advice and guidance, Jennifer ultimately self-advocated in the Fair Work Commission against her employer and was able to obtain a settlement outcome that she was extremely happy with.



Migrant Employment Legal Service

Key legal issues addressed

The Migrant Employment Legal Service (MELS) is a shared initiative from Inner City Legal Centre, Kingsford Legal Centre, Marrickville Legal Centre and Redfern Legal Centre addressing the exploitation of temporary visa holders and migrant workers, especially underpayments, unfair dismissal and discrimination.

Key partners

Clayton Utz and Baker McKenzie.

Key events and achievements

Into our second year of operations, the team identified time and again that many MELS clients who held corresponding immigration law concerns would not pursue employment law claims for fear of jeopardising their visa status. With support from Baker McKenzie's immigration law team MELS are now helping its clients overcome this barrier to accessing justice through the establishment of the MELS Immigration Advice Clinic.

MELS recovered over \$56,000 in compensation for clients in unfair dismissal, underpayments, discrimination, and other matters (in 6 months until December 2020)

MELS was successful in securing \$49,908 in funding from the City of Sydney through their Community Services grant to deliver a capacity-building and training program in employment law and services to upskill 16 community workers and leaders from migrant and temporary visa holder backgrounds to improve employment outcomes and access to justice. The 8-week training program was completed in June and was delivered in partnership with Federal Circuit Court of Australia, Fair Work Ombudsman, Fair Work Commission, Anti-Discrimination NSW, Anti-Slavery Australia, Legal Aid NSW, SafeWork NSW, Unions NSW, Australian Tax Office, Santone Lawyers and Baker & McKenzie.

After completing the Train the Trainer Program 75% of participants reported an excellent understanding of where to seek help with employment related problems. 50% of participants reported they gained good or excellent understanding of the issues faced by migrant workers after completing the Train the Trainer Program

"We were very delighted to see young enthusiastic people pushing so hard for social justice and equality to prevail among vulnerable migrants. We consider this training as an empowerment of voices of the voiceless. The training of 16 disciples by MELS to go out into the communities and educate them about their 'bread and butter' issues and say

no to anti-slavery and employment exploitation... MELS and its partners are doing a great job."

Advice clinics

Established the MELS Immigration Advice Clinic in partnership with Baker McKenzie to provide both employment and immigration law assistance.

Community legal education

Over 300 people attended online and face-to-face Community Legal Education sessions on a range of employment topics including:

- Work rights in Australia for community workers
- Introduction to MELS and migrant worker exploitation
- Work rights and Emergency Relief Services for International Students during COVID-19 pandemic
- What young people need to know before starting their first job

Community outreach

Burwood Library

In partnership with the Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS), MELS commenced a monthly outreach clinic from April 2021 at the 'Employment Corner' at Burwood Library to reach Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean-speaking clients.

Griffith Community Centre

MELS piloted a remote outreach advice clinic in partnership with Griffith Community Centre to reach temporary visa holders and migrant workers in RRR areas.

Law reform

Submission to the Senate Select Committee Inquiry into Temporary Migration

Joint submission with KLC, RLC International Student Service NSW and MELS setting out in details 37 recommendations with the purpose of:

1. Preventing sham contracting
2. Amending the Migration Act 1958 (Cth) to ensure people who hold temporary visas can complain with confidence
3. Extending liability and supply chain measures
4. Recommending the most effective means of redress for wage theft and other breaches of workplace rights and conditions.

Key Statistics

Migrant Employment Legal Service

233

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



93
Identify as male



99
Identify as female



1
Identify as other



122
Main language not english



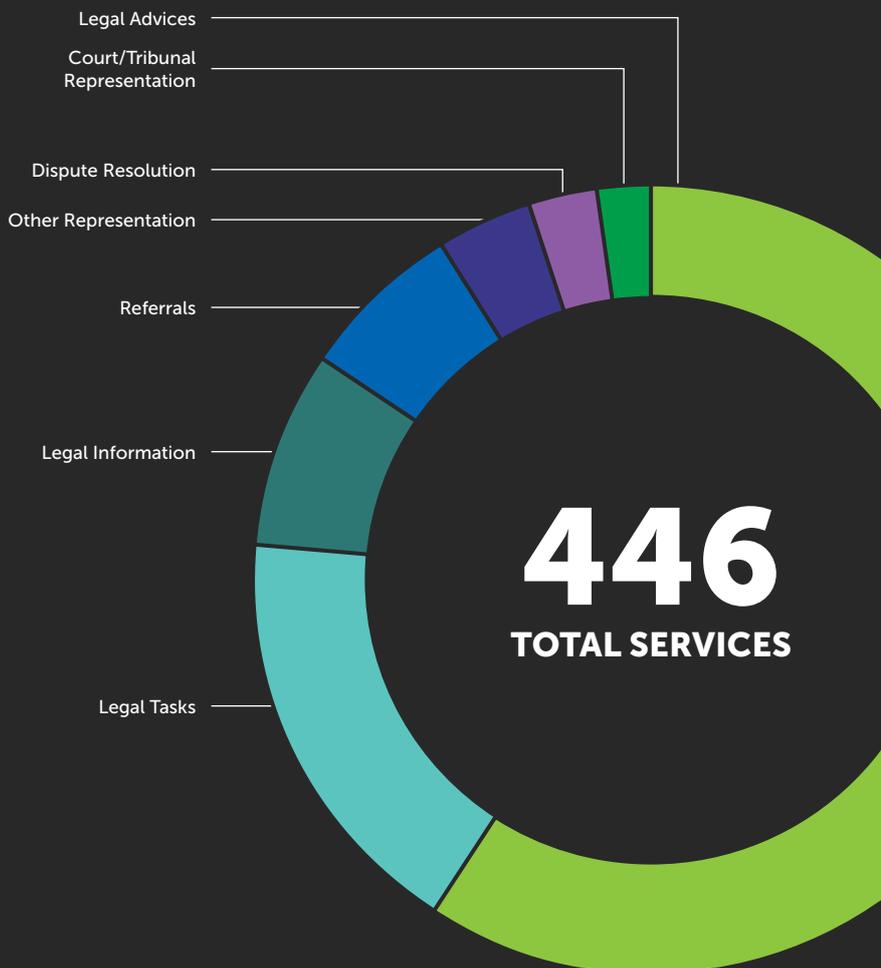
15
Clients using an interpreter



30
Living with a disability



1
Have experienced domestic & family violence



The “contractor trap”

Nichil worked at a tertiary education institution for 8 months as a casual tutor. Nichil was only ever paid one lump sum of \$4,000 over the whole of the employment period, and this only covered the work he did for teaching classes. His payment was according to a flat rate of \$25.00 per hour, which is half of what he was entitled to under the Educational Services (Post-Secondary Education Award 2010), and he was not paid overtime. Nichil came to MELS asking for help to recover the remainder of the wages owed to him and to find out more about rights. The central legal issue at hand was whether he was a contractor and agreed to the contract rate. Nichil never knew the difference between a contractor and employee and only agreed to the ‘contractor’ rate because he thought it was a ‘contract’ for employment. MELS assisted Nichil with some difficult calculations to determine his underpayment and negotiated with his employer to reach a settlement. The employer agreed to pay Nichil \$10,000 as part of a final settlement to resolve the matter.

Holistic justice for Xing

Xing is a temporary visa holder who was sponsored to work in Australia by a small business. At work, his employer treated him unfairly and would often threaten to cancel his visa. During COVID-19 lockdown, he was terminated from his job without any warning. As his employer was a small business with less than 15 employees, MLC advised Xing that he was not protected by the unfair dismissal provisions of the Fair Work Act. However, we were able to assist Xing with his General Protections application. Xing also received immigration advice through MLC’s Immigration Advice Clinic regarding his visa conditions and his obligation to make arrangements for another visa. Xing was grateful for MLC’s holistic support as he was not in a position to get any paid advice from a lawyer for his employment and immigration matters.

Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service

Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service (IWTAAS) is a free legal service for private and social housing tenants, boarders, lodgers and residential community residents living in the Inner West. Our advocates provide advice, advocacy and representation at NSW Civil 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

Termination and eviction, bond disputes, repairs, rent and other charges

Key partners

NSW Fair Trading, Tenants Union of New South Wales, TAAP Network.

Key events and achievements

A social housing clinic was established in September 2020 helping tenants with a range of social housing and tenancy issues including applying for social housing, ensuring social housing living standards, and assisting with disputes at NCAT.

The UTS Professional Pathways Report project is a new initiative between UTS and MLC that is working to evaluate Marrickville Legal Centre Tenancy Services' advice for self-representing tenants at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

A new Alice Street Complex Outreach was established in March 2021 in collaboration with our tenancy and civil teams, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre and Jenny Leong MP's Office.

