

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Changing lives and strengthening communities



Peninsula
Community
Legal Centre

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Vision, Values, Mission | 1 |
| Message from Chairperson and CEO | 2 |
| Our year | 3 |
| Our reach | 5 |
| What we do | 6 |
| Our service delivery | 14 |
| Our people | 16 |
| Our funding | 20 |
| Our relationships | 22 |
| Our community partners | 23 |
| Thankyou | 24 |

PCLC acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of country, recognises their continuing connection to land, water and community and pays respect to Elders past and present.



Vision

A fair and inclusive society that promotes and protects human rights and equality before the law.

Mission

To empower and support disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our community to address their legal needs.

Values

Fairness – we treat all people justly, reasonably and in a non-discriminatory manner and strive for a fairer justice system

Empowerment – we work towards strengthening the capacity of all people, either as individuals or members of a community, to understand their rights, pursue their interests and understand their responsibilities.

Accessibility – we seek to ensure that all members of our community are able to use and benefit from PCLC services, activities and premises.

Respect – we treat others with dignity and in a manner which demonstrates regard for their feelings, wishes, autonomy and rights.

Independence – we are free from external control or influence and are therefore unfettered in our ability to speak for our clients and our community.

Quality – we maintain a culture of continuous quality improvement and we strive for excellence in our operations and service delivery.

Message from the Chairperson and CEO

Peninsula Community Legal Centre Inc. is built on one simple and powerful belief: denying access to justice is an injustice. Each day PCLC works in courts, community and health settings to deliver justice to our community and strives for a fair and inclusive society that promotes and protects human rights and equality before the law.

This year marks our 42nd year of providing critical legal services to thousands of vulnerable and disadvantaged community members in the South East suburbs of Melbourne; while also engaging in systemic advocacy and community development and engagement work which has a significant positive impact in strengthening our community.

As Chairperson and CEO, we are honoured to serve this organisation and work with such committed and passionate advocates. We are extremely proud of the accomplishments of all our staff and volunteers, and are very grateful to all who supported our work and mission in 2019.



Jackie Galloway
Chief Executive Officer



Thierry Pascal
Chairperson

OUR YEAR

This has been an exceptional year for PCLC as we strived to meet the legal demand of a large and diverse community. We sustained our work on our organisational foundation to support our continued growth and focus on quality and holistic services. We enhanced our service delivery with the implementation of new programs and community venues as well as working hard to attain funding security for existing programs.

We continue to forge strong strategic partnerships with key stakeholders in the justice, health, family violence, housing and community service sectors. These partnerships will enhance capacity, add value to PCLC's existing suite of integrated services, strengthen and develop innovative best practice and create sustainable service delivery models that target our priority group clients.

The collective efforts of our staff and volunteers in 2019 have produced impressive results in the delivery of our legal services. This past year, PCLC assisted 6,676 people with the provision of 11,127 legal services. As our client stories highlight, our intensive casework and holistic services are making a difference, with often life changing outcomes for our clients.

A fundamental function of our legal work is our family law and family violence casework and litigation practices, with family law our most common legal problem, and more than a third of our clients reporting family violence. A unique

**“Alone, we do so little;
together we can do so much”**

HELEN KELLER

advantage of our family law and family violence practice model is that it involves ongoing complex legal casework where our specialist lawyers are able to conduct cases from start to finish, with this work often emanating from our duty lawyer services based in the Federal Circuit Court and State Magistrates Courts.

We welcomed the news of further funding for our Family Advocacy and Support Service (FASS) and our Family Violence to Family Law Continuity Program, after positive evaluation findings by the Australian Government Attorney General's Department and Victoria Legal Aid. These programs are integral to our integrated service delivery model.

Our collaborations in family violence were enhanced with our new visiting service to the Victorian Government's Family Safety Hub (Orange Door). This service is delivered in partnership with Victoria Legal Aid, Peninsula regional office to assist those experiencing family violence to navigate the complex legal framework of the family violence system.

Our regional planning work and collaboration with the South Eastern Regional Legal Needs Assistance Network (SERLAN) was at the forefront of our work this past year, with the impending and ultimate closure of Casey Cardinia Legal Service (CCLS). The Casey & Cardinia regions are two of the fastest growing local government areas in the State. PCLC was pleased to commence new weekly visiting services in Pakenham and Clyde North this past year. CCLS along with PCLC, Springvale Monash Legal Service and Victoria Legal Aid have been the primary legal services in the region. PCLC would like to acknowledge the 42 years of services CCLS provided to the community. PCLC would like to thank Springvale Monash Legal Service for their collaboration and commitment to a shared principle of regional service planning, and the management of those needs both over the past few years and into the future.

“There is no power greater
than a community discovering
what it cares about”

MARGARET J WHEATLEY

Our response to the impact of fines in the region was bolstered with two innovative projects; ConnectEast and the Work Development Permit Project (WDP). The Centre has been grappling with the issue of out-of-control fines for several years, with 28% of all toll enforcement Infringements issued in 17/18 arising within the Centre’s catchment. We welcomed the partnership with ConnectEast to work on early intervention strategies to prevent the associated issues with the non-payment of toll fines, and to raise awareness of free legal services. Flyers were distributed to targeted postcodes across the South Eastern suburbs. Providing clients with fines options is the focus of our Work Development Permit Project. This project is funded by the Victorian Legal Services Board to broaden the range of accredited sponsors in the scheme and increase access to the WDP scheme for clients of the South Eastern suburbs.

Our commitment and belief in the principle of affordable and appropriate housing is evident in the holistic work of our Tenant Advocate and Assistance Program and our Rooming House Outreach Program. We were pleased to receive the news that the Rooming House Program funding was extended.

The drive for excellence remained strong this year with our emphasis on continuous quality improvement, we implemented strategies to enrich our Accreditation under the National Association of Community Legal Centre’s scheme. Our

Management Committee and Leadership team led the monitoring and review of our policies, procedures and associated practices to ensure that we met our obligations and reflected on, and improved those practices. Our practice team actively participated in local and state community of practice initiatives to develop, discuss and support strategies for quality practice.

Our PCLC community was strengthened with the addition of two new pro bono partnerships. We cordially welcome Gadens and King & Wood Malleson’s who join our long standing partner Russell Kennedy, to provide pro bono support to the Centre.

