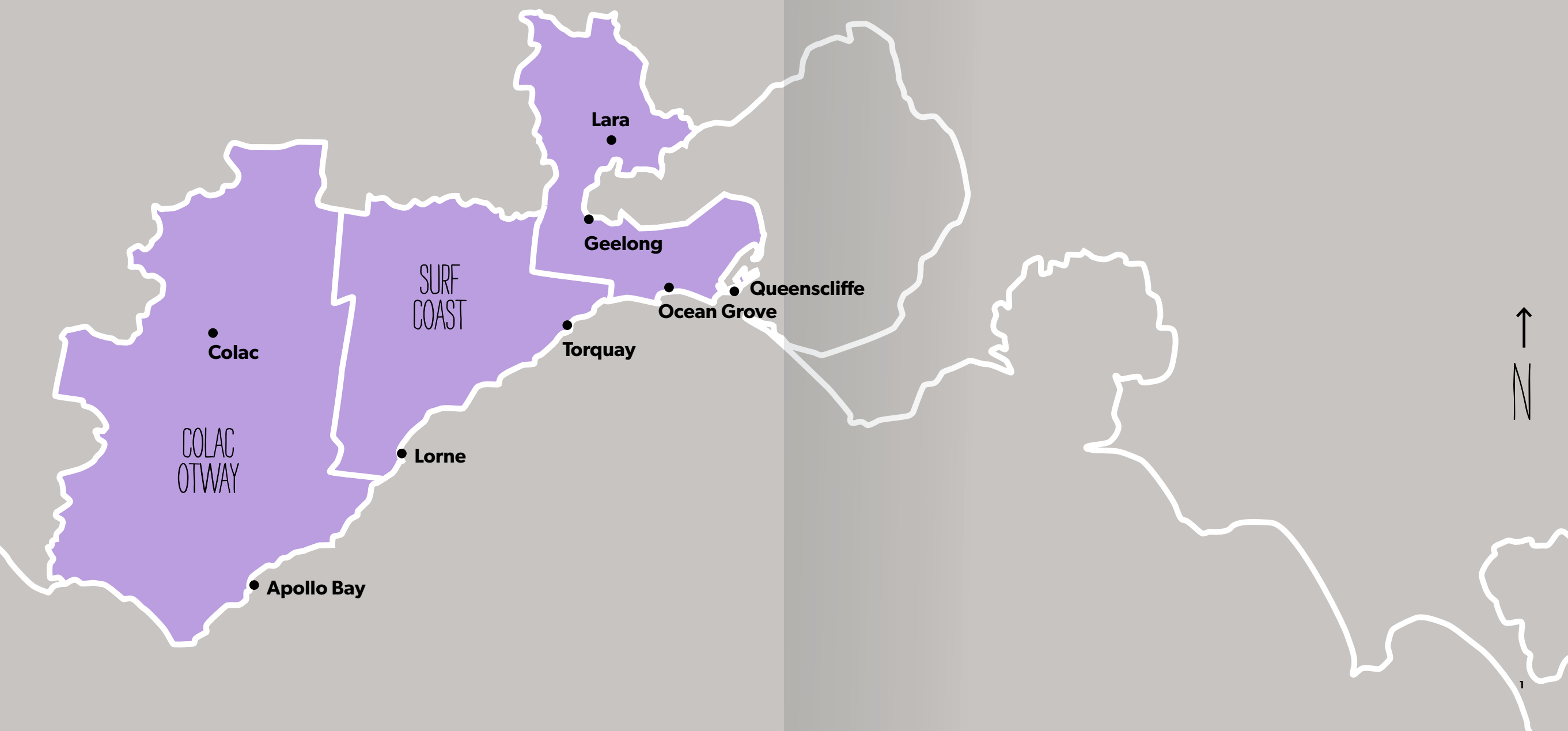


UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY ANNUAL REPORT 2022



OUR REGION



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



// This artwork symbolises people connecting, working and living on Wadawurrung country. The dunes down the bottom hold thousands of years of cultural stories and many known sites are already recorded in our sand dunes on Wadawurrung country... This was a place where my ancestors would gather, collect and live off the land. The footprint and meeting places symbolise people of today utilising these places. Many people live close to our coastline and embrace the stories of Wadawurrung people today. Bunjil the creator flying above watching over you while you're on country. //

Artwork: Living, working and connecting to Wadawurrung country, 2021. Artist: Billy-Jay (BJ) O'Toole.

Barwon Community Legal Service acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work and we pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' deep and ongoing connection and stewardship of Country, and that the land on which we work was stolen and sovereignty has never been ceded.

We aim to challenge the systemic injustices that cause harm and to listen to and learn from our Aboriginal communities, with full acknowledgement that we have a lot to learn and we will not always get it right.

We acknowledge the sorrow caused by the Stolen Generation and the ongoing impacts that colonisation and the justice system have on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also recognise the resilience, strength, and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the ongoing contribution they bring to our whole community.

VISION AND MISSION

OUR VISION

A just society in which all people have equal access to, and status under, the law; and a legal system which is humane, fair, and equitable.

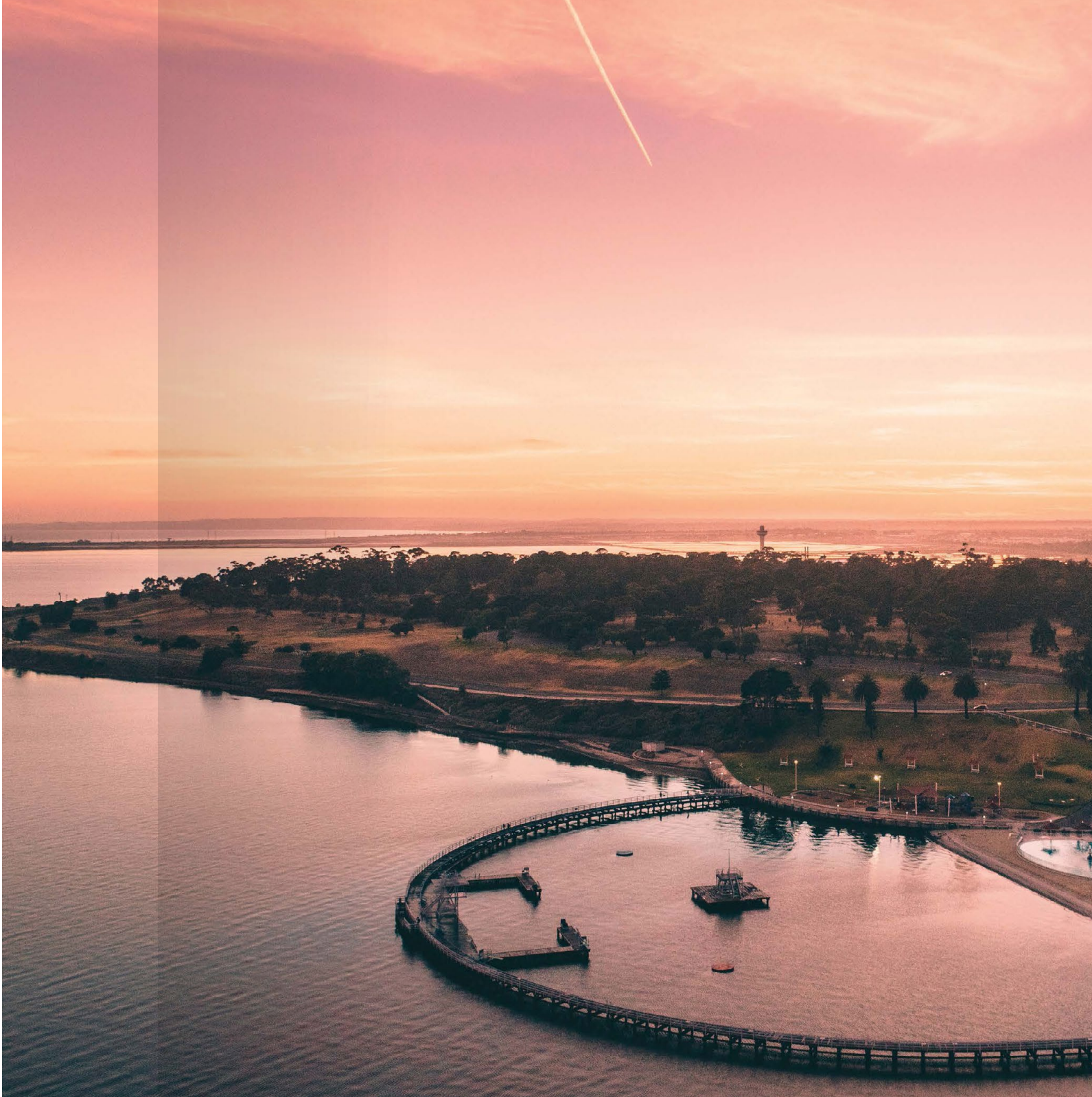
OUR MISSION

To challenge systemic disadvantage and enable our priority communities to access the support they need to understand their legal rights and overcome their legal problems.



CONTENTS

Our Leadership	8
Understanding our Community	10
Our Work	22
Our People and Culture	52
Our Enablers and Sustainability	56
Financials	58

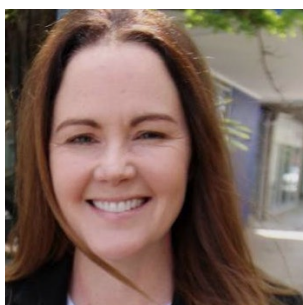


OUR LEADERSHIP

Chair and CEO report



Tom Lynch
Chair



Bryanna Connell
CEO

Our community

Welcome to our Annual Report 2022. As we reflect on the past year, the contrast in how we started to how it ended is stark. In July 2021 we were in lockdown and that was to endure for almost six more months. Interest rates were almost zero. By the end of June 2022 we were living our new normal, free to leave our homes but weighed down by illness, overrun hospital systems and a significant increase in the cost of living.

The impact of the pandemic continues to challenge some more than others. At the height of the pandemic in 2020-21, Coronavirus Supplement and Jobkeeper payments enabled the lowest income earners to afford to pay their rent and provide for their families better than they had been able to for years. Those payments ceased in 2021 but the pandemic remained and we spent most of 2021 in and out of lockdown, and for many that meant in and out of work. A new ACOSS and UNSW Sydney Report has revealed that when these payments ceased and COVID Disaster payments were denied to the lowest income earners, poverty rose by around 20% whilst job growth impacted higher paid jobs more than others. And the divide between high and low income earners grew.

For our community it means that nearly 10,000 people receiving Jobseeker in the Barwon region are living approximately 15% below the poverty line. In Greater Geelong

alone 28% of the population rent, and only 5.5% of rentals are affordable for low income earners. We have seen an increase in the proportion of clients who were experiencing homelessness, or were at risk of homelessness – from 3.2% in 2018-19 to 6.9% in 2021-22.

We know that financial stress is a leading cause of family violence. You will see in this report that our service has seen an unprecedented increase in demand for our family violence services. Approximately half of our clients over the last three years have experienced family violence. This proportion jumped to 71.3% in 2021-22.

New funding

We are grateful for additional funding received in 2022, and planned for 2022-23. In 2021-22 we established the Barwon region's first formal Health Justice Partnership with Barwon Health, thanks to the generosity of the Anthony Costa Foundation. This program has been funded by the Department of Justice and Community Safety for a further 12 months and it will enable us to grow the program to provide place based, integrated legal services to people living in the Colac Otway Region.

We were also fortunate to receive a special CLC Grant to provide dedicated legal assistance for vulnerable women. This grant has enabled us to grow our team and enhance our holistic service offering, for women experiencing family violence over a four year period.

We also received funding through the Commonwealth Safer Communities program for our Law for Life Skills program in partnership with Barwon Child Youth and Family.