Community legal education

Our Tenants' Advocates deliver regular legal education on tenancy rights and obligations, as well as how they relate to COVID-19 public health orders. Sessions included youth refuge Nick Kearns House and a community session on Tenants Rights at Ashfield Library.

Community outreach

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

Fortnightly Thursday

IWTAAS continues to attend NNC's 'One Stop Shop' available to any tenant (private or social) who presents for advice and assistance in relation to tenancy or boarding house issues. The community hub brings together essential services including IWTAAS and Centrelink to provide face-to-face assistance to all members of the community.

Alice Street Complex – Newtown

Monthly

The service attends the Alice Street complex and is available together with other essential services such as Mission Australia and NNC to provide face to face assistance to the tenants.

Radio

IWTAAS participated in an interview with ABC's Triple J about tenancy for young tenants in Australia after new legislative changes were introduced.

Law reform

IWTAAS and NSATS work together to advocate for meaningful change for renters at the policy level. See what initiatives IWTAAS has taken with NSATS at page 28.



Key Statistics

Inner West Tenants' Advice & Advocacy Service

1213

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



478

Identify as male



722

Identify as female



3

Identify as non-binary



107

Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



715

Experiencing financial disadvantage



58

Have experienced domestic & family violence



2.8%

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



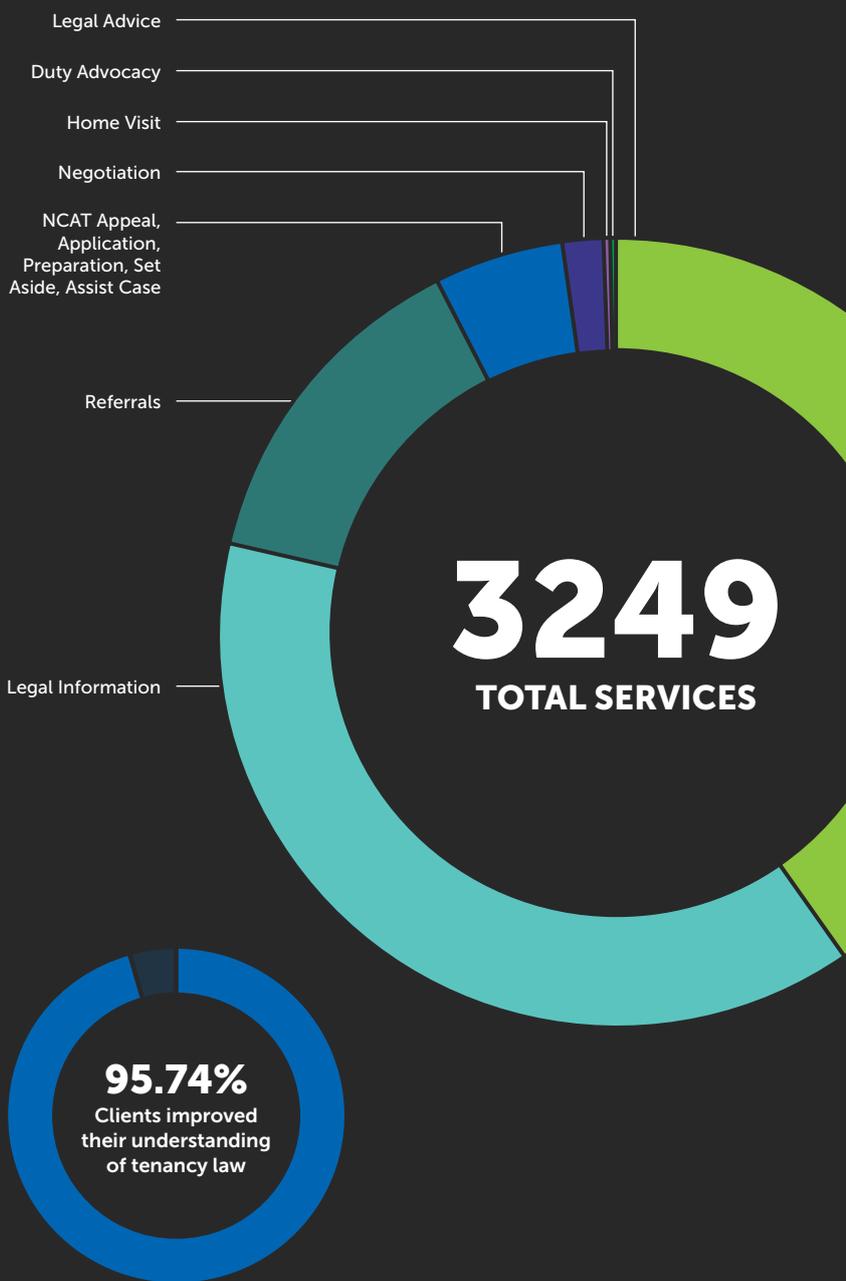
4438

Sessions within the cases below



1388

Cases during the period



Prioritising comfortable housing

Eleanor was a vulnerable boarding house client living with a disability. Her boarding house accommodation was not suitable to her medical needs and she had been on the Housing NSW waiting list for 13 years. IWTAAS assisted Eleanor in extending the term of her boarding house agreement to avoid homelessness whilst also advocating for Eleanor to have priority status with Housing NSW. Eleanor was placed on the priority list immediately and her medical needs were accepted. Soon after, through advocacy, Eleanor was provided a suitable housing offer and has now moved into the accommodation which suits her medical needs.

Risk of homelessness in COVID-19

IWTAAS represented vulnerable sub-tenant Sabrina at NCAT who was trying to delay their landlord from possession of the premises. Sabrina lost their job due to COVID-19 and was not eligible for Centrelink assistance due to their visa status. Sabrina was a renting a room which was run by the head-tenant as a business. The head tenant gave notice to the landlord to end the agreement due to COVID-19. Sabrina remained in premises and the landlord applied to NCAT to seek possession orders. The matter was heard, and the Member dismissed the landlord applications based on our submission that the landlord could not satisfy all the requirements of law and therefore NCAT could not make the orders they were requesting. Sabrina was relieved to avoid homelessness during the pandemic

Northern Sydney Area Tenants' Service

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

Key legal issues addressed

Termination, rent and bond disputes, repair disputes

Key partners

NSW Fair Trading, Tenants Union of New South Wales, TAAP Network.

Key events and achievements

A social housing clinic was established in September 2020 helping Northern Sydney social housing tenants in applying for social housing, ensuring social housing living standards, and assisting with disputes at NCAT.

The UTS Professional Pathways Report project is a new initiative between UTS and MLC that is working to evaluate Marrickville Legal Centre Tenancy Services' advice for self-representing tenants at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Community outreach

Dougherty Community Centre

Fortnightly – on hold due to COVID

The service is available to any tenant (private or social) who presents for advice and assistance in relation to tenancy or boarding house issues.

Link Housing

Weekly – on hold due to COVID

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.

Law reform

Boarding Houses Act Roundtable

NSATS advocates participated in the Boarding Houses Act roundtable discussion in relation to the submissions to the review of the Boarding Houses Act 2012 in October 2019.

Submission on Accelerated Appeals and Section 149 Offers

Submission to FACS as to Accelerated Appeals and Section 149 Offers relating to proposed changes to the process for making and appealing offers of public housing made to people currently in Temporary Accommodation or who have recently accessed TA, and tenants being relocated for portfolio management purposes.

Consultation on Centralised Gas Hot Water Systems policy

Meeting with Land and Housing Corporation – discussion of recent NCAT decision regarding Centralised Gas Hot Water Systems. NSATS was invited to the consultation to provide comments as to new policies on this issue.

Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act Roundtable

NSATS participated in a second roundtable review of the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013 (NSW) to finalise any issues with the Act.

TUNSW Submission on Residential Land Lease Communities

The service endorsed the Residential Land Lease Communities review submissions completed by the Tenants Union of NSW.

Joint letter to extend COVID-19 moratorium

The service endorsed the TU extension on COVID-19 moratorium letter to Parliament

Public housing support

Keely is a Public housing tenant who identifies as Aboriginal. After receiving assistance from a support service, Keely approached NSATS due to difficulties with being accepted for a mutual exchange with another tenant. NSATS assisted Keely with advocating for a mutual exchange transfer in a meeting with the NSW Director of Housing. Following this meeting, Keely was immediately approved for a mutual exchange and has now successfully relocated to her new home.

