

2022

ANNUAL REPORT



Peninsula
Community
Legal Centre



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

Vision

Delivering justice for our community

Promoting and protecting human rights and equality before the law

Mission

PCLC will

Empower & support disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our community to address their legal needs

Engage & build an ever-strengthening and capable legal practice

Foster & maintain a network of support for the vulnerable & disadvantaged with our community

Support families in the provision of services that champion child welfare and safety in the eyes of the law

Deliver a legal service that builds our community toward building one free from family violence

Values

empowerment

we work towards strengthening the capacity of all people to understand their rights, pursue their interests and understand their responsibilities

independence

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

fairness

we treat all people justly, reasonably and in a non-discriminatory manner

quality

we are a leading legal assistance sector organisation committed to providing quality, evidence based solutions to pressing issues facing our community

integrity

we deliver service based upon our strong moral principles and ethics

accessibility

we assist vulnerable and disadvantaged people to obtain justice that they would otherwise be denied

respect

we treat others with dignity and in a manner which demonstrates regard to their feelings, wishes, autonomy and rights

These values underpin all that PCLC stands for and does.

They strengthen our organisation and its capacity to deliver on its promises

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Message from Chairperson & CEO

We are proud to present the Annual Report for Peninsula Community Legal Centre for the 2021-2022 year.

During a period of pandemic based uncertainty, PCLC has continued to provide a broad range of legal and support services across the diverse communities we serve. Our team faced a range of challenges but ensured that they continued to remain socially connected to our community. The organisation and staff have exhibited a genuine ability to adapt and respond, continually seeking practical and efficient ways to deliver legal services. This can be evidenced in ongoing process improvements and the implementation of new technology.

PCLC's core values are what inspired us to continue our work to address issues of inequity and fairness. The health, social and economic impacts on our community during this past year have been significant, and delivering the organisation's values has had a heightened level of importance.

Throughout the year, staff and volunteer wellbeing continued to be a priority. We constantly reviewed our Operational Guidelines and COVID Safe Plan to support our commitment to a safe and supportive workplace. We are full of praise and gratitude for the strength, resilience and commitment of our staff and volunteers to achieve legal outcomes to our community in this constantly evolving landscape.

We continued to reflect on our operations and explore new ways to enhance and improve our services to the community. We drove an agenda based on our strategic objectives and continued to deliver considered changes to the Centre's policies and procedures, and continuously adapted the ways we deployed resources to achieve goals.

We thank our Management Committee colleagues for their knowledge, guidance and diligence in undertaking and supporting us with the crucial governance of the organisation. We acknowledge our Executive and Management teams for their leadership, determination and engagement. We extend our deepest appreciation to the dedicated staff of PCLC. Their professionalism and willingness to deliver the required client experience throughout the year was exemplary. We would like to acknowledge the work and leadership of our former Director, Legal Services, Kate Ross whose contribution was integral to the development and strength of our legal practice.

PCLC is incredibly proud of its standing in the community and the work it undertakes to improve the legal outcomes for our vulnerable community members. We recognise the challenges that lay ahead, and as a collaborative and driven group we will continue to embrace these challenges, and see them for the opportunities that they are.



Matthew Bolle
Chairperson



Jackie Galloway
Chief Executive Officer

Our year

The last twelve months brought glimmers of a post - COVID world, however the rollercoaster of challenges and difficulties of COVID was ever present. Despite the changing landscape, PCLC remained resolute in its resolve to provide access to the vast and diverse communities we proudly serve. Our control room approach, facilitated by our administrative team, provided that vital connection and support to staff, clients and community. Our casework team also adapted and responded to the changing environment, ensuring continuity and quality of service to our clients.

We welcomed the opportunity to reflect on PCLC's 45 years of service to the community, acknowledging the journey from its humble beginnings as a weekly volunteer service to the dynamic community legal centre it is today. We acknowledge the significant contribution of our people, the PCLC community of staff, volunteers and board members both present and past who have embraced our mission in the pursuit of "Access to Justice for All".

PCLC has a long and proud history of responding to community need and this year was no exception. The team rallied to deliver an outstanding year of legal and support services. PCLC assisted 5,736 individuals with the provision of 11,675 services. The longevity of the pandemic was having a profound impact on our communities; 71% of our clients reported experiencing financial disadvantage and 46% reported experiencing family violence this past year.

Elder abuse was a key priority area identified by the Family Violence and Engagement teams for a preventative community legal education response.

Our engagement team delivered public forums and workshop presentations to older people in community settings to raise awareness on elder law issues including elder abuse. We continued our active participation in the Respecting Seniors Network, releasing a social media campaign on common myths in elder law as well as participating in the Victoria Police Elder Financial Abuse Trial.

The drive for excellence remained strong this year with our emphasis on continuous quality improvement. We were pleased to obtain our Accreditation certification under the National Accreditation Scheme for Community Legal Centre's, and we identified and committed to an ambitious agenda of planning, implementation, review and improvement to enhance our quality management. 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.

Despite the challenges of remote working during COVID, we continued our work to establish and enhance our strategic partnerships with key stakeholders in the justice, health, family violence, housing and community service sectors. These partnerships support our multidisciplinary and integrated approach to address our client's inter-related social, health and other needs.

A common theme arising out of our family law program has been the demand for litigation assistance with property law matters for women experiencing family violence. To meet this demand, the Centre conducted a family law property pilot with the assistance of a donation from the Eastlink Community Fund. Prior to this pilot, Peninsula Community Legal Centre was turning away on average five women a week requiring casework support to progress their property matter. Typically, these clients were at significant risk of financial hardship after the breakdown of the relationship. Family violence, especially financial control, small asset pools (including net debt pools), and a family law system which can be used by perpetrators to financially damage and control a victim, meant many clients simply abandoned any hope of pursuing a fair property settlement. Given the current housing crisis, this was particularly concerning considering the difficulties these clients faced, and continue to face, in obtaining housing, especially long term housing.

However, since the pilot's inception, total of 43 women have been assisted, with 20 receiving ongoing casework assistance. In 2021/22 the pilot resolved 10 matters resulting in a monetary benefit to our clients of \$1,177,673. The pilot's funding has now been fully expended.