These programs have enabled us to improve access to justice within our region, however there is still more legal need and more work to be done.

Our team

During the year we said farewell to board members Ian Parsons, who retired from the board after five and a half years of service,

and Jude Hunter, who left the board in mid-2022 after almost three years. Thank you to both Ian and Jude for their significant contribution during their tenure.

We welcomed Paul Blane to the board in November 2021.

We also farewelled our Principal Lawyer, Mandi Hyland, after ten years in the position. Mandi was instrumental in building the culture of our team having lead the legal team with empathy and compassion.

Geordie Stapleton has been appointed Principal Lawyer after 15 years with the service as a lawyer and more recently, supervising lawyer. I am confident that Geordie will lead the team well through the period of significant growth that our service is experiencing.

I would like to acknowledge Alex Jones who was Acting CEO between August and December 2021 whilst also undertaking her substantive role as Community Development Manager. Quite a feat.

Our service and our team have emerged from the pandemic strong and very much changed. Our team, like many others, have shown immense resilience through the last two years. I am inspired everyday by their dedication to our clients and support for each other. If I were to choose a team to weather a pandemic with, I would choose them. Thank you to each of you and the role you played to ensure we continued to adapt, to grow and to provide the best possible assistance to our clients in such challenging circumstances.

Looking forward

In 2022 we are renewing our legal needs analysis and on the following pages we highlight the findings and recommendations from that work. They will guide us as we embark on a new strategic plan in 2023 as we continue our mission to challenge systemic disadvantage and enable those most disadvantaged to understand their legal rights and overcome their legal problems so they may have hope for the future.

UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY

Understanding legal need

In 2021 we undertook a legal needs analysis with the assistance of consultants Lirata. The purpose of this analysis was to understand the met legal need of services we are delivering and the potential unmet legal needs within our communities, including where priority client groups may be falling through the gaps. We examined internal data and external demographic data across a three year period: 2018/19 to 2020/21.

We built on this work in 2022 with the assistance of a research intern to update our data and analysis with data from the newly released Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census.

By building an in depth picture of legal need in our community we can ensure that we are making our services as accessible, inclusive and targeted as possible.

Key findings

- There is high disadvantage and lower service intensity in the Colac Otway Local Government Area and parts of the Greater Geelong region (LGAs) indicating high unmet legal need. We have an opportunity to increase awareness of our service and improve accessibility for these communities.
- It is crucial that we maintain our high service intensity whilst also improving access of place based services to clients living within Corio-Norlane given the extent of potential legal need in those areas.
- We have formed a better understanding of the extent to which our clients experience mental health conditions.
- The increased demand for our family violence services has led to an increase of service provision to people in medium and higher income brackets.

- There is more work to be done to understand the complex nature of what is low and medium income, noting that income levels cannot be relied upon as a benchmark without also taking into account an individual's family situation. For example a single parent on a medium income might be considered financially disadvantaged whereas a single person with no children may not.

Priority client groups with legal need include:

- Young people.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse and newly arrived communities.
- Clients living with a disability.

There has been unprecedented increase in family violence in our region and strengthening our family violence legal assistance to meet this demand is a key recommendation of our report.

- Proportion of clients experiencing family violence has increased by 20% since 2018-19.
- Family violence intervention order matters are the most common problem type across all priority client groups.
- Rates of family violence are higher in Colac-Otway and Greater Geelong higher than the Victorian average.

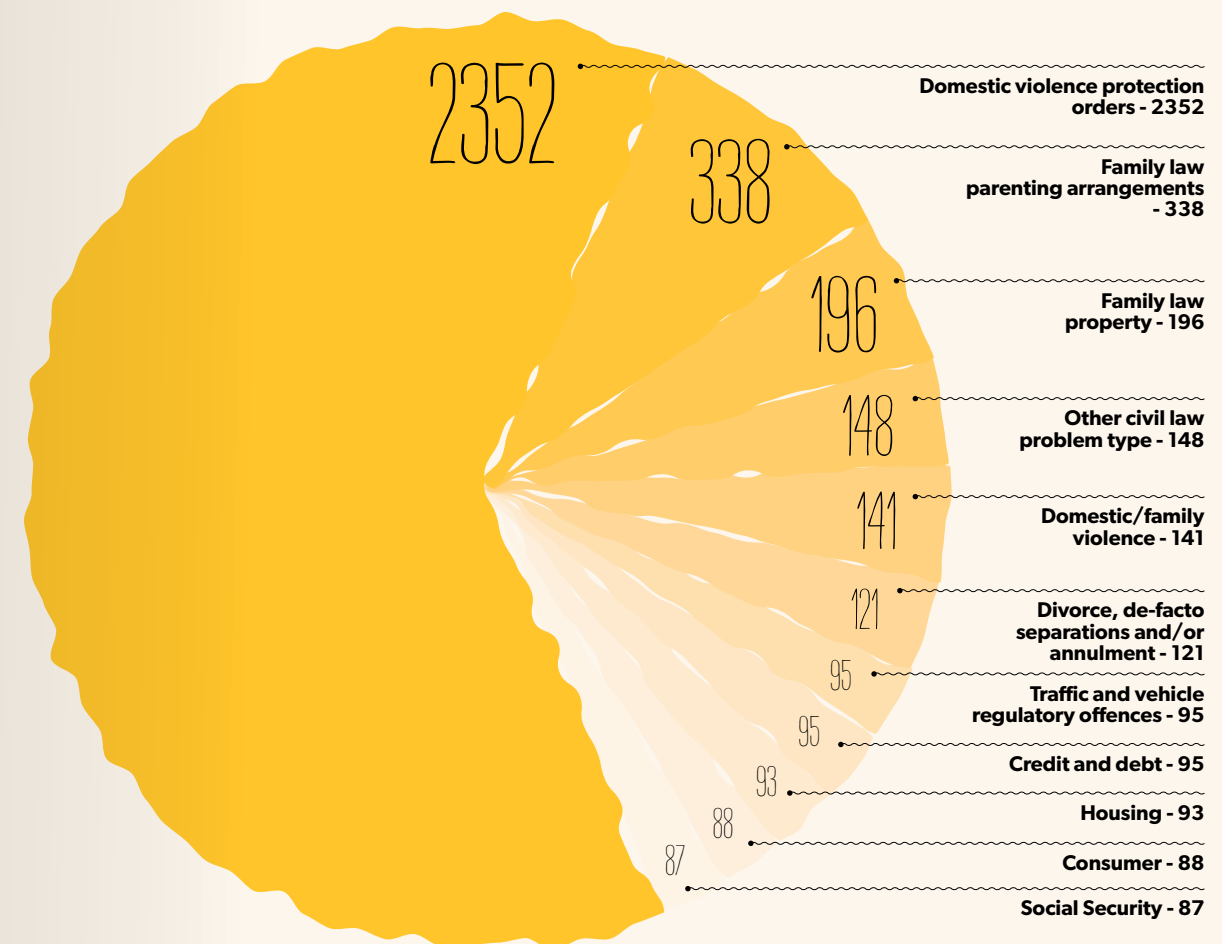
Next steps

We have a number of new programs underway that will meet a level of unmet need in our region including our Health Justice Partnership which will place an emphasis on accessibility in the Colac Otway Region and our Enhanced Access to Family Violence Assistance project funded by the NLAP CLC Grant. However, there is a long way to go.

The findings from our legal needs analysis will inform our 2023-2028 strategic plan and 2022-24 funding strategy. We are committed to adapting our services and programs to improve access to priority communities and focus our efforts to address the unmet legal need in the Barwon Region.

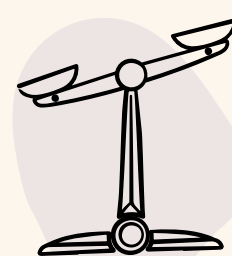
Our most common legal issues for 2021/22 financial year

By services excluding referrals and information



Understanding our service

Our legal practice



1494
Legal
advices



1258

Referrals and
information
provided

868

Duty Lawyer
Services



42

Volunteer
Lawyer Night
service clinics



60

Completed
casework files



677

Advices given on
family violence
matters

494

Pre-court
FV advices
(trriages)

\$64,466

Money saved
for clients

979

Legal tasks

83

Secondary
consultations
with community
workers

Increase in demand for family violence legal assistance

In the last financial year we have seen an increase in demand for our duty lawyer service and pre-court family violence. This increase in demand for our family violence related legal services has led to a decrease in both ongoing casework files opened and completed in this period.

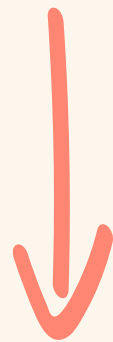


+21.5% Information
and Referrals

+22.8% Duty Lawyer
Services

+26.3% Pre-Court
FV Advice

+17.1% Legal
Tasks



Ongoing casework

-27.3% Opened
casework files

-47.8% Completed
casework files

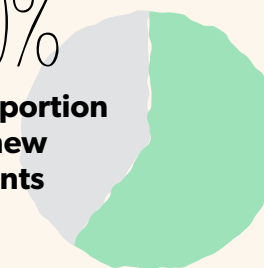
Understanding our clients

1473

Clients
assisted

60%

Proportion
of new
clients



71%

Identify
as Female



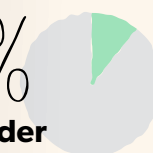
26%

Identify
as male



11%

Under
25



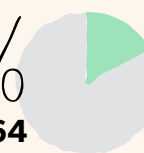
60%

25-49
years



17%

50-64
years



9%

65 years
and over



82.4%

Experiencing financial
disadvantage



71.2%

Experiencing
family
violence



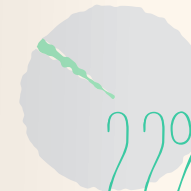
66%

Receiving
government
assistance



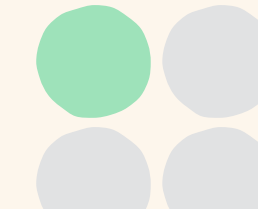
10.3%

CALD
Background/
Main language
not English



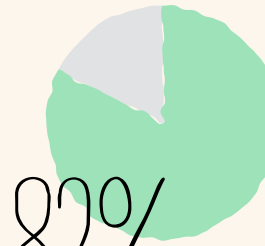
2.2%

Aboriginal
and Torres
Strait Islander
communities



1 IN 4

Living with a
disability or mental
health condition

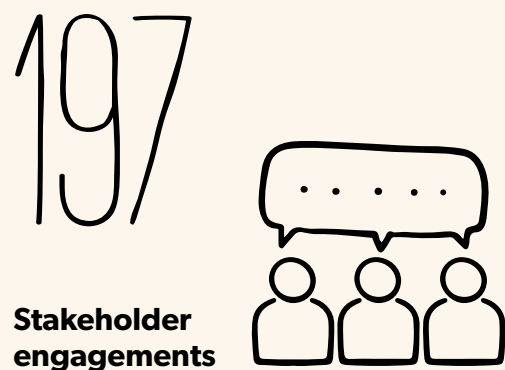
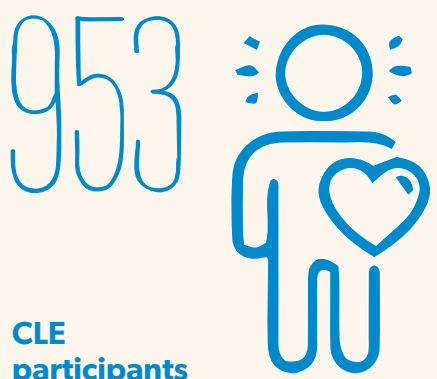