Key Statistics

Northern Sydney Area Tenants' Service

1573

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



665
Identify as male



896
Identify as female



1
Identify as intersex



175
Culturally & linguistically diverse clients



966
Experiencing financial disadvantage



72
Have experienced domestic & family violence



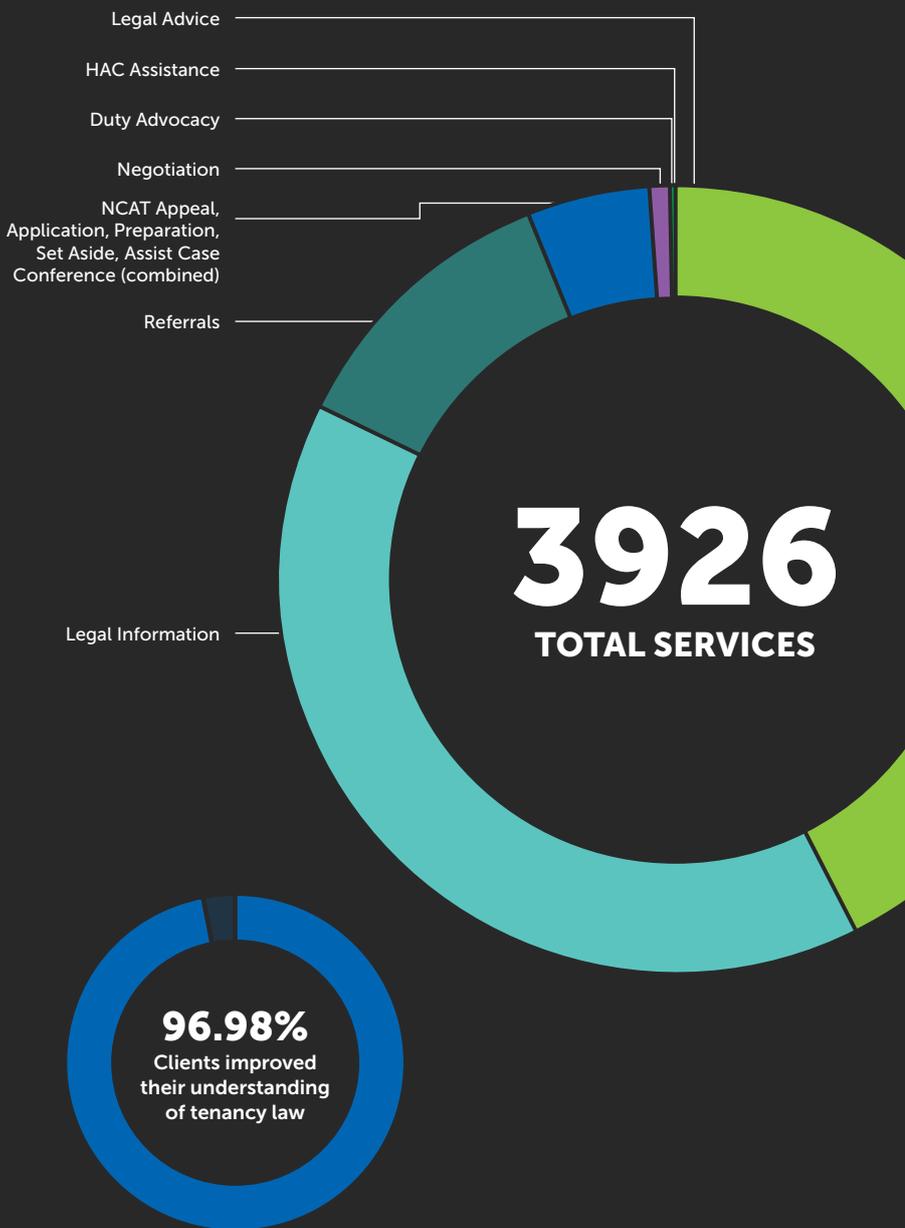
1.4%
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



4795
Sessions within the cases below



1753
Cases during the period



Peaceful outcome through conciliation

Jayden is a long-term community housing tenant who identifies as Aboriginal. Jayden was faced with termination of his tenancy for alleged noise and nuisance towards a neighbour. When more evidence became available, it was realised there were countless complaints against Jayden without basis. NSATS represented Jayden at the NCAT contested hearing. The hearing was successful and the application for eviction was dismissed. At the same time, Jayden was assisted in lodging a discrimination complaint through the civil law service which resolved with a positive and meaningful outcome for the tenant at conciliation. Jayden continues to reside peacefully in this premises.

Lasting change for Jeannette's needs

Jeannette was offered an unsuitable property through a social housing provider which she accepted on the condition that modifications would be undertaken for her disability needs. She accepted the property as she was homeless and had no choice. The property had a substantial risk to the client due to her disability. NSATS advocated for the client to have the provider pay for an OT Report which was approved. Following this, the provider scoped the modifications and due to the large expense, agreed to find alternative accommodation for Jeannette. The service was able to advocate that the provider pay for Jeannette's removal costs, utility connections and cancelled/abated rent for the original property as it did not meet Jeannette's need.



Family Law Service

The Family Law Service works with clients who are unable to access affordable family law services, and who suffer disadvantage or family violence, to make workable arrangements after separation.

Key legal issues addressed

Parenting, financial and property, divorce, spousal maintenance, child support.

Key events and achievements

The Family Law Service (FLS) remained busy through COVID-19 with an increase in service demand qualifying our service for additional COVID funding from the NSW Attorney-General’s office. Through this funding the service was able to recruit a part-time family solicitor to support the FLS service lead.

Like our Low Bono Employment Service, the FLS are exploring how they can increase access to justice for the ‘missing middle’ by providing short term legal representation or unbundled legal services relating to family law.

Educating parents on Family Law issues

The FLS are currently planning family law workshops with Uniting and select community legal centres (CLCs) to develop a workshop for separated parents who use Family Dispute Resolution services through Uniting. The regular workshops will help recently separated parents understand the important role of the mediation process and will be delivered by CLC solicitors. Participating CLCs include Macarthur Legal Centre, South West Sydney Legal Centre, Western Sydney Community Legal Centre and Inner City Legal Centre.

Advice clinics

Family Law advice clinic

Thursdays

The ongoing advice clinic has continued to advise clients remotely with the assistance of 23 volunteer solicitors in FY21.

Community legal education

The Family Law Service provided legal education to Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners and a crash course in Family Law for social workers.

Appearing for mother at Court

The FLS assisted Katherine, a mother of two children who are on the autism spectrum, who had commenced family law proceedings for fear that her children would be removed from the country. Katherine was initially legally represented for a short period of time before running out of savings and self-representing at Court. MLC assisted Katherine with mediation, filing an interim application in relation to parenting issues and appearing on her behalf at Court.

Property and financial issues

Anishna spoke with a solicitor at MLC in relation to property and financial issues. During the conference, Anishna was advised that as she was divorced, she has 9 days left to apply to the Court for financial orders before the time limitation in her matter expired. MLC assisted Anishna with drafting the required Court documents and filing them with the Court.



Key Statistics

Family Law Service

349

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



114
Identify as male



214
Identify as female



5
Experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness



70
Main language not english



12
Clients using an interpreter



72
Living with a disability



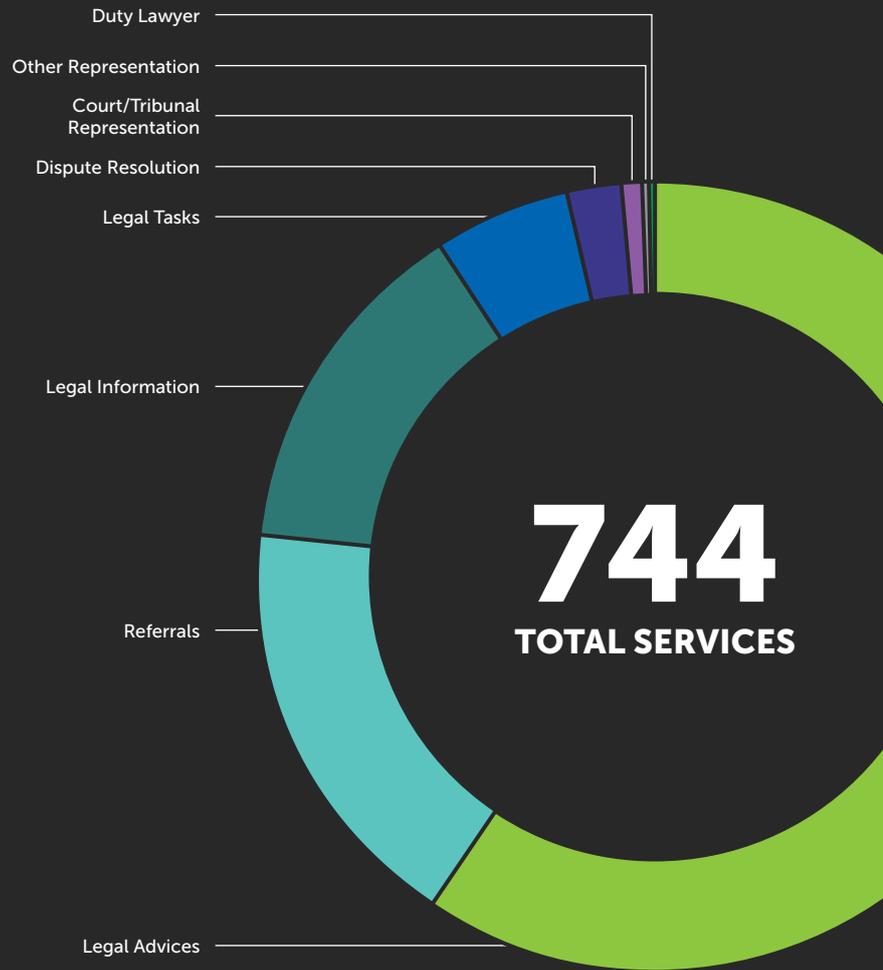
270
Experiencing financial disadvantage



118
Have experienced domestic & family violence



8
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples





Domestic & Family Violence Support Service

The Domestic Violence Support Service offers non-legal support services to people who have experienced family and domestic violence.