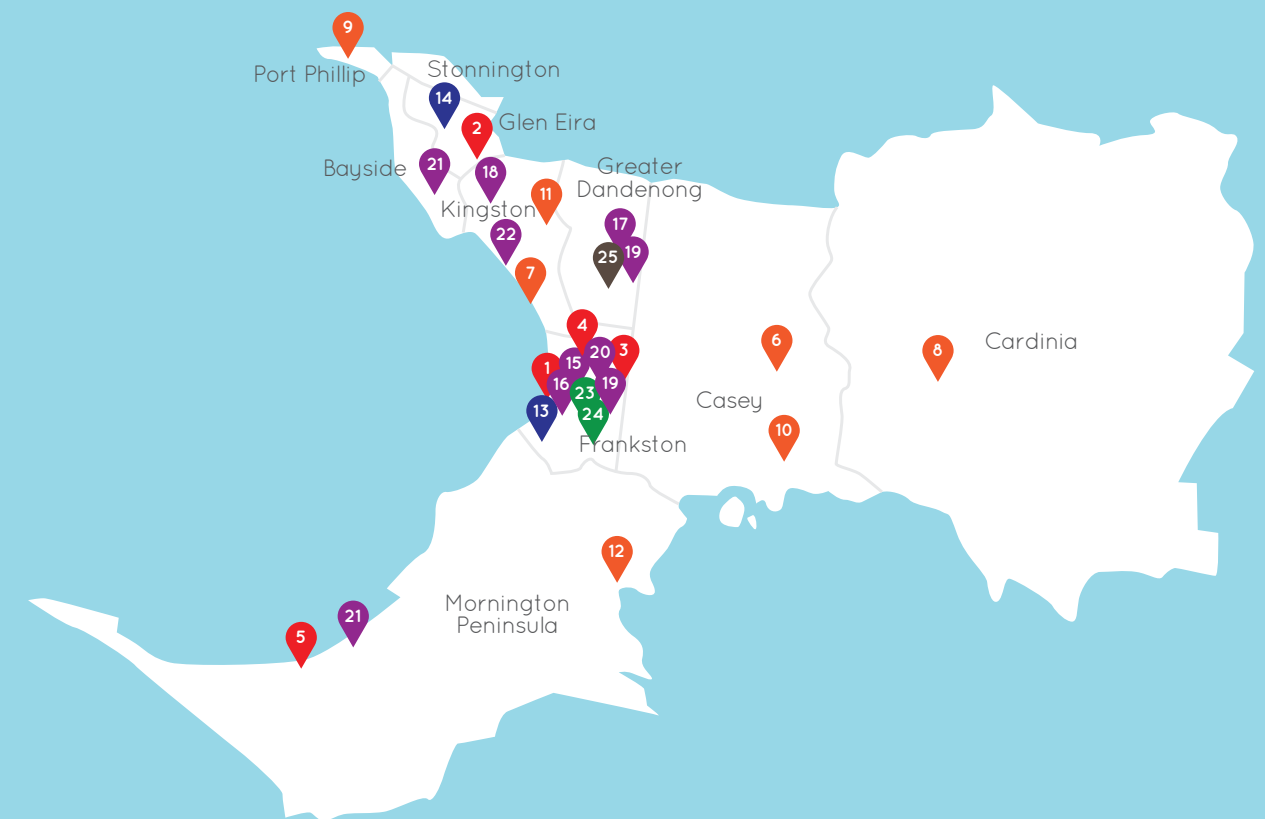
We would not be able to deliver our services without the generous support of our funders, Federal, State and Local Governments, pro bono supporters and donors whose support of the organization is integral to our continuing development and sustainability now and into the future.

OUR CLIENT TOLD US

“She actually listened to me so patiently to understand every single detail about the issue. She guided me and then helped me to take all the necessary legal actions which I couldn’t do by myself as an overseas migrant who migrated here only 8 months ago.”

Our Reach

We are committed to being flexible, innovative and responsive to address the complex legal needs of our clients and communities across a broad geographical area.



BRANCH OFFICES

1. Frankston Head Office
2. Bentleigh
3. Cranbourne
4. Frankston North
5. Rosebud

COMMUNITY VENUES

6. Casey North Community Information & Support Service, Narre Warren
7. Chelsea Community Support & Information Service
8. Living & Learning Centre Inc. Pakenham
9. Salvation Army Crisis Centre, St. Kilda
10. Selandra Community Hub, Clyde North
11. Westall Community Hub, Clayton South
12. Westernport Community Support Service, Hastings

HOSPITALS/HEALTH SETTINGS

13. Peninsula Health
14. Glenhuntly Maternal Child & Health
15. YParc Youth Prevention & Recovery

COURTS/TRIBUNALS

16. Frankston Magistrates Court
17. Federal Circuit/Family Court Dandenong
18. Moorabbin Justice Centre
19. Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Dandenong
20. Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Frankston
21. Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Dromana
22. Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Moorabbin

SCHOOLS

23. Aldercourt Primary School
24. Mahogany Rise Primary School

GOVERNMENT

25. Department of Justice & Community Safety Victoria

WHAT WE DO

OUR CLIENT TOLD US

“Words cannot describe the happiness I am feeling as a result of the final court hearing, where PCLC supported me in every way.”

Change a life; strengthen a Community

The backbone of a community is the individuals and families that live within it. Family breakdown when coupled with family violence is one of the most stressful experiences a person can have. It is widely accepted that separation and divorce rank among life's most traumatic experiences, for adults and children. These stressors can be significantly compounded by the legal process. PCLC provides legal and social support services that endeavour to support individuals and their families through the legal process to a safer and more stable future.

Currently PCLC employs 14 family law and family violence lawyers. These lawyers provide duty services at State and Federal Courts, advice and on-going legal assistance including family law litigation. 52% of clients assisted by the Centre have matters relating to family law and family violence.

It is important that we are accessible to community members who are the most in need. We do this by offering extensive duty services at the Federal Circuit Court, Dandenong and at the Frankston and Moorabbin Magistrates' Courts (Family Violence List). We also have family violence lawyers embedded in maternal health services and in the social work department at Frankston Hospital. This is in addition to our phone and face to face appointments available at all branches and numerous visiting services.

Our duty lawyers see clients with multiple legal and social complexities, often in urgent need of legal assistance. As the demographic composition of Australia changes, our duty lawyer services at Federal Circuit Court continue to witness an increase in matters arising from the relocation of children to various overseas countries; some of which are not signatories to International Conventions made to address the non-consensual removal of young children internationally.

ALHAADI'S STORY

Alhaadi was an international student from Kenya studying in Australia. He was of low means and unable to afford a private lawyer. During his time here, he married Eidi and they had a child. The relationship broke down after a dispute arose back in Kenya about the dowry that Alhaddi's family was expected to pay to his bride's family. Without the Alhaadi's knowledge, Eidi obtained Kenyan travel documents which permitted her to remove the child from Australia back to Kenya. Upon arrival there, the Eidi left the child with the maternal grandmother and then returned to Australia.

As soon as Alhaadi learned that Eidi had left the child in Kenya, he went to the Federal Circuit Court in Dandenong where he spoke to a PCLC duty lawyer. Having regard to the gravity of Alhaadi's matter and his inability to deal with its legal complexity, the duty lawyer assisted him to file an application for orders to have his son returned to Australia, and then agreed to appear for the client as a friend of the court.

The Court at first instance expressed doubt that it had jurisdiction to make the orders sought by the client because Kenya was not a signatory to the relevant Convention, and the child was not residing in Australia at the time the application was made. The Court indicated that the matter should be dismissed.