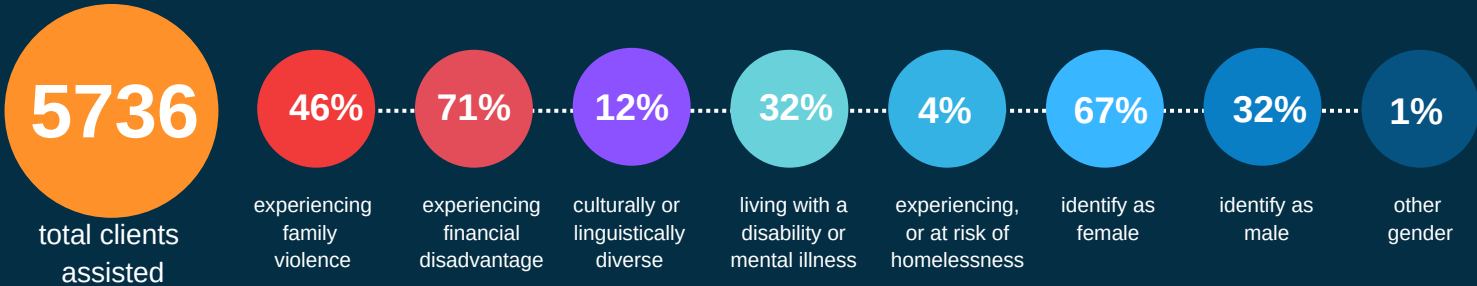
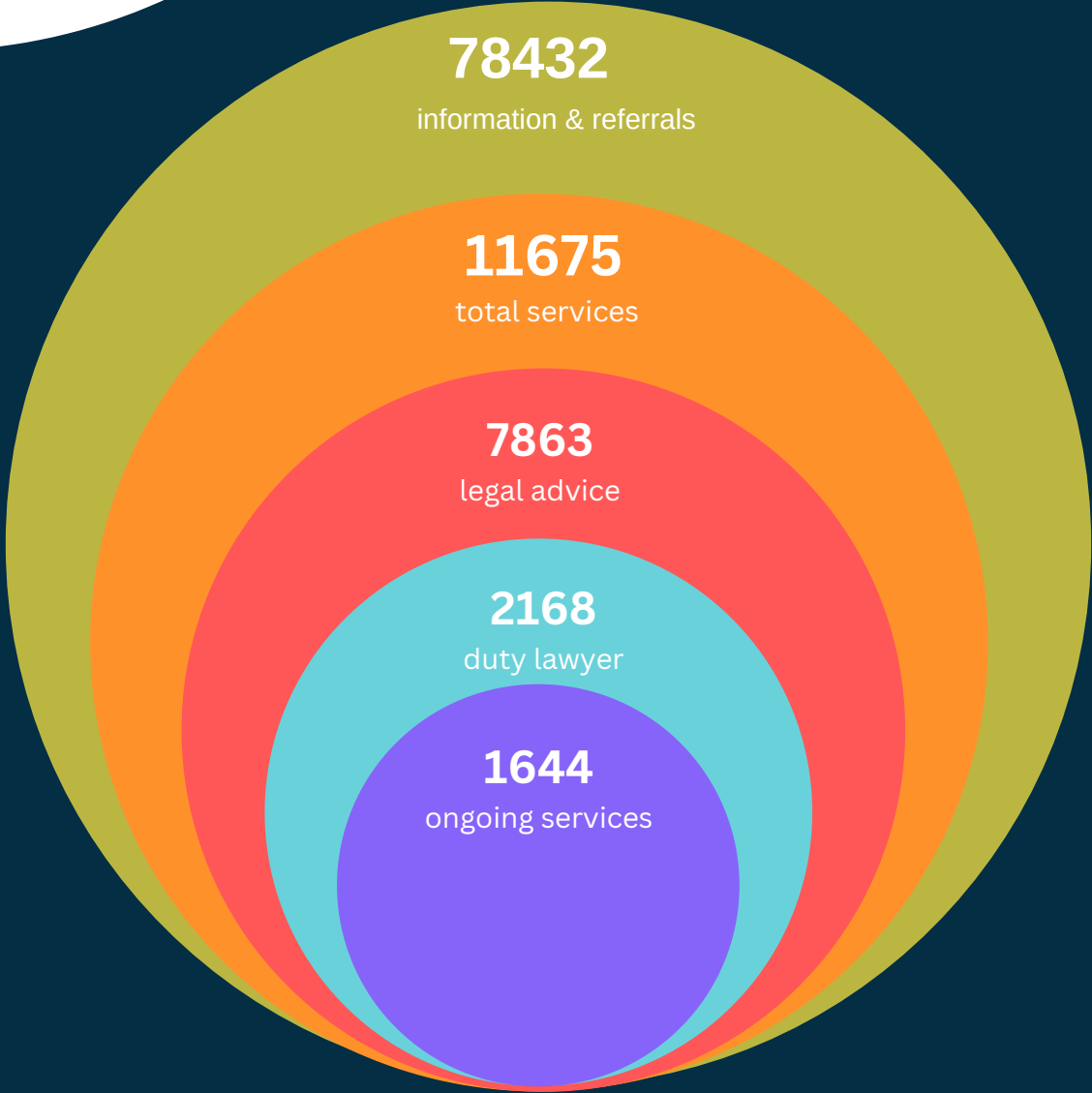
Sustaining housing was also a priority for our Tenancy & Rooming House teams, with over a third of inquiries from renters relating to Notices to Vacate from their rental provider. The tenancy team worked hard to develop payment plans for tenants facing eviction due to rental arrears, the financial impact of COVID, cost of living and rising rents were all contributing factors for tenants facing rental arrears. We were pleased to prevent and/or delay evictions in 53% of matters where PCLC provided assistance.

We regularly review how to most efficiently and effectively use our limited resources to meet the constant and increasing demand for our services, particularly casework and representation services, in this past year we have focussed on enhancing our criminal practice, our case studies are testament to the work being undertaken by the team.

We anticipate that the demand for legal services will only increase as the community grapples with the long term impact of COVID, cost of living, family breakdowns and a housing crisis. It is critical that the community can access legal services and that Community legal centres such as PCLC are properly resourced to address the current and emerging legal needs.

PCLC acknowledges the support of our funders, Federal, State and Local Governments, pro bono supporters and our donors whose support of the organization is integral to our continuing development and sustainability now and into the future.

Service Delivery



Client Comments



I will never forget what you did for me whilst I was going through an extremely traumatic time. I am now able to move past this and try and move forward with my life, this is thanks to you. I hope you know what you do makes a huge difference in peoples lives, more than you would ever realise and is so deeply appreciated.



Having had no legal experience I felt very overwhelmed with the process. PCLC took the time to listen to my story, waited patiently while I read out the details of the charge and the informant statement, and provided me with detailed information on what emails/ documents/responses I would have to prepare and what to expect at the hearing.



There is so much I could say & “thankyou “ doesn’t seem a big enough word but I will keep it simple. It seems you already well understand how women in my situation feel & how vulnerable we are.



I would like to draw your attention to the wonderful, prompt, professional, and courteous service we received from one of your solicitors. The existence of PCLC and the work of your staff has allowed the organisation to look forward to a secure future for its 2000 + Frankston and Mornington Peninsula members.



I have had this matter with PCLC for a substantial amount of time (maybe 6 months or so) and this whole time your lawyer has been nothing but pleasant and professional. His communication has been outstanding and considering I did not pay a dime for him to assist me, the service he provided was high quality.



I would to say: Thank you very very very much to PCLC! Your lawyer is the only person who help me got through my difficult time. She is the only person who tell me: BE STRONG! She saved our family! She helped our family be together again! She is an amazing person! Thank you very very very much



I can’t thank you enough for your help today. You have no idea what it means to have a win over a person who has committed much financial, mental and emotional abuse for months.



Thanks again for assisting in this case in such a sensitive and thoughtful way. I don’t think we would have received as good an outcome without you. What a fantastic service provided to our most vulnerable in private rentals.



PCLC showed empathy in helping me while I was in shock regarding a Magistrates’ Court case. The lawyer showed professionalism in her legal role combined with sensitivity equal to a counsellor at our initial meeting and in later calls.

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.