Key legal issues addressed

Risk assessments, safety planning, support & advocacy at Court and with Police, Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders, applications for Victims Services, Centrelink and DCJ Housing assistance

Key partners

Department of Communities and Justice, Domestic Violence Court assistance scheme.

Key events and achievements

The DFVSS is strengthening and re-negotiating links with DV services providers to provide greater access for clients. The Service has presented to the DCJ Child Protection Intake Hub for the catchment area and has received several referrals from front line child protection. The DFVSS along with Family Law Service presented to the Sutherland DVCAS staff and has received many referrals from this service.

The DFVSS continues to contribute to interagencies such as the Inner West Domestic Violence Liaison Committee and was proud to help plan the virtual 16 Days Against Gender-Based Violence event. The Service is also part of the Canterbury Bankstown Domestic Violence Liaison Committee.



Savvy Finance

Thanks to the Sydney Community Foundation and Sydney Airport, MLC has been developing the Savvy Finance E-Kit. Initially imagined as face-to-face workshops for women at risk of financial abuse in the Greater Sydney region, Project Officer Kinga Bisits has helped MLC pivot and reimagine the program (just as COVID-19 changed everything) into a series of online learning modules. The project is informed by an expert Steering Committee made up of women with lived experience, domestic violence workers, financial counsellors and lawyers. The Savvy Finance E-Kit will assist women and people who identify as women to pinpoint perpetrator tactics that threaten their financial independence. Modules also outline practical ways to safeguard finances when leaving a perpetrator. By promoting help through banks, financial counsellors, and legal services, the E-Kit encourages women to get professional help sooner, thereby improving their long-term financial independence. The project is due to launch in 2021-2022.

Community legal education

The DFVSS runs regular education sessions on safe & healthy relationships with young people living in youth refuges. Jointly with our in-house Debt Crisis Legal Service, our DV worker is educating women on legal-financial wellbeing.

Protection under temporary visa

Helena was referred to MLC by the Department of Communities & Justice Child Protection after she and her 1-year-old child had experienced domestic violence at the hands of the child's father. Helena, who is on a temporary visa, has limited understanding of English. Helena approached the DFVSS for assistance, who were able to support Helena through an interpreter and negotiate a place in a shelter for Helena and her child with Vinnies. The DFVSS made a referral to Immigration Advice and Rights Centre to address Helena's visa issues, as she had applied for a partner visa which is being pursued now. The father has prevented Helena from leaving the country with the child through a watch list at the airport. As ongoing family law issues were identified, the DFVSS referred Helena to MLC's Family law team where she received advice. Helena's case is now no longer open with Child Protection.

Key Statistics

Domestic & Family Violence Support Service

44

TOTAL CLIENTS ASSISTED



3

Identify as male



41

Identify as female



13

Main language not english



5

Clients using an interpreter



19

Living with a disability



43

Experiencing financial disadvantage



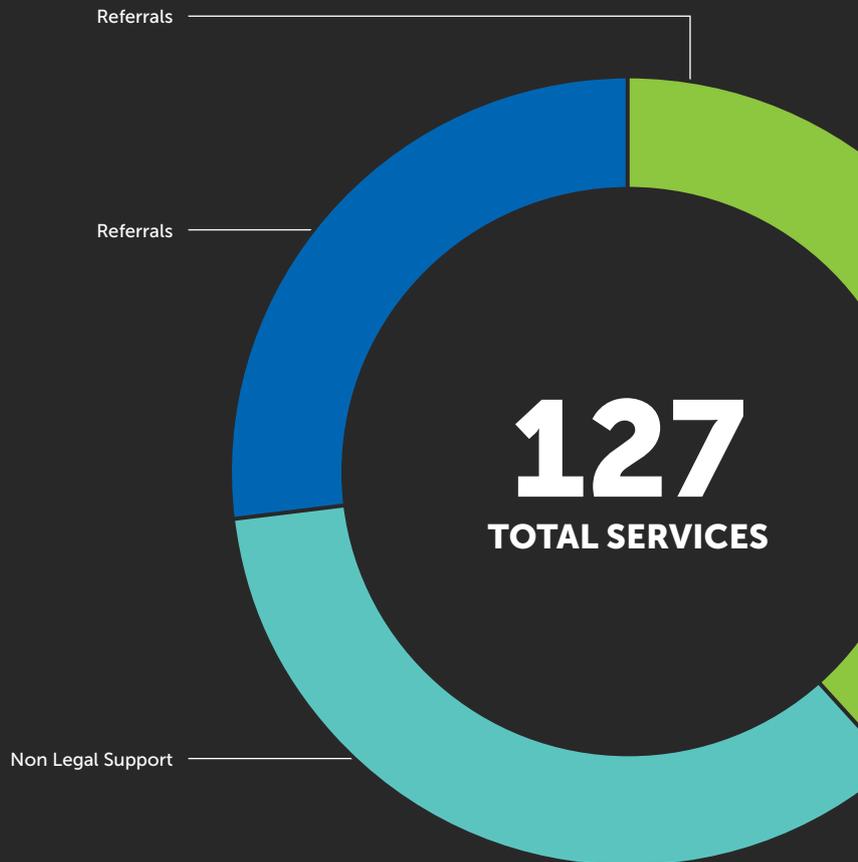
43

Have experienced domestic & family violence



2

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



Living free from constant danger

Shivi has an extensive history of abuse from her partner who is subject to a weapons order and has been incarcerated at various times. Shivi took an AVO against him but reported he would breach it frequently. Her adolescent daughter showed signs of anxiety and said she wanted her mum to separate. A mandatory report was made as well as referrals to shelters but Shivi did not pursue, preferring instead to seek transfer from Housing. Later, Shivi experienced another violent incident, and called the DFVSS in distress. The DFVSS contacted the DVLO, a specialist police officer for the protection of victims of family violence, to support their family. Shivi and her daughter had lived in social housing located locally to school and her community. The DVLO told Shivi that both she and child were 'at risk' and could not return. They went to a hotel for several days for safety. Thanks to this support, a transfer was quickly and successfully completed by Housing in a location ideal for their needs. DFVSS has assisted with a victim's services applications to seek compensation to move forward into a life of security free from harm.

Strata Collective Sales Advocacy Service

The Strata Collective Sales Advocacy Service (Strata Service NSW) offers advice and advocacy to strata owner-occupiers and in some cases, tenants in New South Wales who experience difficulties with strata management.

Key legal issues addressed

Strata levy debt, nuisance & noise, repairs, renovations, disability discrimination, by-law disputes

Our partners

NSW Fair Trading, Seniors Rights Service, Home Building Advocacy Service (WSCLC).

Key events and achievements

2020-2021 saw the Strata Service continue to provide effective and efficient legal advice, casework assistance, legal representation and community legal education to owner-occupiers and in some cases, tenants of strata schemes throughout NSW.

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Strata Service continued to deliver direct legal services to owner occupiers with an increased focus on dispute resolution and advocacy for clients who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. Throughout this period, SCSAS has had successful outcomes through representation and advocacy for clients, particularly those who are experiencing disability discrimination. The service has also focused on promoting a better quality of living within strata for vulnerable clients such as those living with a disability and CaLD clients.

Since the creation of the strata-tenancy solicitor position, Marrickville Legal Centre has been able to offer a holistic and efficient service for strata-scheme tenants. This position has stopped the 'referral roundabout' for strata scheme tenants and has allowed Marrickville Legal Centre to provide tenancy and strata law advice to certain clients within one advice session, avoiding the need for referrals.