Based on extensive experience gained in previous international family law matters, the PCLC duty lawyer sought to distinguish previous judgements relied upon by the mother's lawyer at the hearing, and was successful in having the matter adjourned for contested hearing on jurisdictional issues. Had the client not been represented, it was likely that the Court would have accepted the mother's lawyer's submissions and dismissed the client's application.



In preparation for the contested hearing, the duty lawyer secured pro bono assistance from an international family law Barrister and written submissions were drafted by the PCLC duty lawyer. These submissions were presented by Counsel at the contested hearing.

The Court was persuaded by Counsel's submissions, and decided that it did have jurisdiction to deal with the matter. Accordingly, parenting orders were made. Importantly, Eidi was prohibited from leaving the country and ordered to have the child returned to Australia. Alhaadi is still attempting to secure Eidi's compliance with these orders.

This case illustrates the critical importance of availability of duty lawyer services and subsequent casework in international family law matters. Alhaddi received significant pro bono legal assistance because our duty lawyer saw the importance of mounting technical legal argument, so that jurisdiction would not be a barrier for families facing similar fact scenarios.

More broadly, the decision of the Court sends a clear message to parents intending to remove children from the jurisdiction to non-Convention countries that Australian family courts have jurisdiction to make parenting and other orders necessary to secure the return of those children. This is significant considering the increasing frequency of removals to non-Convention countries witnessed by our Federal Circuit Court duty lawyers.

A duty lawyer service provided by dedicated and driven community lawyers can change a life and strengthen a community.

Standing up for Dignity

Affordable and appropriate housing is essential for human survival with dignity. Housing is part of the human right to an adequate standard of living. A secure home is often the first step in moving out of the criminal justice system, dealing with drugs and/or alcohol issues, obtaining effective treatment for mental illness and building healthier and happier individuals and families.

With housing unaffordability at an unprecedented high coupled with a severe lack of social housing, more than one million Australians are living in poor-quality housing, particularly those facing wider disadvantage. With some 1.2 million renters

in Victoria, it is not surprising that many of the Peninsula Community Legal Centre's clients have tenancy problems. Typically, our clients' tenancy problems are complicated by family violence, a history of substance abuse, mental health issues, or disability.

To respond to this need, we operate a specialist Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program. We assist tenants in privately rented homes, as well as privately operated rooming houses and caravan parks, across the Southern Metropolitan and Bayside Peninsula regions of Melbourne.

Frequently the work of our advocates plays a pivotal role in assisting our clients to maintain affordable and appropriate housing.

ZARINE'S STORY

Since coming to Australia from Afghanistan in 2008 Zarine, her husband and their 7 children have lived in the same property. The family received a notice to vacate from their Landlord who was intending to move back into the property. Zarine was concerned that she and her family would not be able to secure a new rental property before they were required to leave, and would find themselves homeless. Zarine had been trying to find a new property, but due to the size of her family and the financial restrictions they faced, due to both adults receiving only Centrelink benefits, it was proving especially difficult.

Our advocate attended at VCAT with Zarine and successfully challenged the Landlords application for possession. The matter was adjourned for six weeks giving the Landlord the option to renew his application. At the next hearing when the Landlords application for possession was successful, our advocate managed to secure a further one-month extension.

With the additional time, Zarine and her family were able to find an appropriate rental property. Zarine and her family have now secured housing and received their bond back in full.



Rooming House Outreach Project (RHOP)

The Centre's innovative Rooming House Outreach Project (RHOP) assists residents and tenants of rooming houses by providing advice and support services.

The RHOP conducts a visiting service to residents of more than 800 registered private rooming houses. Many of these rooming houses are very rundown, unsafe and in a state of severe disrepair. The Australian Bureau of Statistics classifies those who live in rooming houses as homeless because the accommodation is so inadequate and short in tenure. Rooming house residents are among the most vulnerable clients of our tenancy program.

Whilst our rooming house program aims to provide initial tenancy advice to residents, it also identifies residents who are inappropriately housed and connects them to support services to assist them to secure long-term housing appropriate to their needs. Another objective is to identify rooming houses which do not meet minimum legal standards and to report breaches to regulators.

In this past year, the program has conducted 326 rooming house visits. PCLC's social worker supports the rooming house outreach worker on visits by providing health assessments, material aid and on-going support.

LORRAINE'S STORY

Lorraine had been living in rooming houses for years. Until recently she had been in the same rooming house for 10 years but after her partner died, this was no longer appropriate for her. Lorraine was lucky and found a 'women-only' house where she developed strong connections with other residents.

Lorraine has four children, but has had no contact with them for many years. She acknowledges that she was the cause of much of the conflict with her children and understands why they still do not want to see her. As a result, Lorraine lives a very isolated life, and greatly valued the friendships she had formed in the house.

Our Rooming House Outreach Worker and our Social Worker (RHOP team) had been visiting Lorraine for some time, linking her in with community support and providing material aid. During one of their visits, Lorraine explained that she had been assaulted on the weekend by a new resident. Apparently, while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the new resident had barged into her bedroom and attempted to strangle her. The police were notified, and an intervention order was taken out to protect Lorraine. The property manager was also notified in the hope that they would take note of the intervention order and implement measures to assist with Lorraine's protection.

Unfortunately the property manager decided to serve a '120 day notice to vacate' on both Lorraine and the woman who assaulted her. Lorraine was referred to our Tenancy Team, but as a '120 day notice' can be issued without reason there was no recourse available to her. Lorraine had to find alternative accommodation.

Suitable rooming house accommodation is very difficult to find, with many houses being in poor condition and not well maintained. As our social worker put it:

"Residents are referred to rooming houses in a random fashion, often with extremely challenging combinations of individuals living under the same roof. It is not unusual to find people with serious mental health problems living with others with entrenched addiction issues or extreme aggressive or violent behaviours."

Despite this, with help from the RHOP team, Lorraine secured accommodation at a local caravan park as she wanted to live by herself. Her friends from the rooming house have promised that they will come and visit.

Although this has been a difficult time for Lorraine, she now feels more informed about her rights as a resident and is determined to exercise them in the future if necessary. The RHOP Team will stay in contact with Lorraine, especially during her transition, and until she is well established and linked in with local services.



What a difference a lawyer makes

Summary crime, debt and neighbourhood disputes are often seen as the least important matters within our justice system. However, it is these matters, which can impact significantly upon clients already experiencing a multitude of other social and economic adversities.

With restrictions to legal aid and the prohibitive costs of private lawyers, many clients find they are left to advocate for, and often represent, themselves. This can leave vulnerable clients attempting to navigate their way through a complex and confusing legal system.

PCLC has worked hard to enhance client accessibility to its services. Four days a week a client can call at 9.00am and be able to speak to a lawyer over the phone later that morning. We also have evening appointments staffed by volunteers and various visiting services across our catchment. Special circumstances appointment are available for clients who may have complex co-existing issues or who may require the support of a caseworker or interpreter.