Branches

Frankston Head Office
Bentleigh
Cranbourne
Rosebud

Community Venues

Bunjil Place, Narre Warren
Casey North Community Information & Support Service
Chelsea Information & Support Service
Living & Learning Centre Inc, Pakenham
MISH Building, Frankston North
Salvation Army Crisis Centre, St Kilda
Selandra Community Hub, Clyde North
Youth Support & Advocacy Service, Dandenong
Westall Community Hub, Clayton South
Westernport Community Support Service, Hastings

Court/Tribunals

Frankston Magistrates' Court
Federal Circuit & Family Court of Australia - Dandenong
Moorabbin Justice Centre
Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Dandenong
Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Frankston
Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Dromana
Victoria Civil & Administrative Tribunal - Oakleigh

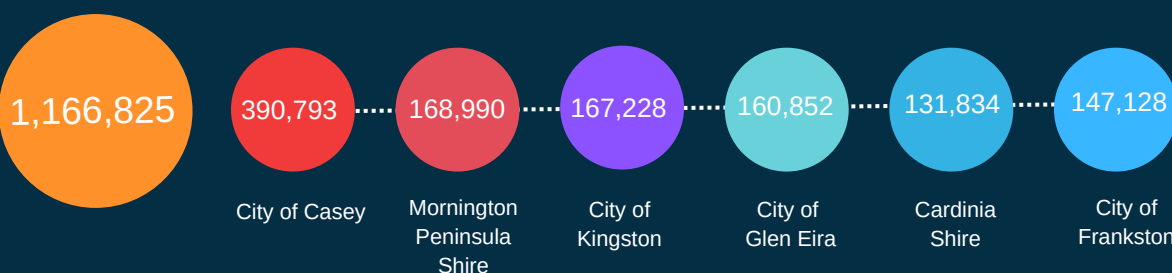
Government

Department of Justice & Community Safety Victoria

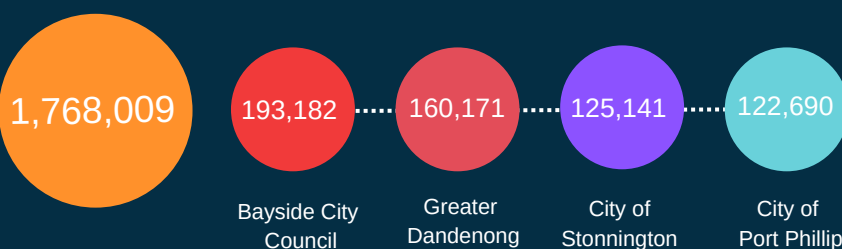
Hospital / Health Settings

Glenhuntly Maternal Child & Health
Karingal Maternal & Child Health
Carrum Downs Maternal & Child Health

Total PCLC
general legal
catchment
population



Tenancy Assistance
Advocacy Program
includes additional
LGA's
Total combined
catchment population



Our people

Management Committee

Chairperson
Matthew Bolle

Vice Chairperson
Paul Hodgman

Treasurer
Renee Thorn

Secretary
Samuel Ellemor

Members
Lisa Bremner
Luke Denham
Phillip Carr
Thierry Pascal

Executive Team

Chief Executive Officer
Jackie Galloway

Director of Legal Services
Sokha Um

Director of Business & Operations
Sue Vincent

Leadership Team

Practice Manager - Specialist Projects
Ash Galvin

Practice Manager - Family Law
Brendan Stackpole

Practice Manager - Family Violence
Sharon Carr

Practice Manager - Civil & Crime
William Betts

Coordinator Business & Operations
Hellen Argiriou

Senior Lawyers

Chris Daniels
Chris Gunasekera
Kate Bell
Saskia Rijfkogel

Paralegal

Casey Hill

Project Workers

Engy Abdelsalam
Jackie Currie
Kay Taranto
Kirsten Young
Mark Patton

Finance

Mark Duque

Legal Team

Alison Laird
Ashleigh Walker (ml)
Caroline Atkinson
Cathie Currie
Christine Ng
Daniel Hombsch
Emily McAlister
Fei Su
Jennifer Allamby (ml)
Joseph Oliver
Laura Di Felice (ml)
Lisa Taranto
Lucy Rosenblum
Michele Simpson
Nina Zec
Robert Braun
Sandy Kaur
Sousan Gholami
Steven Eley
Teddy Polydor
Terry Meehan
Theresa Lam
Vanessa Saunders
Warren Wheeler
Yih Laine Teen (ml)

Administrative Team

Administrative Services Officers
Jasminka Kumbaric (ml)
Nina Mitris

Administrative Workers
Caitlin Wilson
Ellie Lingard
Louise Grant
Melanie Jones
Melissa Liapis

Staff Farewell

*Aldo Taranto
Joanne Petch
Jodie De Gregorio
Kate Ross
Kim Novak
Louise Naylor
Maria Stipic
Natalie Altman
Susan Knight
Warren Eames*

General Law

Challenges & Achievements

Over the past year, PCLC has undertaken structural changes to expand both its civil and criminal practices in response to community need, and to complement our specific services in family law, family violence and fines.

Consistent with the financial hardships experienced by the community generally during this period, our General Law Program noted the prevalence of civil credit and debt matters, and motor vehicle accident matters where the client was uninsured. PCLC commenced the Elder abuse Clinics at our Rosebud office, and this may have contributed to the continued high demand for wills and powers of attorney advice. Also of note were the many clients seeking assistance in VOCAT matters where it was necessary to seek safety related expenses or the costs of counselling sessions, especially where related to family violence and other assaults. We note that these matters are often referred in from our Specialist Family Violence and Family Law Programs.

With the incremental lifting of public health directions during the period, PCLC's general law team welcomed the gradual return to pre-COVID service delivery. In particular, it was pleasing to see the recommencement of in person visiting services at most of its ten venues by April 2022, although some services continued to be serviced by telephone to accommodate specific venue constraints and PCLC staffing changes.

Problem types

- Debt
- Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCAT)
- Will and POA advice
- Guardianship and Administration
- Employment
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Neighbourhood and fencing disputes

Services provided

- Legal advice
- Negotiations with other parties and agencies
- Assistance with applications
- Advocacy
- Ongoing casework

Our impact

General Law

\$3,166.44

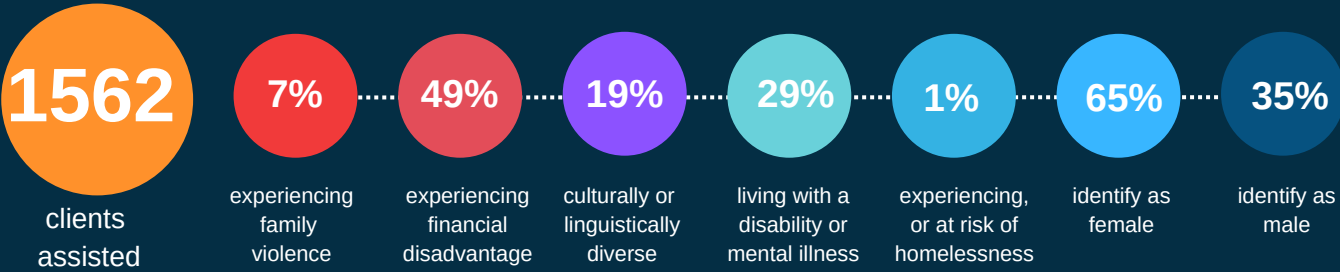
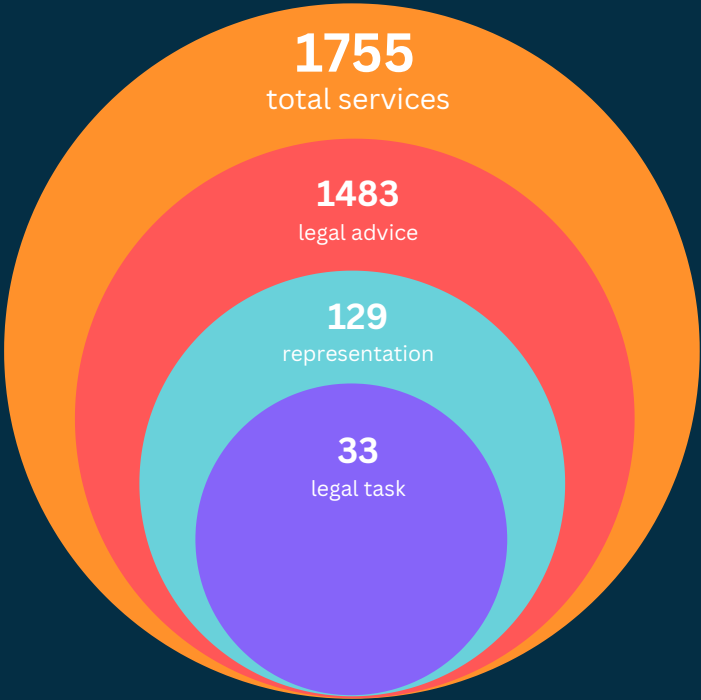
client disbursement fund