82%

Increase in clients
experiencing
or at risk of
homelessness

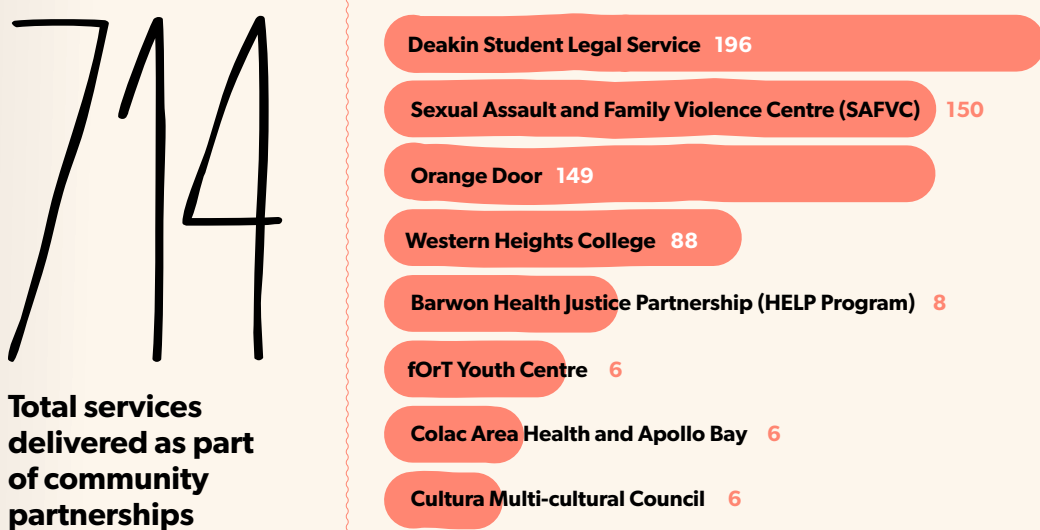
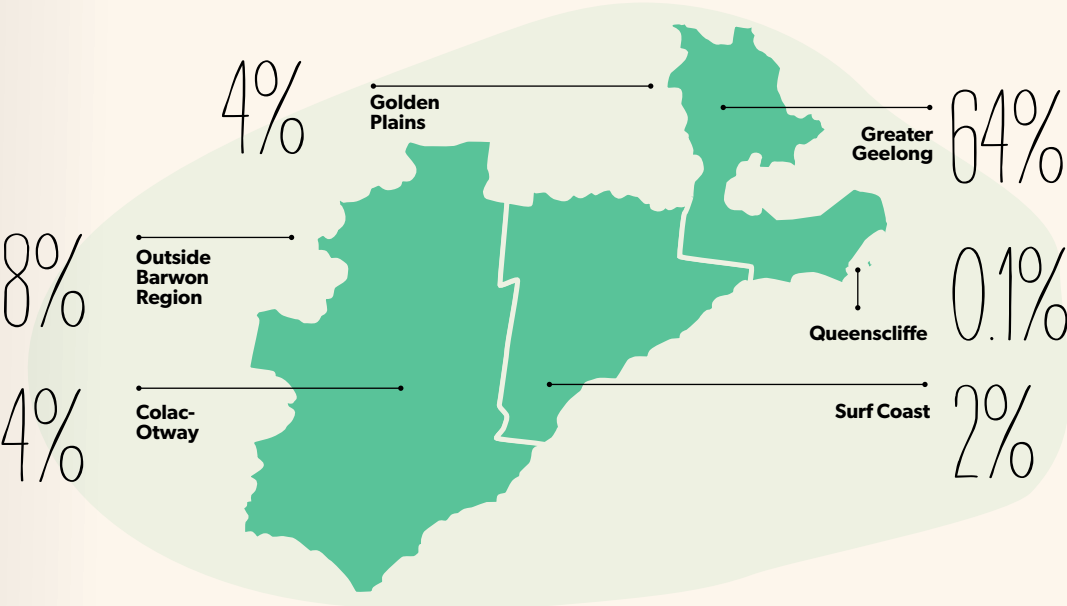
Understanding our clients

Our community engagement, projects and law reform



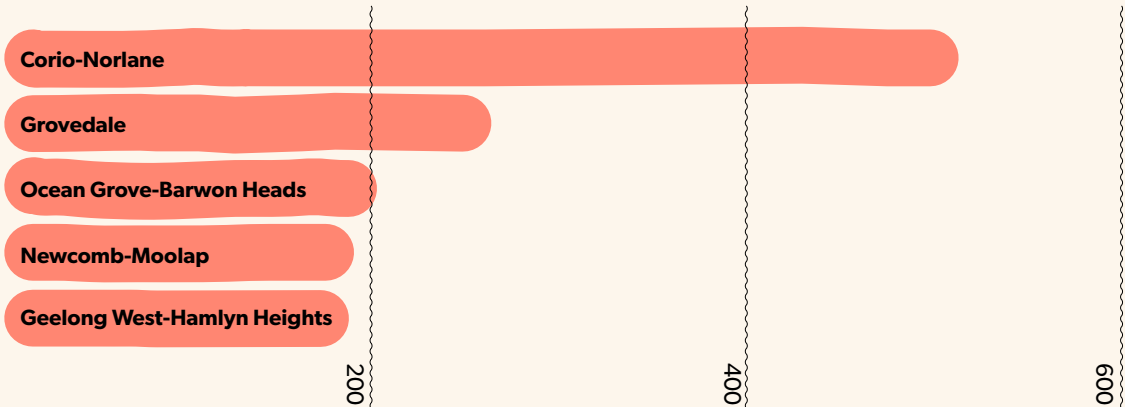
Understanding our partnerships

Top 5 areas receiving most services



Understanding our region

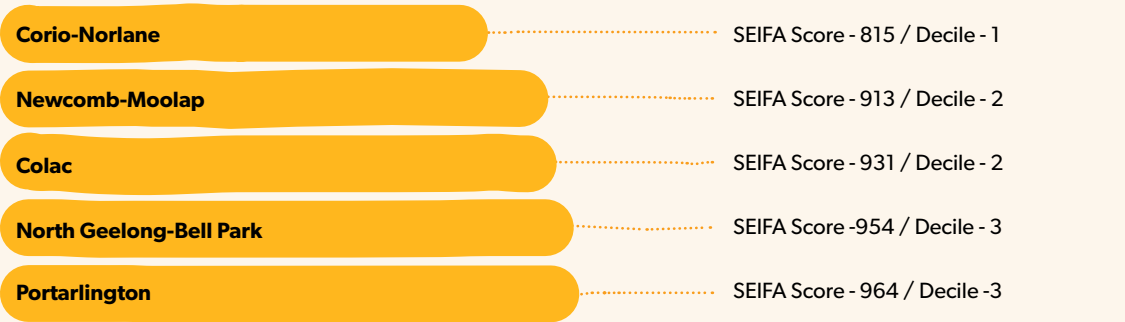
Top 5 – Where our clients live



Data shows clients from Corio-Norlane have the most legal need in our region and receive the most services. Underserved areas include Colac and Portarlington. Both fell outside the top 10 areas receiving most services.

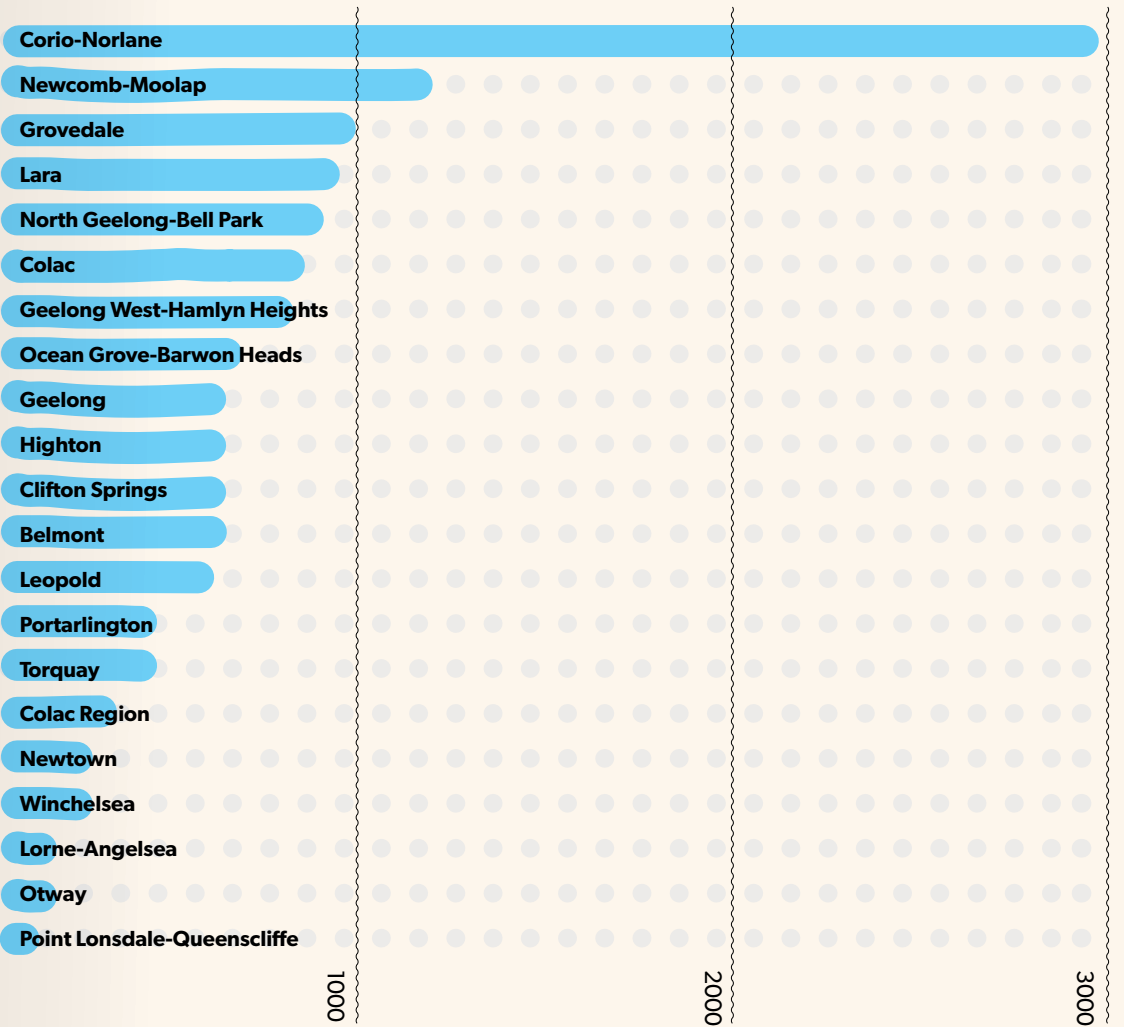
Based on 2020/21 CLASS data

Top 5 – Most disadvantaged areas



Evidence suggests that where there is disadvantage in community there are higher levels of legal need. Four of the five most disadvantaged areas in our catchment are in Greater Geelong. Limitations with data include the fact that SEIFA Indexes are based on 2016 data. We will review revised disadvantage data in our region when it is released in 2024.