Alongside the specialist services we provide, such as fines, tenancy, family violence and family law we have a team of community lawyers who assist clients with all those legal problems outside the specialist areas.

Our lawyers assist clients in a variety of ways, negotiating on their behalf, writing letters, drafting documents and finding solutions for problems that the client may feel are insurmountable. A well-crafted plea in mitigation may be all that's needed to turn a life around.



SIMON'S STORY

Simon was not travelling well; he had suffered with depression and anxiety for more than a decade. Following the recent breakdown of his 16-year relationship, his mental health began to deteriorate. This downfall was exacerbated by being unable to afford psychiatric support. He was attempting to manage his mental health with the assistance of his GP but had recently stopped taking his medication.

Simon knew he was not coping and needed help. As with many clients confined to Centrelink assistance his only option was to attend at the emergency department. The emergency department was busy and whilst waiting in a cubical he became convinced that hospital staff were ignoring him. His anxiety reach such a point that he grabbed a butter knife and approached a police officer repeatedly asking that they shoot him. The situation escalated with the police resorting to deterrent spray and knocking the knife from Simon's hand with a baton.

As the resources of the emergency department were stretched, Simon was discharged without a mental health assessment. The Critical Assessment Team followed up the next day. However, Simon was not suicidal at the time of the visit and no further intervention was planned.

The incident at the hospital saw Simon charged with 'assault police' and 'threat to assault police'. Simon

attended an appointment with a PCLC lawyer, stating how fearful he was of going to jail. Furthermore, he had not yet been able to secure the medical support he needed to address his mental health issues.

Following lengthy negotiations with our lawyer, the police would only agree to withdraw the 'attempt to assault police' if Simon agreed to plead guilty to 'assault police'.

It was explained to Simon that on the facts, it was arguable that the police did not have enough evidence to support a finding of guilt to assault police. Simon felt he was too unwell to contest the charges.

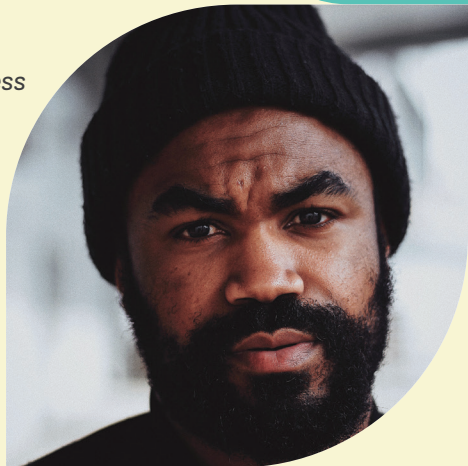
After seeking a sentencing indication from the Magistrate, Simon was advised that the best way to proceed would be to plead guilty and with submissions in mitigation being presented to the court. Simon agreed, and was represented by our lawyer.

The submissions highlighted the attempts that Simon had made to obtain the assistance he desperately needed and the barriers he continually faced. The Magistrate was persuaded by the arguments and ordered Simon be placed on the Court Integrated Services Program. This saw Simon receiving a mental health assessment and having a treatment plan developed, including the allocation of a case co-ordinator who would facilitate on-going mental health support for him.

Simon will be placed on a 12-month good behaviour bond without conviction after he successfully completes his treatment plan.

The approach taken in relation to Simon's legal matters ultimately saw him receiving the intervention for his deteriorating mental health that he urgently required. This means that Simon is less likely to reoffend and gives him the best chance to get well and go on with his life. It is doubtful that Simon would have obtained this result if he had not had the support and representation of one of our lawyers.

Many of the clients who access the legal assistance sector have numerous legal and social issues impacting upon their lives. To address this PCLC runs a holistic practice. This means that along with ensuring we are accessible to the clients who need us the most, we also endeavour to assist clients with as many of their legal issues as possible. Frequently lawyers and advocates co-ordinate across practice areas to provide a multi-faceted service to those clients who need it. What a difference two or three lawyers can make.



MAREE'S STORY

Sometimes being at the right place at the right time makes a big difference.

Maree had just given birth to her first child and was attending one of her maternal health appointments. Maree disclosed that her boyfriend, Vince, was currently in prison after assaulting her while she was pregnant. She was feeling stressed and fearful of what would happen when he was released.

The maternal health nurse referred Maree to the PCLC lawyer who attends the Council's Enhanced Maternal Health Service on a weekly basis as part of one of our health-justice partnerships. Maree explained that as a result of Vince's assault against her the police had successfully applied for a Family Violence Intervention Order on her behalf. The order was still in place but did

not include the baby, as he had not been born at the time. Our lawyer immediately contacted the police and persuaded them to apply to include the baby on the current intervention order.

Maree consulted with our lawyer at the maternal health centre on a couple of occasions receiving assistance in relation to child contact, the birth certificate and passport applications.

As soon as Vince was released from prison he contacted Maree in breach of the Intervention Order. Maree was fragile and scared but with the support of our lawyer she reported the breaches to the police. Maree was referred to a family violence counsellor by the maternal health service and began attending regularly.

During one of her conversations with our lawyer Maree mentioned that she had a large number of outstanding fines in her name. She explained that they had all been

incurred by Vince while he was driving her car. The PCLC Fines Team assisted her to make a special circumstances application which resulted in all her fines, except two for excessive speed, being withdrawn.

The Fines Team also identified Maree as a perfect candidate for the Work Development Permit Scheme (WDP), whereby she could 'work off' off her remaining fines by regularly attending counselling. Maree's family violence counsellor agreed to sponsor her.

During the finalisation of the WDP process it was discovered that Maree had an unpaid court fine that would disqualify her from the program. Our fines lawyers were able to establish that the fine had actually been dismissed by the Court, but that the information had not been forwarded to Fines Victoria. As a result, this matter was able to be quickly resolved and Maree is now paying off her fines and receiving the counselling she needs to help her have a safer and happier future.

Responding to injustice and facilitating empowerment

For PCLC, Community Legal Education is an important element of a preventative strategy to empower disadvantaged communities and individuals to respond to social injustice. Community Legal Education can improve clients' understanding of the law and can raise clients' awareness of their legal rights. It can also provide strategies to identify and address future legal issues. Our community legal education and community engagement program comprises a broad range of approaches, from face-to-face education and training sessions, to producing fact sheets and brochures, to participation in community networks to ensure that other organisations that work with vulnerable people can identify legal issues and refer clients for assistance.

This year we continued with our regular talks to school and TAFE students, seniors groups, tenants and people at risk of homelessness, separating parents, individuals affected by family violence, as well as practitioners working in specialized services who support these groups.

In particular, we spoke to refugees and migrants at Chisholm Institute on Australian laws of particular relevance to new arrivals.