\$11,275.25

client welfare fund

\$353,725

debt summary saved



Helping a victim to recover from a crime

Jane, a woman of Aboriginal ancestry, was a victim of rape and sexual assault occurring in 2018. She instructed that she joined a group of former friends for a girls' night of drinking. After one drink, she felt significantly intoxicated and was nearing unconsciousness. She believed that her former friend had spiked the drink. Later that evening, Jane was raped by the former friend and a man which she had met on an online dating platform.

PCLC prepared Jane's VOCAT application and lodged it in VOCAT's Koori list. VOCAT decided to proceed without notifying the accused persons of the application for assistance. As police did not proceed with charges against the alleged perpetrators, a directions hearing was held to determine that a recognised crime had occurred.

PCLC represented Jane at her VOCAT hearing and on the evidence provided (police statement and psychological reports), the Tribunal Member was satisfied that a recognised crime, rape and/or sexual assault, had occurred and then awarded Jane the maximum special financial assistance for a Category A offence. The Tribunal also awarded past and future medical and psychological expenses, safety related expenses, the costs of an interstate holiday and Jane's future tertiary education to help her therapeutically.

Unnecessary litigation avoided

Laura was a single mother with three children, two of whom had disabilities. She also suffered from severe depression and anxiety, and had a heart condition with other physical health issues. Laura was renting, her disposable income was minimal, and she was dependent on her Centrelink benefit. Laura had arranged a funeral for her late Father. She had repaid some of the original amount owing, but was unable to keep up with payments.

The funeral home subsequently commenced Magistrates' Court proceedings to recover the amount outstanding, and legal costs. Laura was confused about the total outstanding amount and felt overwhelmed trying to make repayments. She was considered judgement proof but she insisted on repaying the debt to clear her mind and debts.

PCLC took the necessary steps to negotiate and the parties reached a negotiated settlement for Laura to pay by instalments. Laura was pleased with this result and very appreciative of PCLC's representation and assistance at a very vulnerable time.

Criminal Law

Problem types

- Traffic Offences
- Minor drug offences
- Violence related offences
- Breaches of Intervention Orders
- Public Order offences

Services provided

- Legal advice and assistance
- Case conferencing with police
- Court representation

Challenges & Achievements

The past year was unprecedented in the history of the Centre in the practice of criminal law. In the preceding 18 months the Magistrates' Court had moved to remote, "on the papers" and ex-parte listings for all but the most urgent of matters due to COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions; modes of hearing that were never previously considered appropriate, especially for serious criminal matters. Similarly, as lockdowns eased and the courts returned to pre-pandemic sentencing practices, PCLC's lawyers have often been required to argue why the most punitive sentences are not in the community's best interests, nor the accused's.

PCLC's criminal lawyers have also encountered an interesting range of matters, reflective of recent social difficulties. There has been an increase in offences relating to non-violent contraventions of intervention orders, when the police or the courts have exercised their powers to exclude a person from an address but the offender lacked anywhere else to go, and the victim has later taken pity on them. Infringements for breaches of Chief Health Officer's directions have also worked their way through the system, sometimes to an appearance at Court. In such cases, PCLC's criminal advocates have often sought to remind the sentencing court of the circumstances that existed at the time of some of these offences. This period saw also an increase in older drivers charged with driving offences resulting from medical reviews and in these cases, the driver was often unaware that their licence had been suspended.

In one matter, a client had his mail directed to the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) (who managed all of his financial affairs). The OPA were prepared to accept that they had failed to forward the VicRoads letter to the client due to a failure of their internal processes, beyond the client's control. The prosecutor agreed to withdraw the charge.

We are finding that the police are reluctant to recommend 'Drive While Suspended' charges for Diversion because of the theoretical possibility that the charge could lead to a vehicle impoundment. Our team is waiting for an appropriate 'test case' to push that issue further.

During 2020 and 2021, mental health problems worsened as the result of confinement, substance use, unemployment and family dislocation. Waiting lists for community resources such as access to Mental Health Care Plans increased. This resulted in clients being less likely to receive the help they needed, exacerbating their issues, and making it more likely that a sentencing Magistrate would impose a sanction supervised by Community Corrections Victoria (CCV). Additionally, clients were less likely to have received a diagnosis, making it necessary for the Court and CCV to explore client's rehabilitative needs. PCLC's criminal lawyers played a critical role in assisting the Court to understand the complex interaction between the mental condition and the offending.

In some ways, the enactment of the Spent Convictions Act 2021 (Vic) last year was a 'game-changer' to the summary jurisdiction.

Accused people who considered challenging a criminal allegation or requesting leniency from a Magistrate were dissuaded from doing so by the effect that a criminal record could have on their employment, travel or insurance prospects.

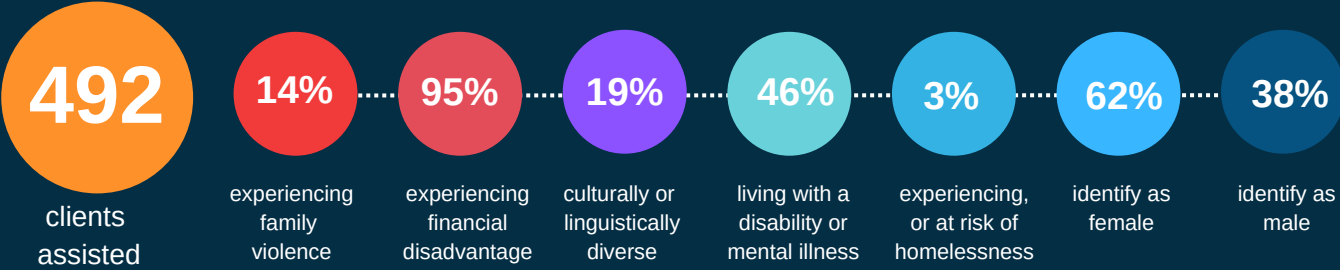
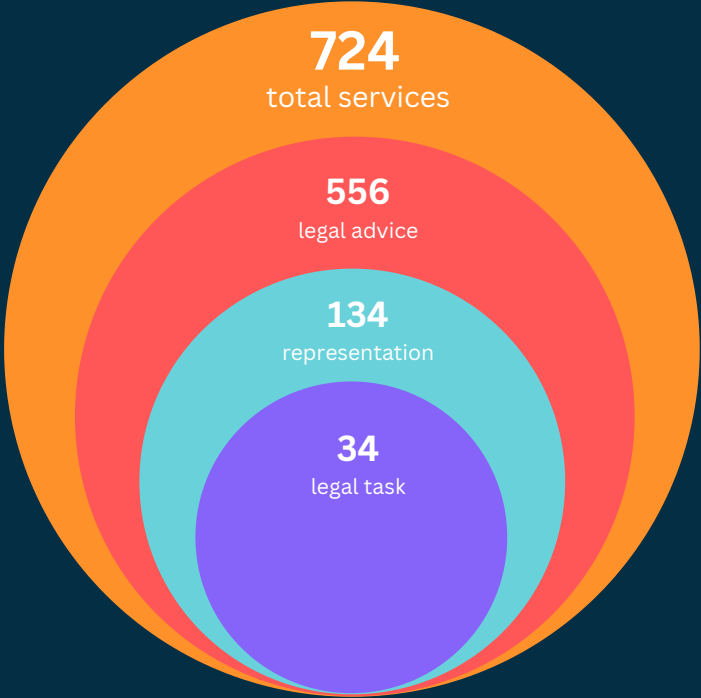
With the introduction of the law in December last year, and the further expansion of its operation in mid-2022, clients electing to have their matters heard before a Court could do so without the uncertainty that old convictions might impose.