High areas of legal need in our region



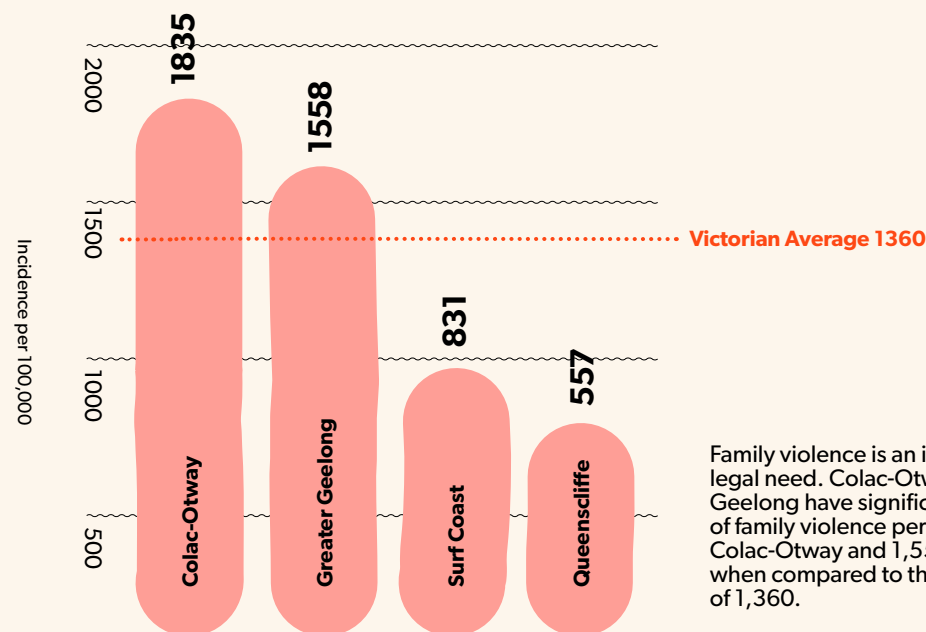
The NLAS Capability indicator is a proxy measure of legal capability for people aged 15 to 64 who have low personal income (<\$26K/yr), relatively low educational attainment.

In the Greater Geelong region, it is estimated that the SA2 Corio-Norlane area has approximately 2,930 people with potential legal need. This is the highest level of need in our region and the 3rd highest level of legal need in Australia.

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is an Australian Bureau of Statistics measure to rank areas according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. A lower SEIFA score indicates greater disadvantage.

Family violence

Rate of Family Violence per 100,000, by LGA - 2021

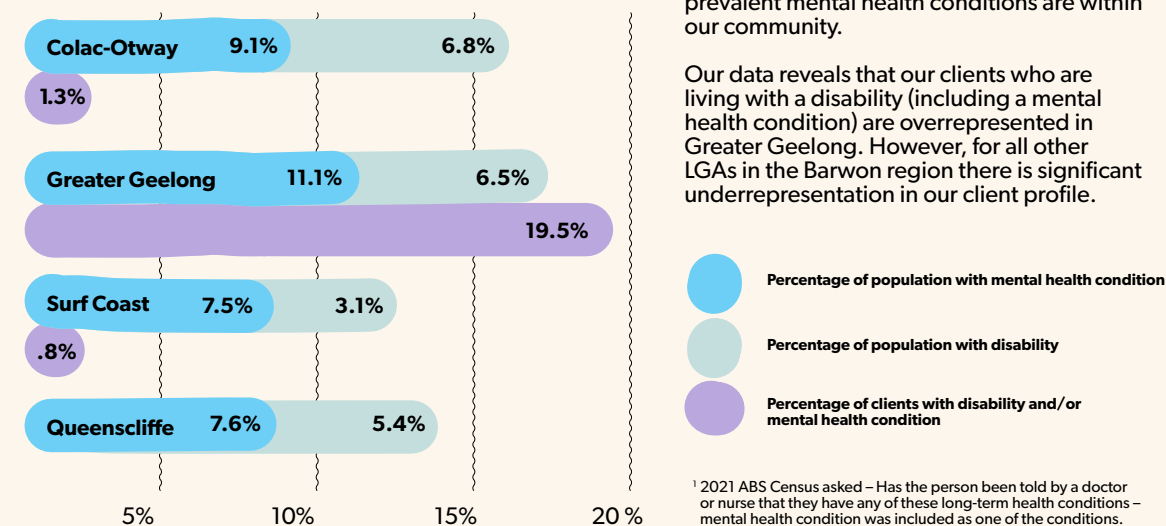


Rate of Family Violence per 100,000, by LGA - 2021

Family violence is an indicator of potential legal need. Colac-Otway and Greater Geelong have significantly higher incidences of family violence per 100,000, (1,835 in Colac-Otway and 1,558 Greater Geelong), when compared to the Victorian average of 1,360.

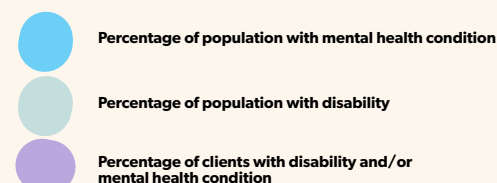
Disability and Mental Health

Percentage of population with mental health condition/disability vs. percentage of clients with mental health condition/disability



In the most recent 2021 Census, long term health issues, including diagnosed mental health conditions, were examined for the first time¹. This provides us with new insight into how prevalent mental health conditions are within our community.

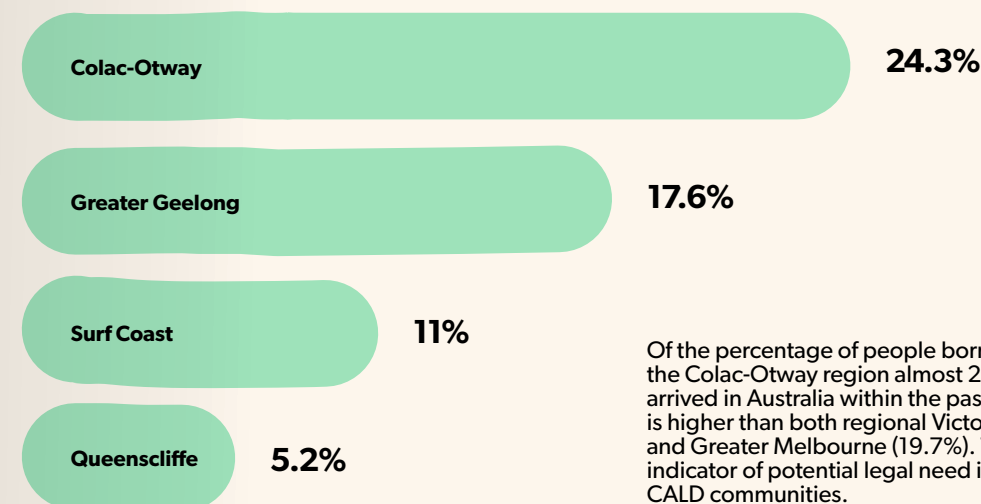
Our data reveals that our clients who are living with a disability (including a mental health condition) are overrepresented in Greater Geelong. However, for all other LGAs in the Barwon region there is significant underrepresentation in our client profile.



¹ 2021 ABS Census asked – Has the person been told by a doctor or nurse that they have any of these long-term health conditions – mental health condition was included as one of the conditions.

Overseas arrivals

Overseas arrivals during the five years to August 2021



Of the percentage of people born overseas in the Colac-Otway region almost 25% of people arrived in Australia within the past 5 years. This is higher than both regional Victoria (16.6%) and Greater Melbourne (19.7%). This is an indicator of potential legal need in this area for CALD communities.

CALD communities are likely to face legal issues involving employment problems, discrimination and immigration².

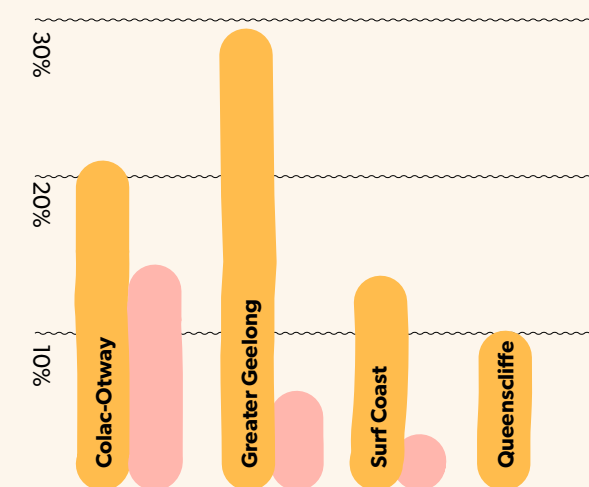
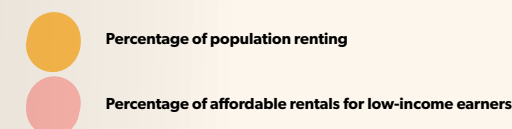
² Community Legal Centres Australia, 'Legal Needs Planning Guide: A data informed approach for the community legal sector', Community Legal Centres Australia (2021), pg. 20, accessed 20 Sept 2022.

Housing impacts legal need

Percentage of population renting vs. percentage of affordable rentals for low income earners

Our analysis revealed a real issue with available affordable housing in our region. Despite the significant percentage of the population who are renting, the percentage of affordable rentals for low income earners is under 15% for all LGAs. In Greater Geelong only 5.5% of rentals are affordable for low income earners.

We have seen the lack of affordable housing impact many of our clients experiencing family violence, putting them at increased risk of homelessness, and experiencing other legal issues.



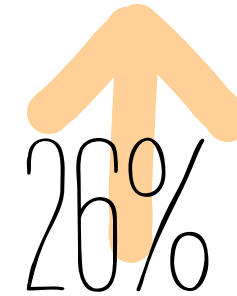
OUR WORK

Meeting the increased demand for our family violence intervention order duty lawyer service

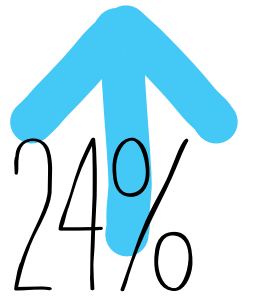
While our duty lawyer service experienced a slight decrease in demand during the pandemic, in the last 12 months we have seen a 23% increase in duty lawyer services delivered, surpassing pre-pandemic levels.