We conducted a series of training sessions for health workers assisting older people to raise awareness of elder abuse and knowledge of available legal services. In collaboration with the Mornington Peninsula Shire, Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders and Seniors Rights Victoria, we held a Legal Matters and Ageing Forum, with the keynote address being delivered by John Corcoran AM from our pro bono partner Russell Kennedy Lawyers.

We spoke at a number of other family violence panels and meetings, in collaboration with stakeholders including the Magistrates Courts, VLA, Victoria Police, the Department of Health and Human Services, and specialist family violence services.

To support the commencement of our outreach service at the Frankston Orange Door community safety hub, we produced, with the support of the Victoria Law Foundation, a set of educational materials intended to improve understanding of some of the common legal issues experienced by people affected by family violence and to encourage early referrals to legal services.

OUR CLIENT TOLD US

"Peninsula Community Legal Centre is an invaluable community organisation that has helped change my life and that of my children for the better, and I am unable to express in words my gratitude for their ongoing support through what has been a very challenging and traumatic time these past two years."

Law Reform

Our law reform activities are based on the acknowledgement that structural social inequality has been institutionalised by the legal system, and structural change is essential to overcome this. In an effort to address systemic barriers to justice, we regularly contribute to enquiries by parliamentary, law reform and other bodies.

This year, our main law reform focus was mental health and family law. Our submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System focused on the impact of family breakdown, family law proceedings and family violence on the mental health of people and their children.

Following PCLC's detailed submission to the ALRC's Family Law Review in May 2018 we responded to the ALRC's Family Law Review Discussion Paper in November 2018. We focused specifically on issues relevant to our family law clients, especially those experiencing family violence. The issues included, whether a dedicated family violence list should be established in the family courts, and if early fact finding hearings should be implemented to hear and determine allegations of family violence at the commencement of family law cases.

We also built on our ongoing law reform work relating to the fines and infringement system in Victoria through the commencement of a special project on the Work Development Permit Scheme (WDP).

Under this scheme, vulnerable and disadvantaged people can be provided with a non-financial option to address their fines debt. A WDP allows an eligible person to work off their fine debt by participating in certain activities and treatments. Types of activities include: unpaid work, treatment from a doctor, nurse or psychologist, drug and/or alcohol counselling and financial counselling and educational and life skills courses. The time a client spends engaged in activities or treatment is calculated and then translated into a reduction

of the outstanding infringement debt. A health practitioner can provide services to clients experiencing mental illness and the client can work off \$1,063.85 (6.6 penalty units) per month off their fines debt.

With support from the Legal Services Board, we translated our belief that the WDP scheme has considerable scope to assist vulnerable people with fines, into a special two year project to promote access to the scheme for eligible clients in Melbourne's South East.

Our project worker is helping to advance the initiative through a range of community development, engagement and education strategies including: production of a WDP Information Package, engaging with potential WDP sponsors to promote awareness of the scheme and to help facilitate their accreditation as sponsors, along with presenting at various peak associations and networks.

community
legal education
activities

67

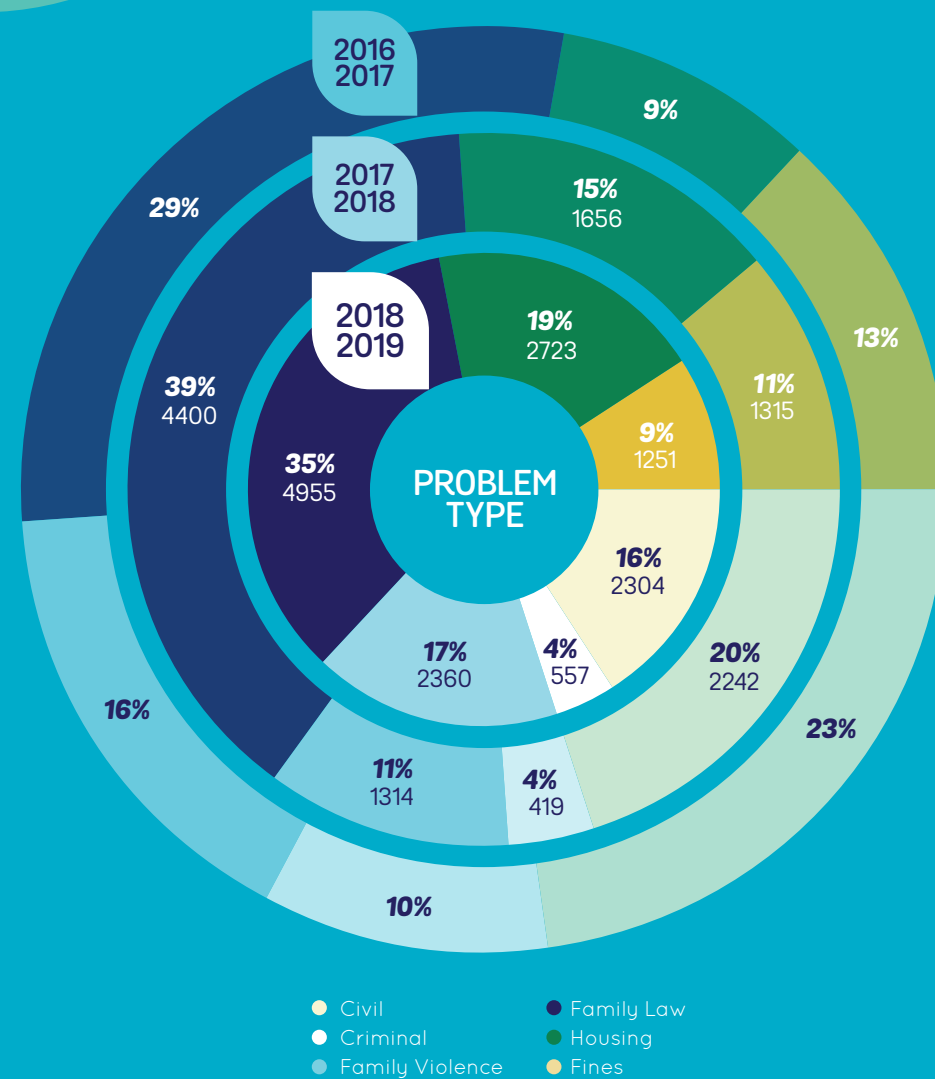


law reform activities

21

OUR SERVICE DELIVERY

2018-2019
Facts & Figures



Our People

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Chairperson**
Thierry Pascal
- Vice Chairperson**
Phillip Carr
- Treasurer**
Jen Kelly
- Secretary**
Lisa Bremner
- Members**
Liz Lor
Luke Denham
Paul Hodgman
Samuel Ellemor

- STAFF FAREWELL**
Andrew Rankin
Belinda Li
Jen Halpin
Katarina Smythe
Michele Simpson
Rachel Tamir