Community legal education

Strata Service NSW continued its strong focus on community legal education throughout NSW to better educate vulnerable and disadvantaged owners within strata schemes. With COVID-19 limiting outreach, the service delivered education sessions online on Facebook and shared digital resources across social media and the Centre's website. 1665 postcards with useful strata tips were distributed to over 100 organisations including NCAT, CLCs, libraries and more.

Virtual sessions helped people understand their rights and obligations living in a strata scheme, in collaborative workshops delivered in partnership with Georges River Council, TAFE NSW, Blacktown Library and more.

Law reform

Statutory Review of Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW)

A 5-year review into the legislation. Our submission focused on the key issues raised by our clients living in strata schemes whilst also drawing on the experience of our solicitors. The service proposed 40 recommendations overall.

NCAT win for disability-accessible strata

Hugh was a client who has tetraplegia and requires a wheelchair because of a motor vehicle accident. He required extensive modifications to his strata townhouse to account for his disability. One of the modifications involved installing a motorised gate to allow the client to drive his car into the back patio of his townhouse, which adjoins the only entrance to the townhouse with ramp access. Regrettably, the modifications were made without the appropriate prior approvals. Hugh's neighbours took issue with the gate, and they both refused to approve of the modifications, and threatened to change the gate back to an unmotorised, smaller version that the car could not drive through. SCSAS assisted the client at NCAT. The interim application was successful, and orders were made to prevent the owner's corporation from modifying the gate while the substantive application was dealt with. Hugh was successful overall, and, orders were made that the owner corporation had unreasonably refused their consent, and approving of the gate in its final, car width, motorised form.

Key Statistics

Strata Collective Sales Advocacy Service



40.69%
Identify as male



56.96%
Identify as female



2.36%
Identify as other



22.70%
Main language not english



2.78%
Clients using an interpreter



31.26%
Living with a disability



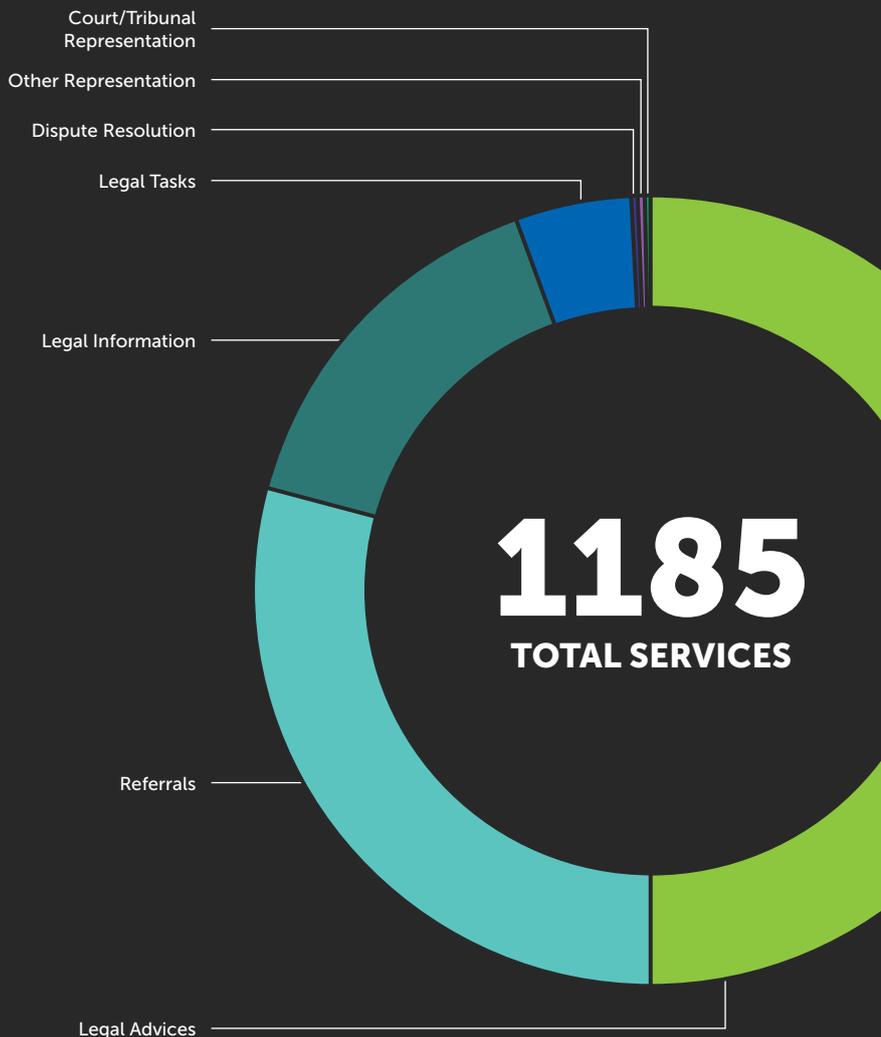
92.29%
Experiencing financial disadvantage



2.78%
Have experienced domestic & family violence



0.43%
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples



Small dog, big joy

Celia was a vulnerable client who lived alone in her strata lot. The Owner’s Corporation denied her request to keep a small dog. The scheme had a by-law banning pets despite the recent Supreme Court decision of Cooper. The service applied to NCAT for the client and challenged the decision of the owners corporation after mediation was declined. Before the formal hearing, the strata scheme agreed to amend its by-law and to provide approval for our client’s pet. The client is now able to obtain the dog she has been waiting for!

Quiet enjoyment for a pensioner

Connor lives in a strata scheme in the Inner West and is on the Aged Pension. Connor was served a Local Court Statement of Claim after falling behind in special levy payments. After failed negotiations with the solicitor representing the owner’s corporation, who suggested our client ‘just sell and go away’ as a resolution, we applied for a payment plan in the Local Court. This was successfully obtained and has put a stay on any future enforcement. Connor has been complying with the order and is finally able to have quiet enjoyment, peace and comfort without the stress of being legally pursued.

Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival

Team MLC was back on the (running) track this year for the Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival in partnership with event partner Hall & Wilcox - this time, virtually.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the event reimagined the festival into the Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival Virtual Run. The change of plan didn't deter Team MLC one bit as they shared their fundraising pages and prepared to get active for the cause. The event began on Sunday 20 September allowing runners to complete their kilometres before Sunday 8 November. Instead of running across the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Team MLC could customise their routes, the length of their run, and even bring pets along for the distance like our Fundraising & Communications Manager Maeve did with office dog Mason (pictured).

Participants ran or walked anywhere from 3.5km to a full marathon distance and recorded their runs virtually.

With the help of our supporters and the team from Hall & Wilcox we were pleased to raise \$3500 to support access to justice. Thank you to all who participated in the run and all those who were able to donate. Your support is vital to ensuring that Marrickville Legal Centre can provide legal services to those that need them most in our community.



Our board

Our passionate volunteer board of directors oversee the governance of our organisation to ensure Marrickville Legal Centre has the greatest impact possible for the community we serve.



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 NSW Health as the Director of Operations, Vaccination and Screening Program at Sydney Local Health District. She has coordinated the implementation and management of over 30 COVID-19 Vaccination Centres, responsible for the administration of 40% of vaccinations in NSW. Lainie has a passion for equitable access to education, legal advocacy and healthcare, having worked in local, State and Federal public health systems. Lainie has a Bachelor of Psychology from the University of Wollongong, a Postgraduate Certificate in Criminology from Charles Sturt University and a Masters in Health Service Management from the University of Sydney. She is also completing the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course.



Simon Fitzpatrick

Simon works as a barrister at 7 Wentworth Selborne chambers and volunteered on the MLC board for 5 years from 2016 until 2021, initially 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 Special Counsel 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 eight 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 been an active elected member of the Board for close to four years.



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 and is a Law Society Accredited Specialist in personal injury. Peter has been a Director of Curwoods Legal Services and McCabe Curwood Pty Ltd since 2015. He is also a Voluntary Director of Road Sense Australia and a former 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 in Mediation.



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.



Andrew Kelly

Andrew Kelly is the CEO of The Antarctic Science Foundation. Across two decades Andrew has witnessed the power of generosity, assisting philanthropists to realise the change they want to see in the world through transformational gifts to Youth Off The Streets, The Smith Family, RACS, the Society of St Vincent De Paul and Children's Medical Research Institute. His guiding principle is to just keep turning up, and his favourite role is being a Dad.