In recent times, PCLC's criminal practice has increasingly advocated on behalf of clients at Summary Case Conferences and this has led to profoundly different outcomes for clients than would otherwise have been the case. This is important work in which PCLC advocates for clients in circumstances where they would otherwise be unrepresented against experienced prosecutors, and hence most vulnerable.



Our impact

Criminal Law



Early intervention gets results

Saeed was charged with exceeding the speed limit. His pregnant wife appeared unwell and he drove her to her doctors, who recommended that she be immediately admitted to the nearest emergency department. On route, Saeed was detected exceeding the speed limit by 31km/h. Saeed's wife was diagnosed with a serious medical condition. Shortly after this time, she gave birth to twins a month prematurely. As a result of the medical condition, she slipped into a coma and tragically passed away three months later. Saeed was already struggling during a very difficult time as the sole parent of new born twins, and two boys aged 3 and 6 years, both of whom had intellectual disabilities. Saeed depended on his driver's licence for the many medical and NDIS appointments required for the older children, not to mention their schooling and child care. Saeed's brother, who spoke more English than he did, contacted the police prosecution and conveyed the situation. They were sympathetic, but indicated that the Court would apply the mandatory suspension period.

PCLC obtained the brief of evidence, took instructions and conducted a summary case conference. The prosecution, on being satisfied with PCLC's submissions, withdrew the matter in the exercise of their discretion. Saeed was able to continue driving his children to their appointments, with no loss of licence, no demerit points, and no fine.

Young offender's complex needs

Michael was 13 years old and presented with a diagnosis of PTSD resulting from witnessing family violence perpetrated by his father on his mother. He was also an only child and estranged from his father, who himself had a criminal history. Michael was charged with one count of driving unlicensed after taking his mother's car for a joy ride with friends. The PCLC criminal lawyer arranged a case conference and after much time and effort, the prosecutor was persuaded to withdraw the charge against Michael on the basis that he was criminally incapable, even though he was above the age of minimum criminal responsibility in Victoria. This was because the PCLC lawyer successfully argued that the principle of doli incapax applied in this case. This principle, which applies throughout Australia, assumes that children aged between 10 and 14 years are criminally incapable. Here, evidence was tendered that Michael was intellectually and morally incapable of committing a crime, and the Court struck out the charge on that basis. This left diversion available as an option to Michael, if ever charged with further criminal offences.

Considering reports that in practice the principle of doli incapax is not always applied (2019 Children's Rights Report), PCLC will continue to advocate to raise the age of criminal responsibility. PCLC views this as critical to ensuring that young people, who often come from disadvantaged backgrounds, can have their complex needs more appropriately dealt with outside the criminal justice system, and thus reduce the risk of re-offending.

Family Law

Problem types

- Separation, parenting, property, divorce
- Child support, adult child maintenance
- Spousal maintenance
- International family law matters

Services provided

- Legal advice
- Casework
- Court Representation
- Duty lawyer services

Challenges & Achievements

Family law continued to account for approximately half of all the legal work performed by PCLC, with many clients experiencing family violence and its isolating effects throughout the pandemic and beyond. For this reason, PCLC was keen to resume the full suite of pre-pandemic family law advice and casework services as soon as possible.

PCLC's Family Violence to Family Law Continuity Program, which provides, legally aided family violence related family law casework services, continued to experience exceptionally high demand, which was compounded by the increasing complexity of client matters, the frequency of trial, interim defended and other hearing work, and delays in obtaining aid. Additional documentation required by the new Court rules introduced in September 2021 also imposed further time pressures. It was therefore pleasing that this Program was able to resolve several very longstanding and complex family law parenting and property matters for some exceptionally vulnerable clients whilst maintaining demanding caseloads.

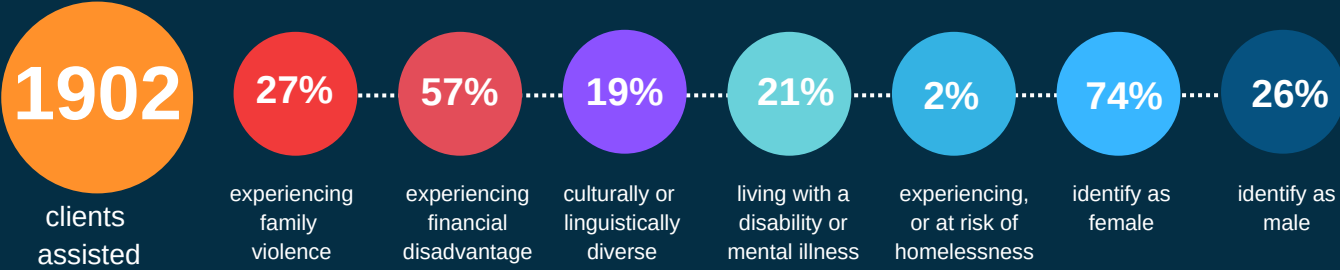
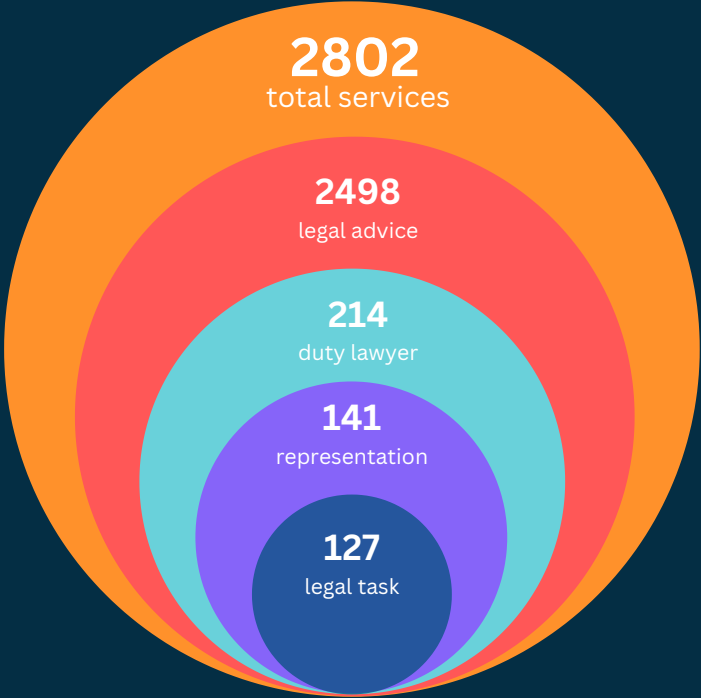
For clients ineligible for aid, our generalist family lawyers continued to provide critical legal assistance. In one matter which took several years to resolve, we secured the return of a child from a non-Hague convention country. In another matter, that same lawyer achieved a significant property settlement for a very vulnerable client in a protracted matter involving an intricate intersection of trusts and family law. With limited funding and a three day per week position, our small pool property lawyer obtained life changing property settlements for 10 CALD clients totaling in excess of \$1 million for this financial year alone.