OUR TEAM

- Executive Team**
 - Chief Executive Officer**
Jackie Galloway
 - Director Legal Services**
Kate Ross
 - Senior Manager Business & Operations**
Sue Vincent
 - Senior Manager Development & Engagement**
Nicola Barrans
 - Leadership Team**
 - Practice Manager Family Law**
Brendan Stackpole
 - Practice Manager General Law**
Sokha Um
 - Practice Manager Fines**
Ash Galvin
 - Practice Manager Family Violence**
Sharon Carr
 - Business & Operations Coordinator**
Hellen Argiriou
 - Finance Officer**
Jodie deGregorio
 - Administration Services Officer/s**
Jasminka Kumbaric
Nina Mitris

- Administrative Team**
Caitlin Wilson
Ellie Lingard
Lisa Taranto
Louise Grant
Melanie Jones
Melissa Liapis
- Caseworkers**
Aimee Brien
Alison Laird
Cathie Currie
Chris Daniels
Chris Gunasekera
Chris Smith
Desmond Maruziva
Emily McAlister
Greg O'Brien
Jodie Hill
John Gibbens
Katrina Markwick
Kim Novak
Laura di Felice
Louise Naylor
Malcolm Bennett
Maria Stipic
Michael Arnold
Natalie Altman
Nina Zec
Robert Braun
Saskia Rijfkogel
Terry Meehan
Will Betts
Yih-Laine Teen
- Engagement Team**
Kirsten Young
Siobhan Kenny
- Project Worker**
Laura Sanderson
- Rooming House Worker**
Aldo Taranto
- Social Worker**
Chris Tudor

Volunteers & Students

VOLUNTEER PARALEGALS

- Marley Angus
Rosemary Appleby
Michael Arnold
Emily Austin
Moe Ayman Nafady
Ama Batuwana
Daniel Benjamin
Faith Brack
Gwendolyn Briscoe
Georgia Brough
Rose Brunsdon
Andrew Campbell
Phillip Carr
Aaron Chisholm
Ilesha Clarke
Shardaye Clarke
Eliza Collister
Talani Cooke
Atibhav Damodaran
Sarah Davison
Luke Denham
Laura Di Felice
Dee Divina
Aija Dowling
Sonari Fernando
Marcus Frajman
Jackie Galloway
Anna Grage
Nadeera Gunawardena
Ines Hage Nebyl
Madeleine Hearn
Alice Henson
Ellie Heverin
Mikayla Hutchins
Minoli Jayamaha
Vinu Kumar
Olivia Lee
- Daniel Levenda-Freeman
Joshua Levenda-Freeman
Christina Liberatore
Danielle McCartin
Ashley Melnaxis
Lucinda Merrett
Kate Mililli
Varsha Nayak
Benjamin Needleman
Max Needleman
Michelle Nguyen
Lillian O'Connor
Barbara Padfield
David Pascal
Olga Pecherski
Dale Pirera
Janet Power
Valerie Power
Stefan Prelevic
Morgan Prosser
Ashley Roussety
Jamie Shilliday
Andrew Shin
Kymberley
Samuel Skillen
Callum Steele
Claire Stratton
Megan Struthers
Nathan Tai
Joshua Tamir
Tahlia Timoney
Alexandra Valerio
Kate Walker
Jesse Williams
Karolina Wlodarczak

OUR CLIENT TOLD US
“The best thing I ever did was coming to see you. We cannot thank you enough for all the help and assistance you have given us.”

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS

- Vasudha Akula
Anna Araneta
Katherine Awad
Stefan Bagg
Veronica Bar
Kristen Beagley
Helen Betros
Ivan Bezbradica
Taylor Billington
John Blackley
George Chabvonga
Richard Chapman
Damien Christmas
Tim Conboy
Bryan Cook
Radek Dajer
Michael Denison
Elizabeth Divers
Despina Djumas
Amelia Edwards
Sue Ellison-Whyte
George Erlichster
Lois Ferri
Loredana Garrusso
Elarya George
John Gibbens
Mark Gilbert
Kate Gordon
Natalia Gorges
Claire Grosso
Chris Gunasekera
Chris Hill
Ian Hone
Chris Horsfall
Amanda Humphreys
Nida Iqbal
Dalit Kaplan
Christopher Khouri
Hadar Kotler
Susan Landy
Elizabeth Lee
Stephanie Mahon
Alex Marcou
Katrina Markwick
James Marsden-Smith
Luke Martin
Desmond Maruziva
Laura McDonnell
Patrick McLennan
Terry Meehan
Jennifer Meyer-Smith
- Michael Morehead
Victor Moss
Louise Naylor
Bianca Neophytou
Julie Newdick
Kim Novak
Thierry Pascal
Katerina Patras
Asha Prasad
Villy Raki
Jonathon Rhall
Ashley Richardson
Trish Samson
Lily Sarkar
Shelvi Shan
Chrystie Siapkak
Joel Silver
Michele
Sarah Sorrell
Melissa Stephens
Angelica Suarez
Rachel Tamir
Michelle Tangimama
Kieta Van der Muelen
Jacqueline Van Dort
Scott Whitechurch
Rohan Wijesinha
Claire Williams
Alexandra Wilson
Kate Wraith-Bell
Nina Zec
- DEAKIN LEGAL INTERNSHIPS**
Sean Abasszade
Olivia Carns
Charles Davidson
Ben Hall
Minoli Jayamaha
Shae Jeanes
Lucy Jukes
Jessica Mourney
Ayesha Nathan
Dale Pirera
Cassandra Reynolds
Jordan Underwood
Fiona Warne
- PRACTICAL LEGAL TRAINEE**
Rose Brunsdon
Jacqui Maehrlein

Volunteers & Supporters

Volunteers are integral to PCLC's operations, with more than 120 legal and non-legal volunteers enhancing and extending our service delivery. Some of our wonderful volunteers have been volunteering with us for over 30 years, and we were delighted to welcome and conduct our usual training sessions for a considerable number of new recruits over the past year.

In addition to our volunteers, we also have a passionate and dedicated network of supporters from the legal community who provide a wide range of pro bono services in support of our work.

Our annual Volunteer and Supporters Dinner is one of the most important events on our calendar, it provides the opportunity for us to express our gratitude for the outstanding dedication of all of our supporters. This year, the keynote speaker Tarang Chawla spoke movingly about the murder of his sister and the impact of men's violence across the community. Emma Dunlevie, the Pro bono Manager at Russell Kennedy Lawyers, spoke about the firm's important pro-bono work and the firm's long-standing relationship with PCLC.