Our staff

Managing Principal Solicitor

Vasili Maroulis

Assistant Principal Solicitor

Justin Abi-Daher

Finance

Greg Oong

Operations

Chris Anderson

Jimmy Atkinson

Fundraising & Communications

Maeve Redmond

Administration

Sajja El Assaad

Vasileios Bebedelis

Emma Fitzpatrick

Adelaide Holm

Alexander Kalos

Kayleigh Yap

Victor Zhu

Legal & Tenancy

Genevieve Barry

Michelle Bogatyrov

Lucy Carroll

Bill Clarke

Codie Croasdale

Jake Edwards

Charlie Faulder

Vivian Galanis

Katie Green

Anastasia Kalos

Emma Kench

Robert McCarthy

Lamees McHawarab

Brigid McManus

Julia Murray

Olivia Nielsen-Gurung

Metin Ozmen

Eloise Parrab

Barbara Paradis

Nicola Perry

Rachael Polt-Cai

Monica Salama

Maralyn Schofield

Danny Shaw

Nicholas Taradilis

Kristen Tsiamis

Jason Teoh

Susan Winfield

Lisa Woodgate

Robert Yen

Janice Yeung

Migrant Employment Legal Service (MELS)

Tu Le

Justin Pen

MELS Train the Trainer program

Yasmeen Fatimah Ahmed

Harry Ly

Kabita Parajuli

Cecilia Park

Daniel Parkinson

Bich Thuy Pham

Joseph Sando

Michele Savicki

Frances Soong

Meher Sulatana

Hang Yee Nancy Tam

Eric Torgbenu

Kanyarat Tresise

Khanddorj Uranchimeg

Feroza Yasmin

Dhondup Yultse

Noel Yandamutso Zihabamwe

Domestic & Family Violence Support

Angela Boyland

Loren Katafono

Zoe McMillan

Savvy Finance E-Learning Kit

Kinga Bisits

Our volunteers

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of Marrickville Legal Centre. The hard work and passion of these individuals helps us to connect more people in our community to justice each year. MLC volunteers are a vibrant and diverse group, just like the community we serve.



97

Client Intake Officers answered our community's enquiries at our front desk



24

student interns joined us from University of Sydney and University of Technology Sydney



325

volunteer solicitors supported our clients with legal advice and assistance



8

multidisciplinary volunteers strengthened our Centre's operations and communications



31

legal assistants helped coordinate our advice clinics



12+

community languages are spoken by our volunteers



12

Practical Legal Training (PLT) students supported our legal team



Our volunteers

Volunteer PLTs

Sarah Barth
 Derek Dao
 Katherine Guan
 Armity Hashkavaei
 Jemima Ladha
 Monique Lim
 Lamees Mchawrab
 Isabella Muscatello
 Nicola Perry
 Delphine Rabet
 Nhu Tran
 Kayleigh Yap

Volunteer Client Intake Officers

Alice Watson	Harrison Hendriks	Miranda Quach
Ameena Hijazi	Harry Ly	Molly Hudson
Amir Elsaïdy	Hiranya Patel	Natasha Reiss
Andy Hu	Ibrahim Khan	Niamh Petchell
Aniela Haigh	Ines Celic	Nicholas Jones
Anna Lombardo	Isabella Meltzer	Nina Dillon-Britton
Asha Vishwanath	Isabella Moya	Perlyn Cusrow Cooper
Ben Jones	Isabelle Doan	Peter Anthony Stephens
Caitlin Blackley	Ishana Srivastava-Khan	Rachael Alice Koch
Carol El-Zakhem	James Eaton	Rheanna Ramajo
Casey Zhu	Jasleen Singh	Samiha Asim
Cassandra Evans	Jessica Wang	Samuel Fitzgerald
Cathy Nguyen	John Su	Sara Galasso
Cherie Jiang	Jordana Kasler	Saranya Bai
Cherry Liu	Joy Rozario	Schirine Yalinejad
Chin Hin Yeung	Julia Lim	Sebastian Gray
Danielle Cavanagh	Kathy Zhang	Seren Ozdemir
Danisha Pogai	Kelly Ng	Shaniece Haifa
Eden McSheffrey	Kenneith Yip	Shannon Lim
Elise Marguerite Anderson	Kiana Asgari	Sophie Ann Driver
Eliza Cook	Kirk Daniel Gehri	Stephanie Mitrovska
Ellen Loh	Kirsten Shields	Sue Jenkins
Eloise Ottery	Lane Pitcher	Tate Lindsay
Emma Carter	Lara Hassan	Thuy Ngan Ha Nguyen
Enda Byrne	Laura Slocombe	Tina Cao
Eric Zhang	Lily Chester	Tina Sharma
Erica Kim	Lisa Alim	Tutti Copping
Gavin Nicholas Carballo	Llewellyn Horgan	Tze-Choong Nge
George Hartley-Wilson	Lucy-Ann Kelley	Venessa Hurmez
Georgina Tanner	Margaret Rose George	Vishnu Narayanan
Gong Chen	Matt Georgevits	Vivian Fan
Grace Wu	Matthew Wallace	Vivienne Davies
Gurman Matharu	Melissa Golby	Von Bacani
Hannah Hijazi	Michael Siu	Wesley Leung
Haris Aziz	Michele Savicki	Yixue Mei

Volunteer solicitors & legal assistants

Abbey Wightley	Ariza Arif	Dal Lim	Georgia Murphy-Haste
Abby Van Der Velde	Asha Keaney	Dane Johnson	Georgia Kennedy
Abigail Smith	Bahar Turkmener	Daniela Scibilio	Georgina Xiradis
Adrian Vipond	Beata Szabo	Danielle Redford	Georgina Dodd
Adrian Vincent	Ben Gottlieb	Danny Nguyen	Gigi Lockhart
AJ Thomas	Benjamin Amato	David Hillard	Glennis Court
Alanna Rennie	Bethan Lewis	Denise Katidis	Grace Morgan-Cocks
Alannah Milton	Brendan Kennedy	Douglas Prime	Hannah Stacey
Alex Kench	Brian Massone	Eden Weller	Hannah Goodman
Alexandria Semyonov	Brianna Clarke	Eileen King	Hannah Fordham
Alexis Cahalan	Bridget Cama	Elisa Lee	Hannah Alcock
Alicia Wong	Brooke Volbrecht	Ella Alexander	Helen Pham
Amanda Hioe	Bryony Loosemore	Ellen Fulthorp	Holly Turner
Amber Philpot	Caitlin Mctaggart	Ellen Brown	Holly Ritson
Amelia Noble	Callum Hinwood	Elouise Bekavac	Ian Bennett
Amelia Couttes	Candice Sng	Elyse Galvin	India Monaghan
Anagha Bidkar	Candy Welsh	Emily Shen	Isabel Muscatello
Andrea Veitch	Carina Lam	Emily Fanning	Isabella O'Connell
Andrea Vanderkuljen	Carmine Santone	Emily Blight	Isabella Daley
Andrea Buritica Toro	Caroline He	Emma Slaytor	Isabelle Hazell
Andrea Boyd-Boland	Cassandra Andrews	Erika De Pellegrin	Ishani Banerji
Andrew Yahl	Cecilia Mak	Erin Wilson	Ivy Tran
Andy Roberts	Chanel Bou-Francis	Erin Jardine	Jack Weinert
Angela Manson	Charles Atkins	Erina Yip	Jack Corcoran
Angela Balacano	Cheryl Po	Eva Dumbrell	Jack Bewsher
Angus Hannah	Christian Knox	Felicity Edwards	Jackie Nicholas
Angus Ferguson	Christina Barnsley	Felix Buddee	Jacky Li
Ann Chin	Christine Ecob	Fevzi Halil	Jacqui Song
Annabel Lowing	Christopher Hartcher	Frances Dreyer	Jade Tyrrell
Annabelle Klimt	Claire Seremetis	Francesco Terranova	Jade Bond
Anne Day	Claire Limbach	Francis Maxwell	James Lang
Anne Cregan	Clare Keating	Freya Booth	James Cole
Anooshka Niles	Connor Mcnair	Gabrielle Bower	James Zhao
Antonia Vo	Cormac Burke	Gareth Austin	Jan Dransfield
Antonia Cacopardo	Courtney Chan	Gemma Chew	Jason Symons
Ariana Ladopoulos	Daisy Johnson	Georgia Sprivulis	Jason Sirrie
			Jaya Punjabi