duty lawyer services



pre-court family
violence triage
advice service

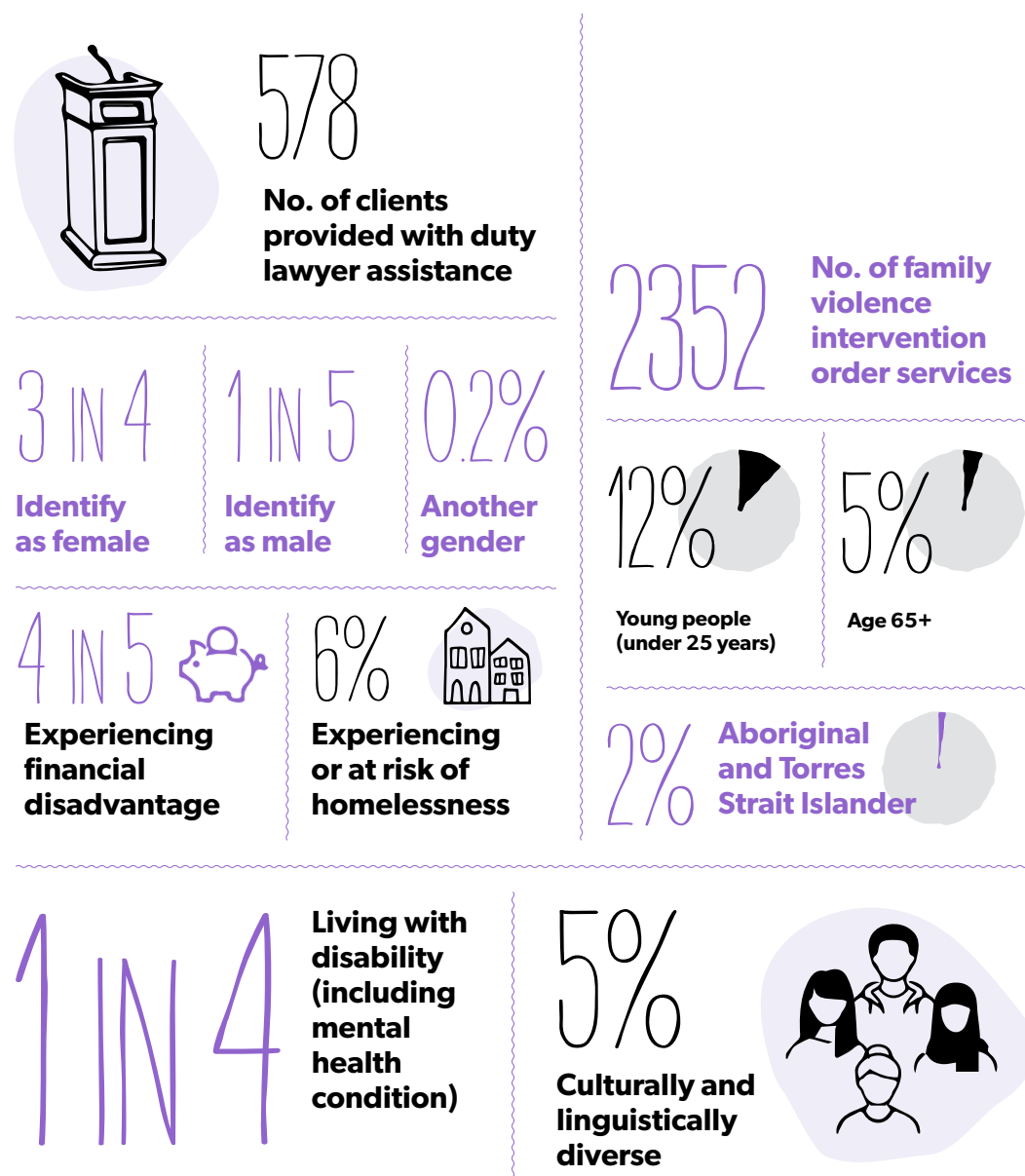


legal advice for
family violence
related matters

Our legal team outside
Geelong Magistrates' Court.



Overview of clients accessing our family violence intervention order duty lawyer service



Working together to help our clients experiencing family violence feel safer, cared for and supported



We take an integrated and collaborative approach to providing legal assistance to people in places where they are already connected. We have integrated partnerships with local health and family violence organisations which specifically target clients experiencing family violence. We do this because we know it is important for our clients to feel supported during this very difficult time.

// It is really amazing how supported I have felt. This has been so different to experiences I have had in the past when I have been at risk from family violence. I definitely wouldn't have handled it the same without this support...

The combination of support from my health provider, local family violence services and Barwon Community Legal has made me feel safer, cared for, listened to and supported.
— Family violence client

We work alongside community workers to support family violence clients, which creates a more positive experience for our clients:

// As a worker it is so good to see when collaborative practice can wrap around a woman and her family and make a positive impact. Sharing relevant health/safety/wellbeing information to be able to support Fatima in a way that has met her individual needs has clearly been a positive experience.
— Family Violence caseworker

One lawyer helping family violence client Iryna with multiple complex legal problems

IRYNA'S STORY

Family violence creates multiple and complex legal issues, often involving family law, debt and housing related issues. Our holistic service means that one community lawyer can assist a client with multiple legal issues across different areas of law.

Iryna was referred to our service by her SAFVC family violence worker. She was in a situation of substantial debt, had nowhere to live, no car, and no income.

Iryna had limited options to help herself and no experience of the Australian legal system. With assistance from an interpreter our lawyer was able to develop a strategy to assist her to unravel her complex legal issues.

Iryna's husband, Ahwas, had sent her and their child ahead on a trip back to their country of origin to visit family. While there, Ahwas published Iryna's details on a dating website and then applied for divorce which put Iryna at danger of imprisonment and stoning in her home country.

She fled back to Australia with her child to find that the family home had been emptied of its furniture and that all her clothes and belongings, and those of her child had been packed up and stored somewhere. The locks had been changed and the house was advertised for rent on a local real estate agent's website. Ahwas had closed all the bank accounts and told the ride share service that Iryna worked for that she would not be returning, and sold the family's pet dog.

The family car had been written off in an accident before Iryna went overseas. Ahwas had kept the insurance money and had not replaced the car.

Ahwas had also nominated Iryna for his traffic fines and had transferred utility bills into her name. She was also paying off an expensive iPhone that Ahwas kept for himself.

Iryna's SAFVC worker encouraged her to report the family violence to Victoria Police who made a family violence intervention order application against Ahwas. They served him with it as soon as he returned to Australia. In retaliation, Ahwas made his own application against Iryna.

We were able to help Iryna in a number of ways:

- We took immediate steps to deal with the fines through the Fines Victoria Family Violence Scheme and negotiated with the telco who removed the handset payments from Iryna's account.
- We worked with Police to finalise a Family Violence Intervention Order protecting Iryna and her child and we represented Iryna in Ahwas' application against her and were successful in having it struck out.
- We are now providing ongoing family law representation to her as part of our Family Law Access program.

Iryna's legal issues will be ongoing for some time but her situation is much improved. She is debt free and is about to move into a rental property with assistance from SAFVC. She is receiving Social Security payments to help her get back on her feet.

Increasing family law access in our community and building our capacity to provide holistic family law casework and representation

// **Please know that you have honestly made a difference in my life and it will never be forgotten.**
— Family law client

40 Referred for casework | 25 Current files open | 5 Files closed



Family Law Access is a capacity building program providing family law assistance to vulnerable clients in collaboration with Women's Legal Service, Victoria Legal Aid, Brimbank Melton CLC and WEstJustice.

The project aims to build the capacity of CLCs and their lawyers to provide holistic, comprehensive family law services to clients who often fall through the gaps. The service ultimately aims to achieve safer outcomes for families.

This program has allowed us to meet the growing need for family law assistance in our region, and help families who are financially disadvantaged and face additional barriers to accessing justice, including those experiencing family violence.

// **Without this service, there is a strong likelihood that these vulnerable clients would be unrepresented in their family law proceedings with the potential for negative outcomes for them and their children.**

— Tamara Kotowicz, Practice Manager (Family Violence and Family Law)

We currently have clients at various stages of their family law proceedings, including initial negotiations, preparing financial documents, mediation, and matters currently listed in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia. All our current clients have experienced family violence.



Georgie Stapleton,
Principal Lawyer

// Our lawyers have been involved in online mentoring sessions and shadowing opportunities with Women's Legal Service, which has built our capacity to provide high quality family law representation in a supported environment. We have built our knowledge about the nuances of family law matters, key elements of client centered practice, intersections between family law, child protection and family violence, and effective family law file management and case strategy.

— Georgie Stapleton, Principal Lawyer

// I find it incredibly rewarding to support and empower clients in making informed decisions about their family law matters. We are uniquely positioned to meet clients very early in their family law matters, which can assist our clients with realising the best possible outcomes for their circumstances, while avoiding lengthy, costly and unnecessary litigation. Often the information can be as simple as knowing they should get family law advice and where to get that assistance when the need arises.

— Tamara Kotowicz, Practice Manager (Family Violence and Family Law)



Tamara Kotowicz, Practice
Manager (Family Violence
and Family Law)

MATILDA'S STORY

Providing swift and responsive family law representation to family violence victim survivor Matilda helps prioritise the best interests of her children.

The Family Law Access model has enabled us to quickly build our family law practice, which has enabled our family lawyers to act swiftly when necessary. The mentoring and support from Women's Legal Service enabled us to provide a high-quality service that is in the best interests of Matilda and her children, with confidence.

Matilda was first referred to our service for advice relating to family violence intervention orders which had been applied for on her behalf by police.

Matilda and her former partner have young children together and the children had been exposed to family violence throughout the relationship. While Matilda and her ex-partner tried to negotiate parenting plans themselves through one off legal advices from various services, they were unable to reach agreement. This resulted in the parenting relationship deteriorating, ongoing incidences of family violence and the children ultimately not spending a significant period of time with the father.

Matilda wanted to make decisions in the children's best interest, however felt overwhelmed by the family law process and uncertain if she was making the right decision. Matilda's experience of family violence meant she was very

distrustful of the father and unsure if the children would be safe should they spend time with their father. She did not feel she was able to make this decision without further information and support.

The father initiated family proceedings in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia. Through no fault of Matilda's, she had a short period of time to prepare responding documentation. Even though she was a single mother with a low income, it was unclear whether she would be eligible for Victoria Legal Aid assistance and she certainly could not afford a private lawyer.

We were able to immediately assess Matilda's eligibility for assistance and prepare responding documents without further delay. We also had the capacity and expertise to appear in the first return date and negotiate interim orders on our client's behalf.

This matter has not yet finalised. However, Matilda is being supported and provided with assistance throughout the process in making decisions in the children's best interest in a trauma informed way. If the matter does proceed to litigation we will be right there with her.

Partnering with Barwon Health to increase legal help for family violence clients in trusted health settings



Our pilot Health Enhancing Legal Pathways (HELP) Program, a health justice partnership (HJP) funded by the Anthony Costa Foundation has allowed us to reach vulnerable women experiencing family violence and provide them with legal assistance in a trusted health setting.

While COVID and the pandemic proved a challenging time to pilot a health justice partnership within a hospital context, our program has enhanced the capacity for Barwon Health, via social workers and selected key health professionals, to provide an opportunity for patients at risk of, or experiencing, family violence to access legal assistance. Initially targeting new mothers within the maternity and paediatric services, we expanded our focus to other key sites within Barwon Health.

Clients who had accessed the HELP Program reported that they felt less anxiety in seeking legal assistance with the support provided by the social workers and health professionals.

The HJP model, and associated HELP Program, has enabled a strong relationship to be forged between our service and the largest health provider in our region leading to effective secondary consultation and referral as well as an increase in Barwon Health staff's understanding of legal issues connected to family violence.

We have now received funding from the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety to continue the HELP program and expand into the Colac Otway region.

// (Lawyer) helped make me feel reassured and gave me the key points and confidence I needed to continue moving forward in my personal legal situation.
— HELP Client

// It helped me have a better understanding of the situation that I had been placed in.
— HELP Client

// I gained the knowledge of what I was legally entitled to.
— HELP Client

// This (HELP) program has helped me as a clinician to have somewhere to turn and seek legal advice and guidance for my clients. It has helped my clients to feel more in control of their legal issues. I have only good feedback on this program and have only had good feedback from my clients.
— Barwon Health Social Worker

// The HELP Program has increased the ability of the lawyer and social worker to cooperate together to find a practical and meaningful path forward. To map out the next steps to be taken in a collaborative model, allows for the new mum to have less emotional stressors and one less thing to worry about during what is already a very stressful and exhausting time..
— Caleb Leitmanis, Health Justice Partnership Lawyer

// When family violence, unstable accommodation, financial hardship and new parenthood as a single mother are bundled together, there is little wonder clients feel overwhelmed. It is here where HJPs can truly make a positive difference for clients who need support. I felt the sense of relief from our clients when they realised that the law often does have options available to them, to help them to untangle their complex life circumstances, to make it more manageable so that they can focus on being the best mother they can be for their child.

— Caleb Leitmanis, Health Justice Partnership Lawyer

Providing life changing legal support for our community with social security legal assistance

We are one of only two community legal centres in Victoria that provide legal assistance in social security matters.

Knowing your rights when it comes to Centrelink can be incredibly complex and having access to legal advice and assistance in this area can be life changing for our clients.

We achieve life changing results for our clients including helping people obtain social security benefits:

// **I wanted to share some lovely news-my DSP has been approved! Many thanks once again for all your support. I cannot express my gratitude enough!**
— Centrelink client

We are also an active member of Economic Justice Australia, providing regular contributions to wider law reform and systemic change in this area, including the Raise the Rate campaign and key election asks.



Members of Economic Justice Australia advocating as part of the Raise the Rate Campaign.