In May 2022, PCLC was pleased to resume the provision of in person FASS duty lawyer services at the FCFC, Dandenong. This was accompanied by promising increases in client demand for FASS services, after a serious decline during the pandemic. We hope that our on-site presence will enable us to better assist those clients least equipped to engage digitally with the family law system, particularly CALD communities, and those with mental health issues. It is also expected that as knowledge of our return becomes more widespread, 'walk-in' client demand will increase.

PCLC thanks its dedicated family lawyers for their persistence and commitment through an extremely trying period. We also thank Victoria Legal Aid for their ongoing support, especially when the provision of free, accessible family violence focused family law services is so needed in our community.

Our impact

Family Law



Commitment gets results

In a parenting matter which took PCLC Continuity Program lawyers over three years to resolve, final parenting orders were ultimately achieved for a vulnerable client seriously affected by persistent family violence.

Adriana and her husband were married for 11 years and had a 14 year old daughter. After separation, Adriana applied for an IVO against the father, alleging ongoing physical violence and verbal abuse in the presence of the child.

In late September 2019, the father initiated proceedings in the Federal Circuit Court (as it then was) after Adriana had obtained an FVIO against him, with the child named. In the family proceedings, the father sought orders for the child to live with him, even though Adriana had mostly been the child's primary carer since separation.

Adriana instructed that the father was extremely coercive. The effects of persistent family violence and the father's coercive control over the mother caused her to appear hyper-vigilant and overly protective of the child. In reporting, Adriana's concerns about the child's mental health while she was in the care of the father were characterized as possible attempts to alienate the child from the father.

The pandemic further complicated and delayed the progress of the matter, resulting in further distress to Adriana. The child's therapist was not readily available, the father had insisted that the child spend time with him and his new family despite his daughters and wife having COVID and still testing positive, and an agreed upon Family Dispute Resolution Conference before the Final Hearing was delayed.

In a last attempt to resolve the matter prior to final hearing, the parties attended a litigation Family Dispute Resolution Service conference. At this conference, our lawyer successfully negotiated final consent orders on Adriana's behalf, providing for the child to live with her with limited time to the father. Considering the polarised and entrenched positions of the parties, this was a remarkable result which has substantially allayed Adriana's previous parenting and family violence concerns.



Property settlement helps CALD client get back on her feet

We assisted Aisha, who was born in the Middle East, and who spoke almost no English. She and her husband were married for 17 years and had two children aged 13 and 16 years. The parties moved from the Middle East to reside in Australia eight years ago and became Australian citizens.

The husband sexually assaulted Aisha during the relationship. She also suffered intimidation, verbal and economic abuse and financially controlling behaviour. The husband discouraged Aisha from learning English or from obtaining employment, and she had very limited knowledge of the relationship's financial matters.

Aisha was very distressed when she approached PCLC as she had limited contact with her husband since he had returned to the Middle East. She was unsure if he was returning and was concerned he would stop making mortgage repayments on the home which was owned in his sole name. Aisha was also concerned that the husband would arrange to sell the house without informing her, or that the house would be repossessed if the mortgage was not paid. As Aisha was not a party to the mortgage, the bank would not provide her with any information about it.

Aisha obtained a caveat over the former matrimonial home, protecting her interest in the property. After PCLC wrote to the husband seeking a property settlement and disclosure, Aisha learned from friends that the husband was attempting to transfer savings to his country of origin.

PCLC then obtained urgent ex parte orders freezing the husband's bank accounts and restraining him from redrawing upon the mortgage. The husband's bank records and mortgage statements were also subpoenaed.

PCLC represented Aisha at a conciliation conference during which the husband ought to claim an unsubstantiated debt which effectively reduced the equity in the matrimonial asset pool to nil. Despite negotiation, the matter was unable to be resolved at the conference.

Shortly after the conference, the husband sought the immediate sale of the family home, which Aisha opposed. PCLC then negotiated with the husband's solicitors for the frozen monies held on trust for the parties to be transferred to an account held by Aisha, to be used for the payment of the arrears of mortgage and future mortgage payments until trial. Aided by our office and Counsel's representation, Aisha was able to obtain Final Court orders for the sale of the former matrimonial home, approximately 80% of the net proceeds of sale of the home, the family car and all the household chattels. Orders for Aisha to have sole parental responsibility for the children were also negotiated on the proviso that the husband's input was sought.

This case study shows how ready access to legal representation and a fair property settlement can be the difference between post separation financial and emotional recovery or continued hardship and distress.

Family Violence

Challenges & Achievements

The pandemic continued to disrupt the work of the courts while at the same time seemingly creating a landscape that fostered entirely new sub-categories of family violence behaviour. All forms of family violence increased during this time.

PCLC's family violence team took a pro-active approach to these challenges by ensuring that clients both new and existing received pre-court advice and assistance. The word of the year was 'reassurance'. Our lawyers and paralegal were able to set clients' minds at rest, that yes, we would help, yes there would be a duty lawyer available, yes clients may attend court remotely or yes there is a safe space in which to wait.

Our team was overjoyed to be able to attend courts in person after such a long time operating remotely. We achieved many hundreds of excellent legal outcomes for clients experiencing family violence. We continued to nurture our valuable community relationships and provided legal education sessions to both workers and community members. Our elder law practice was further expanded, with a number of workshops and presentations throughout the year.

Our valuable work in Maternal and Child Health centres was enhanced with a new partnership with City of Frankston.

We look forward to continue to rekindle all our community relationships and expand our horizons with new outreaches and services.