The success of our work is dependent on the contributions of all of our volunteers and supporters, and we are immensely grateful to them all.

legal advice
by volunteer
lawyers

1617



120+
volunteers

donated hours
5500

Volunteer Award Recipients 2019

KATH NEILSEN AWARD

Claire Williams

VOLUNTEER EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Anna Grage
Angelica Suarez
Chris Horsfall
Megan Struthers
Stephanie Mahon
Talani Cooke

PROBONO AWARD

Svenson Barristers

LAWFIRM AWARD

Maurice Blackburn Lawyers

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Lance Guymer (20 years)
Barbara Padfield (10 years)
Michael Morehead (10 years)
Victor Moss (10 years)



OUR FUNDING

Comprehensive income

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2019.

| | | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ |
|--|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| CONTINUING OPERATIONS | | | |
| INCOME | | | |
| Grant Funding | 2 | 3,958,156 | 3,417,491 |
| Other Income | 3 | 85,570 | 57,613 |
| | | 4,043,726 | 3,475,104 |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| Communication Expenses | | (41,715) | (41,702) |
| Depreciation Expense | | (27,980) | (28,246) |
| Employment Expenses | | (3,359,435) | (2,834,328) |
| Finance Expenses | | (11,010) | (9,673) |
| Occupancy Expenses | | (252,633) | (244,763) |
| Office & Administrative Expenses | | (205,017) | (195,598) |
| Repairs & Maintenance Expenses | | (41,750) | (31,568) |
| Resources Expenses | | (36,122) | (25,635) |
| Travel & Accommodation Expenses | | (32,774) | (26,749) |
| | | (4,008,436) | (3,438,262) |
| NET PROFIT | | 35,290 | 36,842 |
| Other Comprehensive Income | | | |
| Items that may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss when specific conditions are met | | - | - |
| Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss | | - | - |
| TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME | | 35,290 | 36,842 |

Financial position

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2019.

| | NOTE | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ |
|--------------------------------------|------|------------------|------------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Cash at Bank and on Hand | 11a | 572,851 | 325,297 |
| Receivables | | 55,248 | 1,650 |
| Term Deposit | | 1,250,000 | 1,250,000 |
| Other Assets | 4 | 8,493 | 12,690 |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS | | 1,886,592 | 1,589,637 |
| NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Fixed Assets | 5 | 73,889 | 70,191 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS | | 73,889 | 70,191 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 1,960,481 | 1,659,828 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Trade and Other Payables | 6 | 114,479 | 82,627 |
| Payroll Liabilities | 7 | 69,607 | 60,090 |
| Grants in Advance | 8 | 294,910 | 49,100 |
| Employee Provisions | 9 | 413,397 | 358,967 |
| VLA Unused Funds | 12 | 404,523 | 500,315 |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES | | 1,296,916 | 1,051,099 |
| NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Employee Provisions | 9 | 62,279 | 42,733 |
| TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | 62,279 | 42,733 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | 1,359,195 | 1,093,832 |
| NET ASSETS | | 601,286 | 565,996 |
| EQUITY | | | |
| Retained Earnings | | 601,286 | 565,996 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | | 601,286 | 565,996 |

Retained earnings

Statement of changes in equity for the year ended 30 June 2019.

| | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Opening Balance | 565,996 | 529,154 |
| Profit in the current year | 35,290 | 36,842 |
| Other Comprehensive Income | - | - |
| CLOSING BALANCE OF RETAINED EARNINGS | 601,286 | 565,996 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | 601,286 | 565,996 |

Our Relationships

Our extensive engagement with local community networks raises awareness of legal issues and identifies and responds to legal need. We also engage in a broad range of initiatives and partnerships with the legal assistance sector and government to facilitate empowerment and access to justice for clients and communities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

- Bayside Peninsula Integrated Family Violence Partnership
- Bayside Peninsula Family Violence Capacity Building Working Group
- Cardinia Shire CALD Network
- Casey/Cardinia Critical Linkages Family Violence Network
- Casey Nth Services Network
- Casey/Cardinia Homelessness Network
- City of Casey Community Service Organisation Network
- Collaborative Support Group (Federal Circuit Court, Dandenong)
- Dandenong Rooming House Network
- Federal Circuit Court Duty Lawyer Meetings
- Frankston & Mornington Peninsula, Health Justice Community of Practice
- Frankston Charitable Fund Committee
- Frankston City Strategic Homelessness Alliance
- Frankston Homelessness Network
- Frankston Emergency Relief Providers Network
- Frankston Magistrates’ Family Violence Court Users Meeting
- Frankston Mornington Peninsula Family Violence Network
- Frankston North Collaborative Partnership
- Greater Dandenong Youth Network
- Inner South Rooming House Network
- Living Free Steering Committee
- Middle Sth Welfare Network
- Mornington Peninsula Elder Abuse Prevention Network
- Mornington Peninsula Housing Network
- Mornington Peninsula Combined Service Provider Network
- Peninsula Health Crisis Hub Steering Committee
- Outer South Integrated Family Violence Partnership
- RAD-FMP Steering Committee
- Westall Community Hub Service Providers Network

LEGAL ASSISTANCE SECTOR RELATIONSHIPS

Regional

- South Eastern Regional Legal Assistance Network
- Victoria Legal Aid (Peninsula & Dandenong Regional Offices)
- Southern Metropolitan Partnership
- Southern Metropolitan Social Isolation Project Steering Group
- South East Region CLE & Community Development Network

Victorian

- Access to Justice/Jurisdictional Planning Working Group
- Consumer Affairs Funded Services Reference Group
- Family Violence Working Group
- FCLC Community Development and CLE Working Group
- Infringements Working Group
- Integrated Legal & Social Support Network
- Management Committee of Federation of CLCs
- Principal Lawyers’ Network
- Residential Tenancies Commissioner Stakeholder Reference Group
- Streamline Fines Project Committee
- Tenancy Working Group
- Toll Fine Coalition
- VCAT Residential Tenancies Users Group
- VLA Child Support Stakeholders
- VLA Communities of Practice – Family

National

- National Association of Community Legal Centre’s Advisory Committee



Our Community Partners

PCLC is proud of its connection with and participation in, the community of services and organisations in the South East region and see this collaborative work as a vital facet of strengthening communities. We place great emphasis on building and sustaining our relationships with our community partners, to enhance and support our vision and commitment to improve outcomes for our community and its members now and into the future.

REGIONAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS

South Eastern Regional Legal Assistance Network

The South Eastern Regional Legal Assistance Network (SERLAN) is a collaboration between Springvale Monash Legal Service (SMLS), Peninsula Community Legal Centre (PCLC), Victoria Legal Aid Peninsula Regional Office and Victoria Legal Aid Westernport Office to improve and grow the legal service system. SERLAN works together to undertake organisational strategic and service planning for the South Eastern region and assist the broader service delivery community to identify legal issues.

HEALTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS

HJP’s are a holistic model of service delivery which sees free legal services integrated into public health-care settings.

Peninsula Health

The Centre’s partnership with Peninsula Health continues to flourish, with the provision of two visiting legal clinics and the Centre’s active participation in Peninsula Health’s Crisis Hub Steering Committee. It is widely recognized that the hospital system is an early contact point for many people experiencing family violence. Our onsite family violence lawyer works closely with the hospital’s social work team to provide an integrated service to those experiencing family violence and/or elder abuse, including a secondary consult service to hospital staff.