DATA SNAPSHOT: CENTRELINK MATTERS

98

clients assisted

87

legal services provided



AMIRA'S STORY

Helping Amira get a Centrelink debt waived so she can move on with her life.

Amira came to our service with an \$11,500 Centrelink debt weighing her down.

She was connected to our lawyer through the SAFV Centre after Centrelink had raised a number of debts against Amira claiming she had been overpaid benefits because she was partnered but did not report it.

Amira and her partner had children together however were together for only a few years before he was incarcerated for a significant period of time. Amira received Centrelink benefits as a single mother during this time and following his release. Amira and her ex-partner did not resume the relationship when he was released however Centrelink claimed that she

was partnered for 10 months after her partner was released from prison and raised the debt based on that assumption.

Amira had begun to pay off some of the debt, despite only having limited means of payment.

We appealed the Centrelink debt and represented Amira at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal arguing our client was not a member of a couple and that the debt should be waived.

The Tribunal found in favour of our client and that the debt had been incorrectly raised and the debt was waived. This is significant because with this finding Centrelink had to repay any amounts that Amira had paid off the debt.

Lifting a weight off our clients' shoulder through consumer law advice

While we provide ongoing casework for clients experiencing complex legal issues, we also provide one off legal advices that can equally lead to powerful results for our clients. With two short phone appointments we gave Konrad the confidence and trust to represent himself and get justice.

// Prior to talking to you I had no energy to fight. I had no finances. I didn't realise I could do it on my own. Getting advice was like a weight being lifted from my shoulders. You gave me the legal information and the words so that I had enough confidence on how to present the case myself. Without this I couldn't have gone forward. I wouldn't have taken the case to VCAT to get justice. It's amazing how much difference those two short phone calls made for me in getting a fair outcome.
— Konrad, consumer law client



KONRAD'S STORY

For Konrad our legal advice lifted a weight from his shoulders.

Konrad was very close to his mother and after she died, he inherited some family heirloom jewellery. He didn't know how much it was worth, but that it was high quality gold.

He went to a local jeweller to get the gold melted and remodelled into an heirloom piece that would last a lifetime. After depositing the jewellery, he then spent the next 18 months talking to the jeweller who first told him the jewellery had been lost, then melted down by accident, then that it was in Melbourne, and finally that he couldn't find it. He was told that he wasn't entitled to any compensation or refund, just a credit for future work.

Konrad didn't know how to get any help and couldn't afford to see a lawyer. He had recently gone through a separation and paid thousands in lawyer fees; he had very little faith in the legal system. He called our legal service for a one off appointment not hopeful of receiving help.

Our lawyers listened to Konrad's story and gave him advice and encouragement on how to take his case to VCAT. Konrad called us a few months later to say that he had followed our advice, started a case at VCAT and been successful in getting a large amount of compensation from the jeweller.

Integrating legal assistance into education and youth spaces



Lawyers Marijana Hawkins and Sarah Eid running an event for our Deakin Student Legal Service as part of Self Care Week at the Waterfront campus.

Deakin Student Legal Service

SERVICE SNAPSHOT

94

Legal advices

64

Referrals

26

Legal tasks

12

Triage

LEGAL PROBLEM SNAPSHOT

Tenancy

Consumer, credit and debt

Employment

Family violence

Social security

Fines and infringements

Immigration

Motor vehicle accidents

ALICIA'S STORY

Helping Deakin University students hold repeat scammers accountable.

Alicia advertised to sell her car online for \$9,000 and within an hour received a response from David asking if he could inspect it. Alicia had never advertised a car for sale and was surprised by how easy it had been to attract a buyer. Alicia and David organised to meet at a car park in a nearby suburb where David inspected her car and test drove it. Before Alicia could even tell David that he was welcome to think about it, David asked what Alicia’s bank account details were, because he was keen to purchase the car on the spot and take it that day. Alicia happily provided David with her bank account details, confirmed the price of \$9,000 and within moments, David showed Alicia a transaction record on his phone of the transfer of \$9,000 into her account. Three days later, when Alicia had not received the funds into her account, she went to her bank to enquire – they told her there were no pending transactions. She then showed them the transfer receipt that David had shown her – the bank told her that that was the step before the money was transferred and not in fact the transfer confirmation. Alicia couldn’t believe that she had been scammed! Alicia also reported this incident to the police, however they didn’t seem overly interested in investigating this individual and told her that she would need to pursue him in Court.



Alicia contacted our Deakin Student Legal Service and we assisted to write a letter of demand and also request mediation, however received no response from David. The only other legal option was for Alicia to sue David in the Magistrates’ Court, however this was costly and there was no guarantee that Alicia would be able to recover any money from David, therefore Alicia did not wish to pursue this avenue.

Our Deakin Student Legal Service has had experience with matters against David in the past, with very similar details. With consent from a previous client and Alicia, we contacted the local police station, outlined both cases in detail and urged the police to investigate David. Shortly afterwards, Alicia was contacted by the police and made a formal statement. A few weeks later Alicia was notified by the police that David had been charged and would have an upcoming Court hearing in relation to the offences against her and one of our previous clients. The police will be seeking restitution at Court, which will be an order to compensate Alicia for \$9,000. Alicia was happy that the police were able to hold David accountable and that she would recoup her financial loss.

Western Heights College School lawyer program

Our School Lawyer Program continued to thrive through lockdowns and restrictions, with our School Lawyer Emma Cvitak delivering our service remotely and in person at Western Heights College.



SCHOOL LAWYER PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



30

Presented a
total of 30
Legal Education
Sessions

Covering: Bullying and
Harassment, Sexting and
Consent, Laws around Drugs,
Alcohol and Vaping and
Discrimination

34

students and

22

staff

staff engaged in 'Legal Chats'
with our School Lawyer on a
broad range of topics from Wills,
Family Law and Intervention
orders to Cyberbullying,
Centrelink and Child Protection

96%



of students surveyed indicated
they loved/or liked having a school
lawyer providing legal education
and support as part of their school
experience.

Building our research capacity during COVID to better understand the civil law needs of older people

During the pandemic we received funding from the Victoria Law Foundation (VLF), as part of its Knowledge Grant funding stream, for our first research project examining the civil law needs of older people in our region.

This project provided an opportunity to better understand our organisational and local demographic data, and the barriers that many older people face in accessing justice.

It also allowed us to build an evidence-based framework for the collection, interpretation and application of available data, which has led to an ongoing collaboration with Deakin to build our research and data capacity across other areas of legal practice.

Our research included interviewing key local stakeholders to help us better understand the barriers that many older people face in accessing legal assistance, including how the pandemic has impacted this particular group of clients:

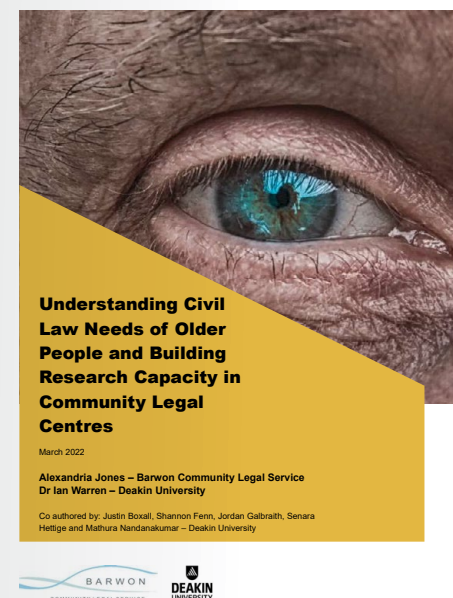
“Many older people often do not know where to begin accessing legal services, “and even if they do identify specific legal issues whether they need to go to a lawyer or they need to go to Centrelink or they need to go to a tenancy tribunal... [the] pathway is so difficult to identify.”

— Stakeholder interview

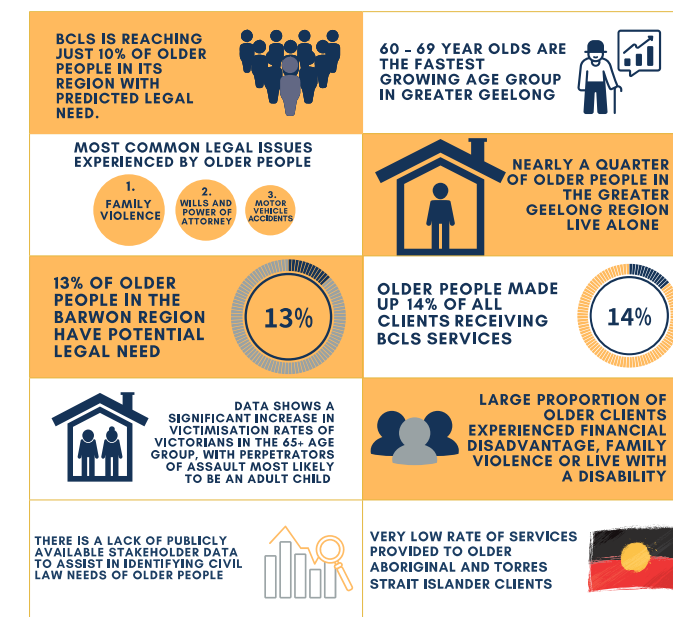
Our research findings identified opportunities for improvement in the provision of legal assistance to older people in our community and recommended:

- Better capturing data about older people accessing our services.
- Engaging with local Aboriginal organisations to improve access to civil law assistance for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Exploring co-locating our services within organisations supporting older people to extend the reach of family violence legal assistance for the Colac and Geelong regions.
- Ensure co-located services target older people experiencing financial disadvantage, CALD communities and older people living with disabilities.
- Providing legal assistance centred on the rights, autonomy and independence of older people.
- Developing a legal health check tailored to the civil law issues experienced by older people.
- Providing community legal education for older people and the services that support them.
- Continue to build the relationship with Work Integrated Learning Program and Deakin University for future research initiatives.

Real Life Research in Partnership



CLASS data showed that over a three-year period between July 2017 and June 2020:



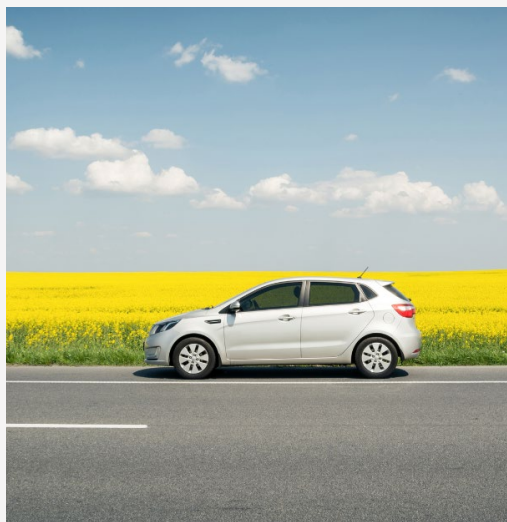
Alexandria Jones and Dr Ian Warren from Deakin University presenting research findings to the Victorian CD and CLE Working Group.

To help consumers resolve lemon car disputes

Buying a lemon car that is defective can have a huge impact on someone's life, leading to unemployment, financial stress and impacts on mental health. If, after purchase, a new car is defective and the dealer is refusing to repair, replace or refund, a consumer has to go through VCAT which can be an often expensive, complex and slow process.

We worked alongside Consumer Action Law Centre (CALC) to contribute to strategic advocacy calling for the establishment of a lemon car Ombudsman, to help consumers resolve disputes in a faster and more cost effective way.

We helped our client Belinda share her story for a media article in Wheels Car Magazine as part of this strategic advocacy.