Our volunteers

Volunteer solicitors & legal assistants

Jelena Kovacevic	Kim Fisher	Maria Bletsas	Paige Durham
Jen Davidson	Kim Roylance	Marianne Robinson	Paris Gray
Jennifer Williams	Kinga Mrozek	Marie Karykis	Paul Bonjour
Jennifer Wicks	Kirk Simmons	Marion Carthew	Peter Pertsoulis
Jennifer Kakakios	Lana Tian	Mark Ferguson	Peter Hughes
Jeremy Hardy	Laura Lombardo	Martin Zanolla	Phillip Ridgway
Jessica Phillips	Laura Bereicua	Matt Mewing	Rachel Skevington
Jessica Meech	Lauren Sanderson	Matthew Kearins	Rachel Johnston
Jessica Luker	Lauren Blumberg	Matthew Gradidge	Raghav Iyer
Jessica Leppert	Lawrence Leung	Max Southern	Rajan Sharma
Jimmy Ngo	Liam Cross	Max Dalton	Ravi De Fonseka
Jodie Vella	Lindsay Owen-Taylor	Melanie Shanahan	Raymond Quinn
Joe Kennedy	Lisa Dolan	Melanie Howlett	Rebecca Mahony
John Hibbard	Lisa-Maree Switala	Melinda Jensen	Rebecca Goh
John Nolan	Liz Pearson	Melissa Chen	Richard Martyn
Jonathan Rose	Louisa Lo-Cao	Michelle Sun	Robert Eaves
Jonathan Nigro	Louise Russell	Michelle Hannon	Rob Muir
Jonathon Tyne	Louise Jackson	Miriam Succar	Robyn Coyle
Jordan Smith	Louise Hang	Mitch Wilson	Rod Stockell
Julie Kneebone	Lucy Chen	Mohamad Ardati	Rohan Barmanray
Julie Gordon	Luke Sundercombe	Monica Perotti	Roland Hassall
Kaori Nishioka-Lopez	Lydia Turman	Monique Essey	Rosetta Lee
Kara Ramsay	Lynley Mackay	Monique Azzopardi	Sabrina Garcia
Karlana Fuata	Macsen Nunn	Myfanwy Henry-Jones	Sally Weatherstone
Kasey Tyler	Maddison Ives	Myles Bryant	Samantha Treflietti
Kate Minton	Madeleine Mcintosh	Nadica Mirceska	Samantha Ramsay
Kate Gillingham	Madeline Verge	Natalie Bentley	Samantha Auty
Kate Emanuel	Magaret Driscoll	Nathan Kennedy	Sana Minhas
Kate Mccallum	Marcel Salloum	Nicholas Masias	Sarah Roper
Katherine Zheng	Marcela Salgado Mar	Nicholas Kraegen	Sarah Barth
Katherine Lau	Marco Olea	Nicole Smith	Scott Sherwen
Kathyrn Bertram	Marcus Vella	Nicole Lojszczyk	Sean Lally
Keith Rovers	Marcus Thomson	Nikki Perry	Seb Tonkin
Kenneth Lau	Margaret Cameron	Oksana Lutak	Sebastian Huynh
Ken Pogson	Margaret-Ann Coleman	Olivia Boyages	Selma Causevic
Khushaal Vyas	Maria Guarnieri	Olivia Lynch	Seun Idowu

Volunteer solicitors & legal assistants

Shannan O'Donnell
Sheldon Korneluk
Shiara Niles
Shinelle Baker
Shivika Gupta
Simone Hall
Sophie Ray
Sophie Goossens
Stephanie Raciti
Stephanie Dixon
Stephen Somerville
Stephen Doupe
Steven Wang
Tal Gilead
Tamara Sims
Tania Hanna
Tarang Immidi
Tatjana Giutronich
Taylah Cochrane
Teagan Naidu
Terence O'Riain
Thomas Primrose
Thomas Hobson
Tiara Agarwal
Tineka Winter
Tom Kaldis
Tom Hillyard
Tom Burns
Trent Morfis
Tristan Cutcliffe
Venthan Brabaakaran
Yingzhou (Judy) Zhou
Yvonne Nehme
Zach Marrett
Zynal Khan

Volunteer legal assistants

Alannah Milton
Alex Kalos
Andrew Mulligan
Ashleigh Xuereb
Bianca Winston
Brian Massone
Brianna Clark
Chris Anderson
Elsher Keir
Fevzi Halil
Francesco Terranova
Isabel Muscatello
Jessica Xu
Jonathon Nigro
Karen Leong
Karlana Fuata
Lauren Musgrave
Leah Park
Nicholas Masias
Nikki Perry
Peter Im
Quyen Nguyen
Rob Muir
Sam Rabin
Sarah Barth
Sarita Samleerangkul
Tara Mulholand
Tutti Copping
Vivian Nguyen
Yingzhou (Judy) Zhou

Communications & operations volunteers

Anna Lombardo
Brooke Ristic
Dash Buxton
Eloise Newbury
Gisela Johnson
Jen Davidson
Leo Su
Phillip Salakas



Special thanks

Marrickville Legal Centre is thankful for the indispensable support of its partners. With the ongoing challenges presented by COVID-19, our partners offer valuable support to our key legal services, freeing up resources so we can direct focus to our most vulnerable clients.

Marrickville Legal Centre is extremely grateful for the assistance and partnership of the following companies and individuals. 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.

Law firms

Baker McKenzie

This year, Baker McKenzie continued to lend support through the provision of fortnightly solicitors at MLC's Youth Legal Service Advice Clinic. In February 2021 we established the MELS Immigration Advice Clinic in partnership with Baker McKenzie, utilising the firm's migration law expertise to provide holistic employment and immigration law assistance each week.

Bartier Perry

This year, pro bono partners Bartier Perry provided ongoing legal advice and assistance to clients of MLC as part of a monthly commitment to our Centre's Tuesday evening advice clinics.

Colin Biggers & Paisley Lawyers

Through the generous support of Colin Biggers & Paisley, MLCare creating lasting change for young people. Since 2015, the Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation has supported our Centre's Youth Legal Service NSW (YLS) through providing lawyers to assist on our weekly Youth Advice Clinic and since 2020 it increased our in-house capacity, supporting a dedicated youth solicitor to provide advice and casework to young people across New South Wales. The Colin Biggers & Paisley Foundation has also assisted the YLS seconding a graduate lawyer to the service 3 days per week.

Gilbert + Tobin

Gilbert + Tobin provide ongoing pro bono assistance at Marrickville Legal Centre's General Legal 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 offered their expertise in scoping and planning Marrickville Legal Centre's New Age Legal Assistant (page 13). The design team at Gilbert + Tobin additionally keep MLC looking professional through ongoing pro bono design.

Hall & Wilcox

Hall & Wilcox maintain their support to MLC 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 through their pre-established pro bono referral pathway. Together (and apart) our teams raced in the name of #JusticeForUsAll in the Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival Virtual Run, raising \$3500 for the work of MLC. Hall & Wilcox's graduate secondment program has also continued into this year and has provided crucial support to our employment law team.

HWL Ebsworth Lawyers

Marrickville Legal Centre continues benefit from a regular rotation of graduate secondee lawyers from HWL Ebsworth who have provided ongoing support to our civil law team.

Johnson Winter & Slattery

Marrickville Legal Centre and Johnson Winter & Slattery's graduate secondee program has become a foundational for our Centre with another suite of graduates providing invaluable advice and advocacy for renters in the inner west and northern Sydney area this year. Law Week NSW received a refresh from MLC and JWS together with Legal Aid NSW and State Library NSW as we relaunched the inaugural Law Week NSW website in May 2021, a community initiative to promote access to justice for a state-wide audience. JWS also lends its pro bono expertise to reviewing our Centre's policies and procedures..

Minter Ellison

Marrickville Legal Centre continued to receive pro bono support from Minter Ellison lawyers who aid the Employment Legal Service with research and advice for casework at its weekly Employment Law Clinic.

Santone Lawyers

Santone Lawyers assist Marrickville Legal Centre's Employment Law Clinic weekly which helps workers who have faced unfair dismissal, wage theft, or workplace discrimination. Santone Lawyers supports this partnership further through a referral pathway for client's needing workers' compensation advice and casework.

Sparke Helmore Lawyers

Together Sparke Helmore Lawyers and Marrickville Legal Centre successfully recovered over half a million dollars for clients through the new 'Low Bono' service, which assists people who cannot afford private solicitors and do not meet requirements for Legal Aid or community legal assistance (see page 20). MLC further benefits from 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. Sparke Helmore helped MLC to create legal factsheets for consumer law and supported our team through a regular rotation of legal secondees.

Our funding partners

Attorney-General NSW

Department of Communities & Justice

Fair Trading NSW

Legal Aid NSW

Office of Responsible Gambling

Universities

University of Sydney

Australian Catholic University

University of Technology Sydney

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.