Our Streamlines Fines Legal Services collaboration with Peninsula Health supports a community lawyer visiting the hospital every Friday to provide legal services to those with Fines. The service primarily works with patients of the Community Health, Social Work and Complex Services teams.

Mind Australia Ltd

PCLC’s partnership with Mind Australia under their Justice in Mind Project provides a fortnightly legal clinic at Mind Australia’s YPARC facility. YPARC is a Youth Prevention and Recovery Care Residential facility in Frankston, providing care for 16-25year olds diagnosed with a mental illness.

Glen Eira Mums Project (GEMS)

Our Glen Eira Mums Project (GEMS) is a partnership with the City of Glen Eira. This innovative project undertakes legal clinics at the Glenhuntly Maternal & Child Health Centre to those experiencing family violence. The project also provides a secondary consult service to maternal child & health nurses in the Glen Eira region.

FAMILY VIOLENCE PARTNERSHIPS

Bayside Peninsula Integrated Family Violence Partnership

Outer South Integrated Family Violence Partnership

PCLC is a proud member of both the Bayside Peninsula and Outer South Integrated Family Violence Partnerships. The Partnerships provide area-based leadership on family violence service integration and planning.

Family Safety Victoria’s The Orange Door

PCLC is pleased to be collaborating with Victoria Legal Aid’s Peninsula Office in a joint partnership with The Orange Door to provide a fortnightly onsite legal clinic. The Orange Door, located in Frankston, is an intake service for people experiencing family violence. Orange Door staff have also played a key role in the development of PCLC’s family violence brochures.

Our Community Partners cont.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Family Life

PCLC and Family Life have a long and effective history of working together to ensure that separating parents at the Family Relationship Centre have access to timely family law legal information and advice.

Better Place

The integration of financial counselling services into PCLC has had a positive impact for the Centre and its clients. Four days per week Better Place provide financial counselling services at our Frankston Office, primarily to PCLC clients.

Connect Health & Community

Our service response has been strengthened with the addition of Gamblers Help Counselling to the suite of integrated services available to PCLC clients. Once a week Connect Health & Community provide counselling services at PCLC.

“People coming together as a community can make things happen”

JACOB REES-MAGG

Thank you

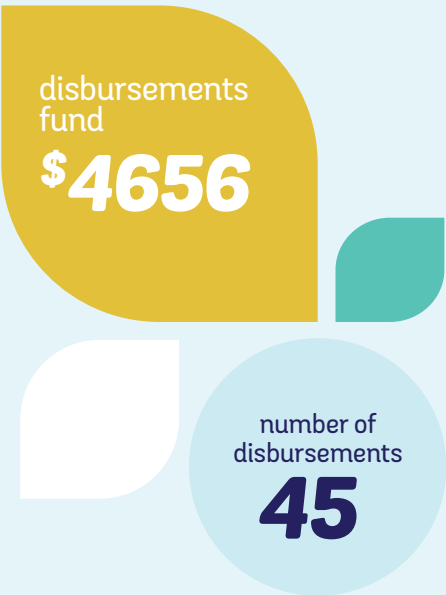
We are extremely grateful for the support of a committed and generous network of supporters who share our vision and drive to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable community members.

PRO BONO SUPPORTERS

Our pro bono partnership with Russell Kennedy Lawyers continues to support and strengthen our capability to provide legal services. Assistance is offered with mentoring, professional development, the funding of our disbursement fund, governance and marketing and business support. Special thanks to Emma Dunlevie, Principal and John Corcoran AM, Principal and the entire Russell Kennedy team.

PCLC has teamed up with King & Wood Mallesons to expand the reach of both organisations community legal education efforts. King & Wood Mallesons TalkLaw® is a national community legal education initiative that targets students in areas with high migrant backgrounds and/or disadvantage. PCLC presenters join with KWM volunteers and lawyers to deliver the program to local students.

Our pro bono partnership with Gaden’s family and relationship law team enhances the Centre’s capacity in our family law and family violence work. The partnership provides mentoring, through a ‘phone-a-friend hotline’, professional development and a client referral pathway targeted to women experiencing family violence.



Our Legal Community rallies to support our clients with the provision of a wide range of pro bono services, including special counsel mentoring, whole of firm contribution to our volunteer program, legal practice management support, training and resources and advocacy to support our clients on a pro-bono basis or significantly reduced fee briefs.

LEGAL MENTORS

MST Lawyers

Amanda Humphreys

Guymer Lawyers

Lance Guymer

Victor Moss

COUNSEL

Svensons List

Easton Legal

Holmes List

Stanton Lawyers

Pattersons List

Australian Family Lawyers

LEGAL FIRMS

Bayside Solicitors

Maurice Blackburn

MDL Law

Justice Crew Legal Services

Morehead Lawyers

White Cleland

Victoria Legal Aid

We extend our warm thanks to Michael Morehead for his support of the Peninsula Lawyer Discount Scheme. The Scheme by Morehead Lawyers provides an affordable option for clients in the Rosebud Area with legal assistance.

SPONSORS

Russell Kennedy Lawyers generously supports our client disbursement fund providing much needed assistance to support clients with their disbursements related to their legal matter.

GOVERNMENT

- Australian Government Attorney Generals Department
- State Government Victoria, Department of Justice and Community Safety Victoria
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- City of Glen Eira
- City of Casey
- Frankston City Council
- City of Kingston
- Mornington Peninsula Shire

TRUSTS

- The William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Trust
- Lord Mayors Charitable Trust
- Streetsmart
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victorian Legal Services Board

UNIVERSITIES

- Deakin University Melbourne (Burwood Campus) Internship Program
- University of Melbourne

SUPPORT SERVICES

Our support services for our Rooming House Outreach Program was boosted with the generous contribution of material support

- Salvation Army – Project Hope, Community Support
- Streetsmart
- Gadens
- Russell Kennedy Lawyers
- PCLC Welfare Fund

NOT FOR PROFIT DONATION & DISCOUNT SUPPORTERS

- Goods 360
- Connecting Up
- Telephone Technologies Pty. Ltd.

HEAD OFFICE

441 Nepean Highway,
Frankston, Vic 3199

Tel: 03 9783 3600

Fax: 03 9770 5200

Free Call: 1800 064 784

DX 19953 Frankston

Email: pclc@pclc.org.au

Hours: Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm

BENTLEIGH BRANCH

82 Brady Road,
Bentleigh Vic 3165

Hours: Mon & Thurs, evening

CRANBOURNE BRANCH

Bella Centre, Suite 12,
33-39 High Street
Cranbourne Vic 3977

Hours: Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm

FRANKSTON NORTH BRANCH

28 Mahogany Avenue,
Frankston North Vic 3200

Hours: By Appointment

ROSEBUD BRANCH

1375 Point Nepean Road
Rosebud Vic 3939

Hours: Mon, Wed & Thurs, 9am – 5pm



Peninsula
Community
Legal Centre



PCLC is committed to providing
safe and inclusive legal services

www.pclc.org.au



Reg A8T
ABN: 23591244622