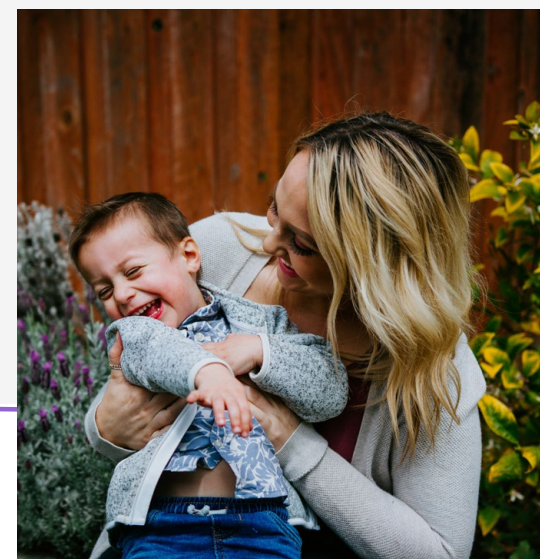


// It's a shocking fact that every year thousands of Victorian families and livelihoods are shattered because we don't have a fast, accessible and affordable way to resolve lemon car disputes.

We rely on our cars for daily life: to get to work, school, health appointments and the shops. Cars can be a crucial part of a safety plan – a way to flee family violence or to evacuate during bushfires and extreme weather events. In Victoria's regional, rural and outer metro areas that lack public transport, including our rural Koori communities, cars are essential.

The way to help families quickly is with a dedicated ombudsman for motor vehicles who can help get Victorians on the move.

— Tania Clarke, Director of Policy and Campaigns CALC



BELINDA'S STORY

Single mum-of-three Belinda, 26, from Geelong, who has asked us not to use her last name, found this out herself the hard way when she bought a 2015 Kia Sorento from an independent used-car dealer in Melbourne in January this year.

She says she'd had the car for just two hours after purchase when the 'check engine' light came on and it overheated. The independent dealer, who we cannot name for legal reasons, attempted to fix it twice to no avail – eventually sending it to Kia in Geelong for an inspection which found the head gasket had gone. The vehicle was then sent back to the independent dealership where it remains now.

"I just want my money back. It cost me \$30,000 on finance – which I still am paying but with no car to show for it. They [the independent dealer] said they are obligated to fix it, but they've had plenty of chances. They've been so rude, the feeling I get is that they think

'you've purchased the car, it's your issue'. They still have it at the moment and are demanding I come and collect it or they'll charge me storage fees – but the dealership I bought it from is almost two hours away.

I lost my job because of all this – the stress, the time off. I have three kids – I need a car. I'm just borrowing cars from friends and family at the moment here and there, or spending money I don't have on Ubers to be able to get my children to school and day care otherwise it's an hour's walk each way. I will never again buy a second-hand car. I sold my Mazda CX-9 to 'upgrade'. Worst decision I've ever made."

To protect the community from scams

Community Development Manager Alexandria Jones met with then Shadow Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation Stephen Jones MP and Libby Coker MP for a roundtable discussion about the impacts of scams on our local community and to advocate for adequate funding for community legal centres to meet the demand for legal assistance in the Barwon region.

Community Development Manager
Alexandria Jones meeting with Libby
Coker MP and Stephen Jones MP.



To better support older people from migrant and refugee backgrounds

Through our work convening the Barwon Elder Abuse Primary Prevention Network, we were invited to provide evidence at the Geelong hearings of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Support for Older Victorians from Migrant and Refugee backgrounds.

We provided evidence about the need for elder abuse prevention in our CALD communities and the barriers that many CALD communities face in understanding their rights and navigating legal services. We also shared findings from our recent research report examining the civil law needs of older people in our region.

Our evidence was quoted throughout the final report and supported a number of key recommendations from the inquiry.



// Barwon Community Legal Service, which provides legal support to communities in south-western Victoria, noted its recent research which revealed it was 'only reaching 10% of older people with potential legal need in the Barwon region.' This is a particularly pertinent issue for culturally diverse people given the barriers they face around reporting legal concerns and their low knowledge of services and legal issues. These barriers include language and communication problems that make it difficult for culturally diverse older people to navigate legal services and poor understanding of their legal rights in Australia. The research also found culturally diverse older people may fear community backlash if they seek assistance from a legal service.

— Page 154 Final Report Inquiry into Support for Older Victorians from Migrant and Refugee Background

Connecting to our community

To train community workers to be legal issue spotters

We know that we are most effective when we work together with community organisations that help vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Funded by the Victoria Law Foundation, our innovative Law for Community Workers Online Training was co-designed alongside frontline workers to help workers spot legal issues, refer clients to legal assistance early, and support their clients to engage with the legal process.

The funding also allowed us to collaborate with a videographer and illustrator to create training videos and animations, ensuring our legal information, case studies and quizzes are as engaging and accessible as possible.

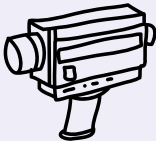
Not having a legal background, the legal system can be very complicated so it has been great to get some basic training on some of the legal issues that affect our clients.
— Local Family Violence Caseworker

LAW FOR COMMUNITY WORKERS ONLINE TRAINING SNAPSHOT

3 online self-paced modules

9 downloadable factsheets and tools

14 14 short films featuring local community workers and lawyers



2.5 hours of learning Co-design process

5 co-design sessions with community workers



10 representatives from 10 local community organisations engaged

10

25

community workers tested and piloted the training

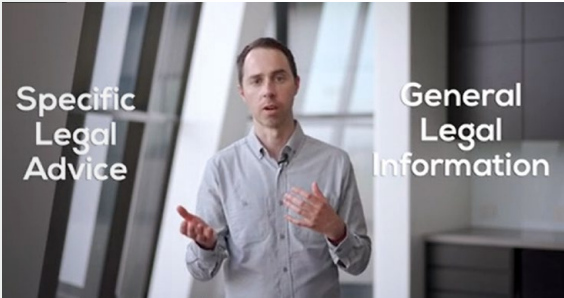
Sectors included: family violence, settlement, financial counselling, youth homelessness and health and aged care

All [the training] was relevant to the work that we do and how we can best support clients by seeking legal support. It was a great refresher and provides more confidence on how to speak with clients about legal issues.
— Youth Housing Worker

Offers our organisation and clients a great deal of support and education. This support is very important to ensuring our clients understand and know how to access their human rights.
— Local Community Development Settlement Project Worker



Left: Videographer Max Milne with Community lawyer Shane Foyster videos.
Above: On set shooting content for our Law for Community Workers Online Training Program.
Below: Community lawyers Shane Foyster and Marijana Hawkins starring in videos for our Law for Community Workers Online Training Program.



To prevent elder abuse in our local community by challenging ageism

To mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day the Barwon Elder Abuse Primary Prevention (BEAPP) Network partnered with the City of Greater Geelong to launch the STREETFACE See Me, Respect Me campaign. The campaign sought to humanise and make visible older people living in the Greater Geelong region and to challenge ageism as a key driver of elder abuse.

We engaged 12 older people as leaders from our local community to be photographed for this campaign and interviewed them to obtain key words about that person's identity and interests. Our campaign built upon the work of the Ballarat EAPN's See the Person Respect the Person Campaign and we obtained permission from this network to run an adapted version of their campaign in our region.

Photographs were then used as part of a large scale poster campaign that were featured at key venues around our region.

Our campaign received positive media attention locally and featured in the Geelong Advertiser, Surf Coast Times and Bellarine Times.

Geelong Advertiser article highlighting the increase in demand for tenancy assistance during the pandemic.



Posters tackle elder abuse

NAOMI NEILSON

VISITORS at key venues across Geelong will come face-to-face with posters of older residents in a bid to stamp out elder abuse.

As part of the Streetface See Me, Respect Me campaign, 12 elderly residents will have their faces on the walls at the Geelong Library, Leisurink Aquatic and Recreation Centre and a number of other popular locations across the



One of the Streetface posters.

region. The posters, delivered by the Barwon Elder Abuse

Primary Prevention Network, have been designed to counter the ageism that often leads to elder abuse.

Barwon Community Legal Centre, which runs the network alongside the City of Greater Geelong, said there must be "proactive steps" towards eradicating ageism and creating a culture that "does not discriminate against older Australians".

"If we want to stop elder abuse before it starts, we need

to tackle ageism and see older people as whole people. That's what we're doing with our Streetface campaign," chief executive officer Bryanna Connell said.

According to a study by the Australian Institute of Family Studies, one in six older Australians had experienced some form of elder abuse in the previous 12 months.

The project also found just one-third of victims reported their experiences.

While perpetrators are often family members, elderly residents are also being targeted by friends, neighbours and acquaintances.

"Often elder abuse goes unreported as older victims don't know where to turn for help or fear losing close family relationships if they take action to stop the abuse," Ms Connell said.

"From the way older people are ignored by shop assistants, to the ageist jokes in birthday

cards – age-based discrimination is surprisingly common. But that doesn't make it right," the Streetface campaign clarified on its website.

"If we want to create a more equal society, we need to ensure people of all ages are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve."

Ms Connell said she hoped the posters alerted the community and victims to services that could assist with combating elder abuse.

CAMPAIGN TO COUNTER NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TO AGEING

The Barwon Elder Abuse Primary Prevention Network, led by Barwon Community Legal Centre and in partnership with the City of Greater Geelong, have launched a new campaign aimed at challenging age discrimination, which is one of the key drivers of elder abuse.

The STREETFACE See Me, Respect Me campaign features large-scale posters of older people from the Geelong region installed at key venues around the region, including the Geelong Library and Heritage Centre and the Leisurink Aquatic & Recreation Centre. Barwon Community Legal Centre chief executive officer

Bryanna Connell said the campaign is designed to counter negative attitudes around ageing which allows elder abuse to occur.

"We must take proactive positive steps to eradicate ageism and create a culture that does not discriminate against older Australians which allows elder abuse to exist. "If we want to stop elder abuse before it starts, we need to tackle ageism and see older people as whole people. That's what we are doing with our STREETFACE campaign."

The Australian Institute of Family Studies found in a recent study that one in six older Australians had experienced a form of elder abuse in the past 12 months but that only one-third of those

people had sought help.

"Often elder abuse goes unreported as older victims don't know where to turn to for help or fear losing close family relationships if they take action to stop the abuse," Ms Connell said.

"It's critical that those who experience elder abuse know that services such as Barwon Community Legal Centre exist to help."

To find out more about the campaign, head to barwoncommunitylegal.org.au/streetface-see-me-respect-me-campaign-for-world-elder-abuse-awareness-day.

Barwon Community Legal Services lawyer Shane Foyster with one of the STREETFACE posters.



Above: Community Lawyer Shane Foyster featured with one of the STREETFACE posters in Bellarine Times.

Below: Project Officer Rachael Houghton, Community Development Manager Alexandria Jones and City of Greater Geelong Healthy Ageing Officer Tanya Hall at Geelong Library & Heritage Centre featuring our STREETFACE campaign.



To educate young people through the Respect Cup

We are a key organising partner of the Barwon Respect Cup which engages high school students and primary school students in respectful relationship workshops using netball as a medium. This event is a collaboration with Barwon Heath, City of Greater Geelong, and Respectful Relationship Team at Department of Education, Headspace Geelong and Netball Victoria.

This year the Barwon Respect Cup was recognised at the Victorian Sports Awards and won 'Community Sporting Event of the Year'.

This year ran the second ever Barwon Primary Respect Netball Cup Kardinia Park but due to COVID our secondary school Respect Netball Cup was unable to take place. A total of 62 primary school students and 9 school staff from around the region attended. The day consisted of morning workshops that focused on responding and recognising gender stereotypes and an afternoon round robin game where students were scored on their respectful behaviour on the court, not only on goals.



Opposite and above: Students participating in the Respect Cup.

Left: Netball Victoria Mel Taylor receiving the Community Sporting Event of the Year Award.