Problem type

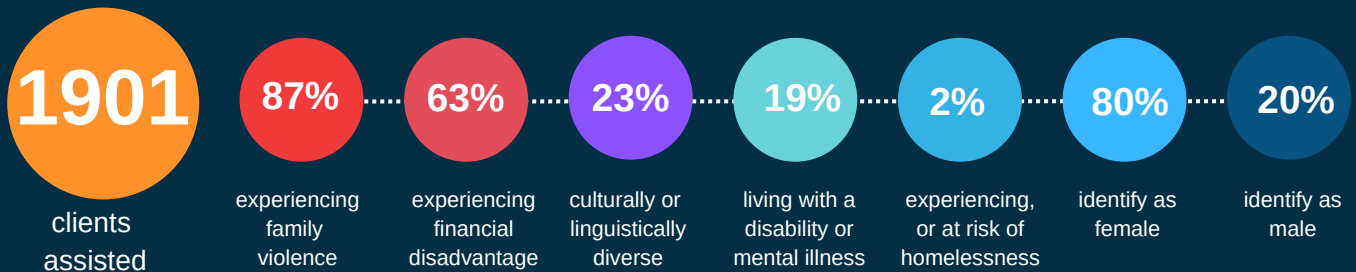
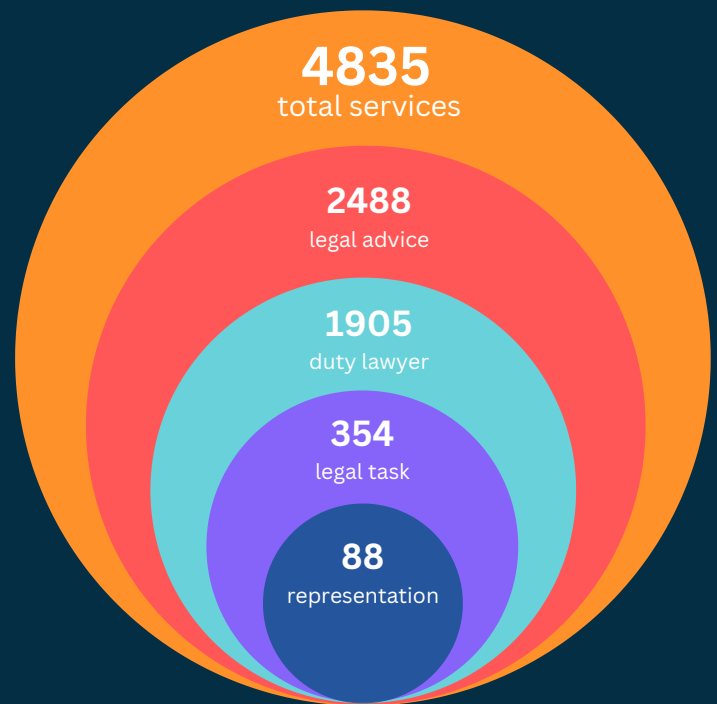
- Intervention orders
- Separation and child contact
- Child protection involvement
- Family violence related criminal charges
- Elder abuse

Services provided

- Legal advice in family violence and elder law
- Casework
- Duty Lawyer Services
- Maternal Health Visiting Services

Our impact

Family Violence



PCLC duty lawyers reach out

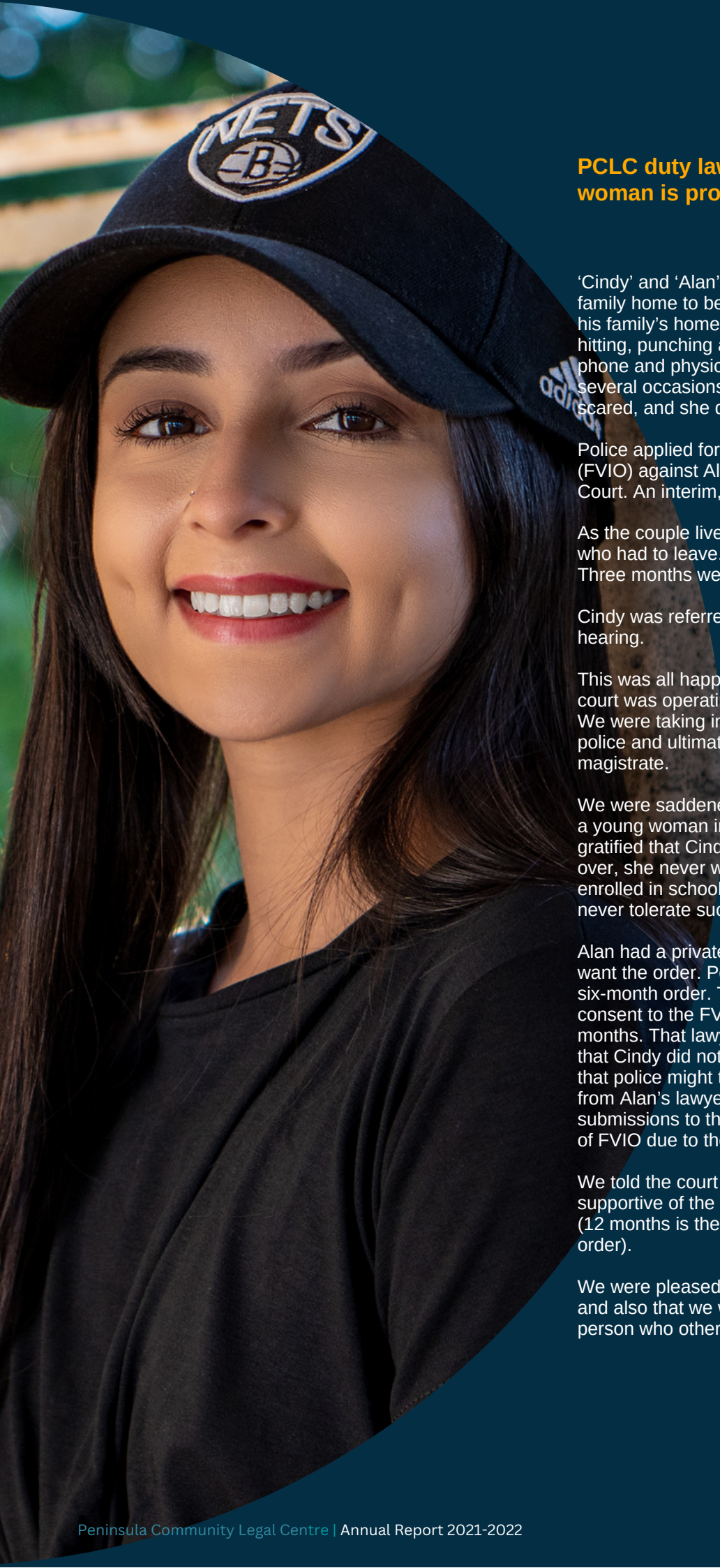
Minh was waiting, alone, at the Magistrates Court all morning. When our duty lawyer approached her at lunch time to see if we could help, Minh advised that she doesn't speak English, only Vietnamese. Our lawyer, who also speaks Vietnamese, took her to registry and discovered that no one had known she was there. The court had also failed to book an interpreter for Minh.

We offered to assist Minh, discovering that there were serious allegations of family violence against Minh's husband, and that police had been granted an interim intervention order against him. He had been excluded from the family home by that order. He was not allowed to contact Minh or their children. We knew this situation was not about to change. Minh was very emotional and said she had no financial or social support in Australia other than her husband. She wanted her husband home as she was totally reliant on him.

We explained the court process and Australian law to Minh. She said that everything made more sense to her now. We told her the matter would be adjourned, and during that time her husband must step up to convince the court the previous behaviour would not happen again. In the meantime we took Minh to see the applicant support worker at court (and interpreted for her). We also referred her to The Orange Door, and asked registry to ensure there would be an interpreter for Minh next time.

The Orange Door helped Minh with emotional and material support. She got onto Centrelink. Her husband, thankfully, continued to pay the rent, and he undertook a Men's Behaviour Change program.

At court next time we were gratified that Minh smiled when she saw us. She was much calmer and stronger. And while she still wanted her husband to be allowed home, she made it clear no bad behaviour would be tolerated.



PCLC duty lawyers ensure a young woman is protected from family violence

'Cindy' and 'Alan' were both aged 16. Cindy left her family home to be with Alan, moving in to his room at his family's home. Alan became violent and controlling, hitting, punching and biting Cindy, withholding her phone and physically preventing her from leaving, on several occasions. When police were called, Cindy was scared, and she did not co-operate with police.

Police applied for a Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO) against Alan, to be heard in the Children's Court. An interim, no contact, FVIO was granted.

As the couple lived at Alan's family home, it was Cindy who had to leave. She moved back in with her parents. Three months went by with no contact.

Cindy was referred to PCLC the day before the court hearing.

This was all happening during the pandemic when the court was operating remotely, by emailed submissions. We were taking instructions by phone, negotiating with police and ultimately making a written submission to the magistrate.