6 St James Hall Chambers

Bronwyn Byrnes

7 Wentworth Selborne

Michael Wells

9 Wentworth Selborne

David Parish

12 Wentworth Selbourne

Vanja Bulut

Denman Chambers

Ella Dalrymple

Frederick Jordan Chambers

John Eun

Paul Moorhouse

HB Higgins Chambers

Adam Guy

Maurice Byers Chambers

Zoe Alderton

Sir Owen Dickson Chambers

Tahn O'Rourke

Sixth Floor

Naomi Wootton

Greenway Chambers

Ingmar Taylor SC

Jamie Darams

Penny Thew

Eleven Wentworth

Clare Roberts

List A Barristers

Nicholas Baum



Financial overview

The 2020/2021 year was another successful one with gross revenues increasing by \$659,000 over the previous year. This was primarily as a result of increased funding from Government to assist with the challenges faced by our organisation in assisting clients during the COVID pandemic. This year there was an operating deficit for the year of \$246,523 which was both forecast and budgeted for. As foreshadowed in last year’s annual report, a change in accounting policy resulted in the recognition of program funding surpluses as income in the year of receipt which was part of the reason for the surplus of \$242,920 for the 2019/2020 year. A significant proportion of these surplus funds were expended during the 2020/2021 year and thereby contributing to the deficit for the year. The year also saw the end of a number of funded programs during the year including the very successful NALA project and Responsible Gambling program as well as a number of capital grants including the refurbishment of the front reception area at the Marrickville office.

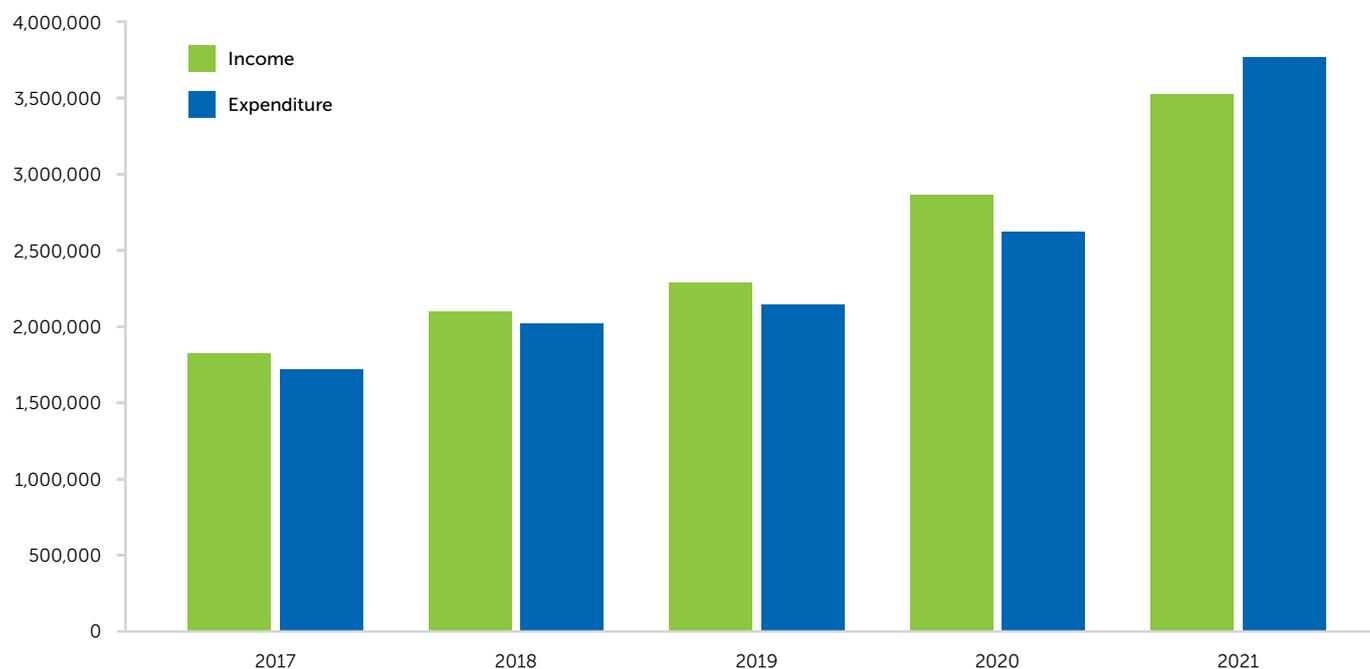
MLC again received a significant proportion of income from both Federal and State Governments with this funding representing over 90% of total income. However, MLC has over the last two years worked to develop other revenue streams and there are promising signs for these developing alternate revenue options. MLC’s greatest asset are its staff which not coincidentally is also the greatest cost. Employee related expenditure accounts for 80.6% of total expenditure.

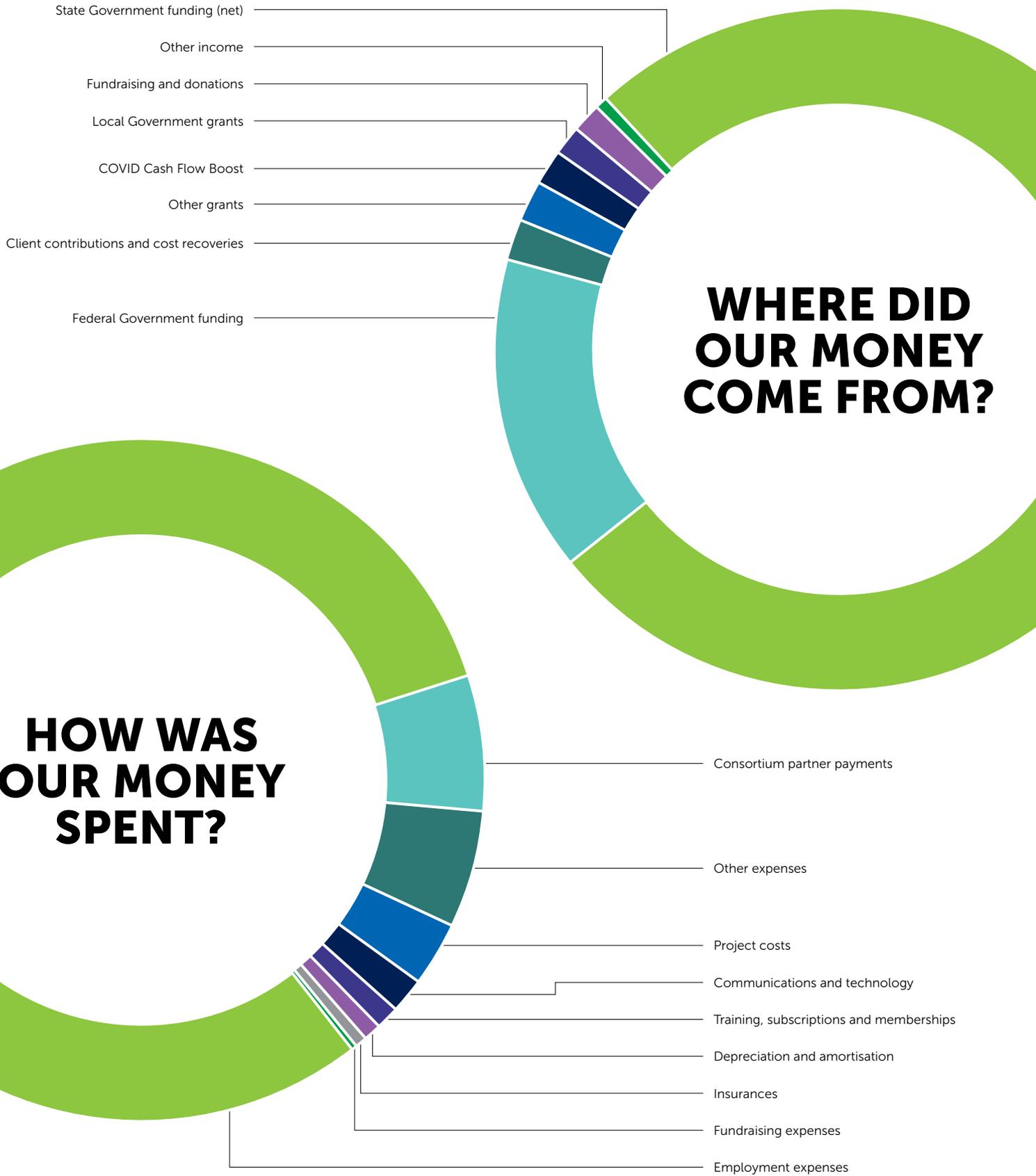
The financial position remains sound with accumulated funds as at June of \$505,400 as compared to \$751,900 for the previous year due to the operating deficit this year. This provides a solid financial platform to move into the new year albeit it with forecast lower gross revenues as a number of funding streams ended last year with other COVID related funding programs to end in the first half of the 2021/2022 year.

Greg Oong
Finance Manager



Income v Expenditure





Copies of the financial report can be accessed through the MLC website 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 financially 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



Photos by Codie Croasdale, Dash Buxton and John Kars.
Designed by Gilbert + Tobin.

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE

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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