OUR PEOPLE & CULTURE

Providing practical learning experiences for interns and students

Research internship program

Our Knowledge Building Research project was conducted in partnership with Deakin University. The project involved the establishment of a partnership with Deakin's Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Program and School of Criminology to embed virtual student research interns within our service to assist with the collection and interpretation of data. We have built this program into an annual research internship to provide students with valuable real life research experience.



// This was not an easy internship. The work was complex and time-consuming. It was also deeply rewarding, and brought joy to my COVID-controlled world. I loved my team work, the supervision and the way Barwon involved us as peers. It was the best part of my degree.

— Knowledge Grant student research intern

// The best part of this internship is that I've had the opportunity to make a real contribution. From the first day, I was encouraged to jump right in and get involved. I wasn't just observing or filing documents, as is often the case with short term internships. I was trusted to contribute with my skills in writing and research analysis. I was frequently asked for my opinion, which made me feel like a valued member of the team. Of course, I was supported the whole way, and given many suggestions about how to improve, but feedback was always given after I'd had the chance to try first.

— Student research intern

Building pro bono partnerships to increase our capacity

We partnered with national law firm Barry. Nilsson Lawyers on a pro bono secondment of solicitor Luana Harris three days per week over a 6 month period.

The provision of an additional staff member increased our capacity to provide legal assistance at a crucial time for our service when we were facing a capacity shortage. The secondment had a real impact on our ability to address an increase in demand for our services to the community.

// **This secondment has been a wonderful success for us. We have been able to assist more vulnerable clients with more appearances and more casework. Without the assistance of Barry. Nilsson Lawyers, we would not have been able to fund another lawyer to do this work. We are extremely grateful that they chose our organisation to send their seconded lawyer.**
— Mandi Hyland, previous Principal Lawyer



The secondment contributed greatly to Luana's professional development. She had her own casework, learned about areas of law where she previously had no experience, and advocated on behalf of clients in Family Violence Intervention Order matters before the Geelong Magistrate's Court. Our seconded pro bono solicitor Luana described her duty lawyer days as:

// **... often challenging. Our small team would sometimes appear in upwards of 10 matters, and on one occasion, I appeared for 12 matters on my own! Although challenging, I found these days to be the most rewarding, assisting vulnerable clients who would otherwise be unable to advocate for themselves.**

The secondment also allowed for us to establish a clear pro bono referral pathway, with Barry. Nilsson accepting our referrals for pro bono assistance where we are unable to continue providing assistance to a client due to capacity or policy restraints.

Thank you to our Board and all of our staff who have made an incredible contribution to our work and our community in 2021-2022.

OUR BOARD

Tom Lynch, **Chair**

Natasha Powles, **Deputy Chair**

Dominique Saunders, **Secretary**

Charles Agar, **Treasurer**

Ian Parsons
(left November 2021)

Jude Hunter
(left mid-2022)

Myra White

Paul Blane

OUR TEAM

Leadership Team

Bryanna Connell,
Chief Executive Officer
(returned from parental
leave November 2021)

Mandi Hyland,
Principal Lawyer
(left July 2022)

Geordie Stapleton,
Supervising Lawyer
(appointed Principal
Lawyer from July 2022)

Alexandria Jones,
Community
Development Manager
(Acting CEO from August
to December 2021)

Our Staff

Elsie Stokie, **Lawyer**
Caleb Leitmanis, **Lawyer**

Tamara Kotowicz, **Lawyer**
Shane Foyster, **Lawyer**

Sarah Eid, **Lawyer**
Peter Dickinson, **Lawyer**

Sam Hawkins, **Lawyer**
Victor Galaz, **Lawyer**

Emma Cvitak, **Lawyer**
Megan Alford, **Lawyer**

Marijana Hawkins, **Lawyer**
Louise Thorsen, **Lawyer**

Emma Kennedy,
Social Worker
(left February 2022)

Georgia Lennon,
Social Worker
(April to July 2022)

Melisa Veljan,
Administration Assistant
(left November 2021)

Jack Parsons,
Community Legal
Education and
Development Officer
(left October 2021)

Jordan Galbraith,
Research Paralegal
(left September 2021)

Chloe Treloar,
Paralegal
(left September 2021)

Rachael Houghton,
Project Officer
(December 2021
to July 2022)

Peter Kelly,
Project Coordinator
(left June 2022)

Olivia Drazzi,
Legal Trainee

Alison Upton,
Administration Assistant

Charmaine Floyd,
Administration Manager

Elizabeth Flynn,
Administration Officer

Grace Forrest,
Administration Officer

Matilda Jones,
Administration Assistant
(left May 2022)

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We rely on volunteers, both students and lawyers, to assist with the delivery of our services. We would like to acknowledge and thank all of our valued volunteers for their ongoing

commitment and contribution to our organisation. Your dedication to advancing access to justice cannot be understated and we are extremely grateful for all the work you do.

OUR ENABLERS & SUSTAINABILITY

Acknowledgements

Anthony Costa Foundation

Arc Justice

Barwon Area Integrated
Family Violence
Committee

Barwon Child Youth and
Family

Barry Nilsson Lawyers

Barwon Health

BATForce

Bellarine Community
Health

Better Place Australia

Corina Eccles,
Wadawurrung Traditional
Owner

Cahill & Rowe Family Law

Chris Oldham (Barrister)

Christine Couzens MP

City of Greater Geelong

Colac Area Health

Colac Otway Shire

Community Legal Centres
Australia

Cornish Lawyers
— Family Law

Criminal Lawyers Geelong

Hon Dan Tehan MP

Darren Chessman MP

Deakin University
Deakin University Student
Association

Dementia Australia

Diversitat

Dr Ian Warren

Eastern Community Legal
Centre

Economic Justice Australia

Ecstra Foundation

Family Relationship Centre
Geelong

Federation of Community
Legal Centres (Victoria)

Fitzroy Community Legal
Centre

Foley's List

Geelong Law Association

Geelong Law Courts

Geelong Regional Library
Corporation

Gerard Mansour —
Commissioner for Senior
Victorians

Gippsland Community
Legal Centre

Give Where You Live

Hume Riverina Community
Legal Centre

Inner Melbourne
Community Legal

Billy BJ O'Toole,
Wadawurrung artist

JobWatch

KC Law Group

KG Lawyers

Leo Cussen Centre for Law

Hon Lisa Neville MP

Libby Coker MP

Louisa Gibbs

Mark Edwards

Marrar Woon
Neighbourhood House,
Apollo Bay

Martin Ching

Outline Print Design

Peninsula Community
Legal Centre

Pillow Fort

Perisic Lawyers

Pixled

Prestige In Home Care

Reclaim the Night
Collective Geelong

Refugee Legal

Regional Information and
Advocacy Centre

Hon Richard Marles MP

Richard Riordan MP

Roger O'Halloran & Co

SalvoConnect

Senator Hon Sarah
Henderson

Senior Rights Victoria

Sexual Assault and Family
Violence Centre

Social Security Rights
Victoria

Stary Norton Halphen

St Kilda Community Legal
Service

Surf Coast Shire

Stuart Grimley MP

Tenants Victoria

The fORt

The Orange Door, Barwon

Trapski Family Law

Victoria Legal Aid

Victoria Police

Victorian Aboriginal Legal
Service Co-operative

Victorian Law Foundation

Wathuarong Corporation

Western Heights College

WEstjustice

Whyte Just & Moore
Lawyers

Women's Legal Service

Worksafe

FINANCIALS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BARWON COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES INC

Report on the Concise Financial Report

Opinion

The concise financial report, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and related notes, are derived from the audited financial reports of Barwon Community Legal Services Inc for the year ended 30 June 2022.

In our opinion, the accompanying concise financial report, is consistent in all material respects, with the audited financial report, in accordance with AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by Australian Accounting Standards applied in the preparation of the audited financial reports of Barwon Community Legal Services Inc. Reading the concise financial report and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial reports and the auditor's reports thereon. The concise financial report and the audited financial reports do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial reports.

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial reports, which describe the basis of accounting. The financial reports have been prepared for the entities for the purpose of fulfilling the directors' financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial reports may not be suitable for another purpose.

The Audited Financial Report and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial reports in our report dated 11th November, 2022.

Directors' Responsibility for the Concise Financial Report

The directors are responsible for the preparation of the concise financial report in accordance with AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the concise financial report is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810: Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.



Stephen Kirtley
Director

Dated this 11th day of November, 2022

Davidsons Assurance Services Pty Ltd
101 West Fyans Street
Geelong, Victoria 3220

/ GEELONG

101 West Fyans Street
PO Box 386
Geelong VIC 3220
PHONE 03 5221 6399

/ TORQUAY

6 Walker Street
PO Box 125
Torquay VIC 3228
PHONE 03 5261 2029

/ DIRECTORS

Stephen Wight CA
Stephen Kirtley CA

Davidsons Assurance Services Pty Ltd
ACN 123 098 662 / ABN 77 123 098 662
info@davidsons.com.au
davidsons.com.au

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation. Davidsons is not licensed to provide financial product advice under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)

Statement of comprehensive income for year ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Revenue from ordinary activities	2,153,825	2,397,977
Expenses from ordinary activities		
Employee benefits expense	1,800,386	1,741,868
Depreciation	33,635	54,346
Administration expenses	302,293	313,490
Total expenditure from ordinary activities	2,136,314	2,109,704
Net result from ordinary activities	17,511	288,273
Other comprehensive income	–	–
Total comprehensive income for the year	17,511	288,273

Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2022

	Retained profits \$	Reserves \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2020	428,703	9,040	437,743
Total comprehensive income for the year	288,273	–	288,273
Balance at 30 June 2021	716,976	9,040	726,016
Total comprehensive income for the year	17,511	–	17,511
Balance at 30 June 2022	734,487	9,040	743,527

Note:

- (a) The concise financial report cannot be expected to provide as full an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the entity as the financial reports of Barwon Community Legal Service Inc; and
- (b) further financial information can be obtained from the financial reports of Barwon Community Legal Services Inc and these reports are available, free of charge, on request to Barwon Community Legal Service and from its website barwoncls.org.au

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Current assets		
Cash	1,522,013	1,319,533
Receivables	31,022	35,199
Total current assets	1,553,035	1,354,732
Non-current assets		
Fixed assets	70,306	99,587
Intangible assets	1,358	2,355
Total non-current assets	71,664	101,942
Total assets	1,624,699	1,456,674
Current liabilities		
Payables	568,968	415,204
Provisions	295,504	293,820
Total current liabilities	864,472	709,024
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	16,700	21,634
Total current liabilities	16,700	21,634
Total liabilities	881,172	730,658
Net assets	743,527	726,016
Equity		
Reserves	9,040	9,040
Retained profits	734,487	716,976
Total equity	743,527	726,016

Cash flows from operating activities for the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Payments		
Payments to employees	(1,803,636)	(1,689,830)
Other operating expenses	(230,935)	(327,476)
Receipts		
Government grants	2,104,942	2,474,340
Interest received	1,176	2,489
Other operating income	135,893	127,957
Net cash provided by operating activities	207,440	587,480
Cash flow from investing activities		
Payments for purchase of fixed assets	(4,960)	(53,278)
Net cash provided by investing activities	(4,960)	(53,278)
Net increase in cash held	202,480	534,202
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period	1,319,533	785,331
Cash at the end of the reporting period	1,522,013	1,319,533

SUPPORTING THE LEGAL NEEDS OF GEELONG, BELLARINE, SURF COAST AND COLAC OTWAY REGIONS.



Level 1, 63 Thomson Street,
Belmont VIC 3216
1300 430 599
@barwoncls.org.au
barwoncommunitylegal.org.au

Design — rodeo.com.co