We were saddened that such a young man would treat a young woman in such a way, however we were gratified that Cindy instructed that the relationship was over, she never wanted to see Alan again, she had re-enrolled in school, was doing well, and that she would never tolerate such abuse again.

Alan had a private lawyer who told police Cindy did not want the order. Police then said they would seek only a six-month order. The lawyer said that Alan would consent to the FVIO, but only for a period of three months. That lawyer actually wrote in their submission that Cindy did not want the order. We were alarmed that police might take the version of Cindy's wishes from Alan's lawyer, rather than from us. We made submissions to the court asking for the maximum length of FVIO due to the seriousness of the abuse.

We told the court and police that Cindy was actually supportive of the full FVIO, for the maximum time frame (12 months is the maximum the Children's Court can order).

We were pleased that court granted a 12-month FVIO, and also that we were able to be the voice for a young person who otherwise may have had none.

Assertive Outreach

Rooming Houses

Challenges & Achievements

Despite a challenging year with sustained periods of lockdowns and the COVID virus affecting engagement opportunities with residents, PCLC was able to find creative ways to maintain engagement through a variety of means including the delivery of health packs, PCLC service information, phone calls and socially distanced meetings.

PCLC made a written submission to the Office of the Commissioner for Residential Tenancies as part of the Rooming House Lived Experience Project. Along with the submission process, there were opportunities for residents to give testimony about their experience, current conditions and suggestions for improvement. The PCLC Rooming House Outreach team supported six residents to attend the hearings and offered support throughout the process. The RHOP also supported rooming House residents to participate in the ABS Census.

A PCLC lawyer joined the outreach program giving the program the ability to respond immediately to legal issues. Having this contact with a lawyer has assisted greatly in building rapport and trust between rooming house residents and PCLC.

The RHOP outreach team continued to partner outreach visits with other organisations such as Star Health, Bolton Clarke Homeless Persons Program, Port Phillip Community Group and Access Health.

Problem types

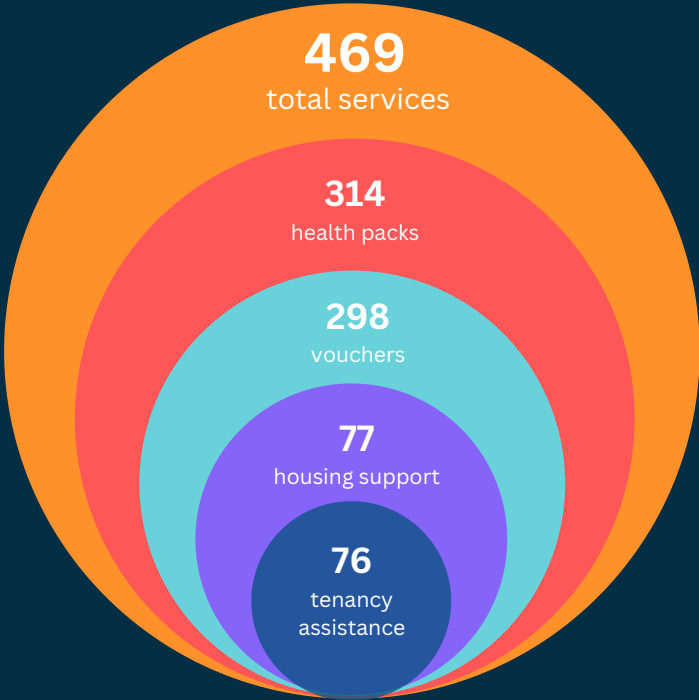
- Advice & Casework
- Information & Referral
- Rooming House Visits
- Support Services

Services provided

- Infringements
- Criminal Offences
- Repairs
- Rental Arrears
- Rooming House Standards
- Notices to Vacate

Our impact

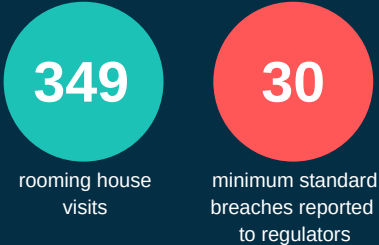
Assertive Outreach
Rooming Houses



Housing health hazard

RHOP visited a registered rooming house in the Melbourne's South East where upon no answer at the door, the team called out through the back gate in the hope that someone would hear them. They heard an answer and were invited around the back of the property. Upon entering the rear of the property they found a man in his 60's, who due to poor health could not get out of this bed. His room door lock was broken and the glass in his room's external window was smashed leaving large and dangerous shards hanging. The resident was subject to the cold weather as he could not close the door properly or prevent the weather from entering through the empty window frame. This dire situation further exacerbated his poor health.

RHOP provided Fred with a warm blanket, fresh sheets, towel and a health pack, as well as arranging for a community nurse from the Homelessness person's Program to visit Fred. The nurse was able to get Fred hospitalized. A few weeks later upon his discharge, he had moved into secure, supported residential accommodation. The RHOP team reported the numerous breaches of minimum standards to the local council and Consumer Affairs Victoria. Council took action and the property has ceased to operate as a rooming house.



Rooming house horror

Lucas is 34 years of age and continues to have limited options for housing other than living in rooming houses, registered and unregistered. Lucas had been living in an unregistered rooming house in for a period of 4 months and previously resided in an unregistered rooming house in another local government area.

When PCLC RHOP first met Lucas he was experiencing ongoing harassment and intimidation from the Rooming House Operator (RHO) requesting he vacate the premises prior to a scheduled inspection by local council. The RHO threatened to and followed through with disconnecting the power supply at the premises.

The RHO offered Lucas alternative accommodation in another unregistered rooming house. Unfortunately what the RHO described and what Lucas discovered differed significantly. The premises were in substantial disrepair including no locks on room doors and damaged windows.

During this time PCLC Rooming House Outreach continued to visit and follow up with phone calls to Lucas offering timely tenancy advice, connecting Lucas to PCLC TAAP services and linking him to a local housing agency for assistance with rental payments. Most importantly, alternative accommodation was found in a registered, fully compliant rooming house in the same local government area.

Regulators have been informed by PCLC RHOP about multiple unregistered premises being run by the above registered rooming house operator. Local Government Environmental Health Officers continue to monitor the operator with what appears to be a pattern of non-compliance and high risk impacting on vulnerable and disadvantaged homeless persons in our community.



Housing

Challenges & Achievements

The demand for PCLC's Tenancy and Advocacy Program (TAAP) continued to be high over the past year. Private renters, rooming house residents and caravan park residents required advice and extensive assistance amid the transition to the Residential Tenancies Amendments Act 2018 and the commencement of the new Residential Tenancies Federal Jurisdiction at Magistrates' Court.

PCLC gradually resumed pre-COVID service delivery from late 2021, with renters having a choice of in-person or telephone services. TAAP also continued to triage clients with its intake and response model, thus enabling the provision of tailored tenancy services delivered by experienced tenant advocates and lawyers.

PCLC continued to see a surge in legal action taken against rental providers over repairs. There were also a number of renters fleeing family violence and presenting with a range of significantly complex issues requiring extensive casework. With the removal of the emergency moratorium prohibiting rental increases and a shortage of rental accommodation, many renters faced demands for increased rent in circumstances where they were left with limited bargaining power.

These market forces, which often conspired to further disadvantage our clients, underscored the importance of PCLC's policy and law reform work in this area during the last year. PCLC gave voice to the complex difficulties faced by renters by making submissions to the Social Housing Regulatory Review, and by advocating for greater legal protections for community housing residents.

Problem types

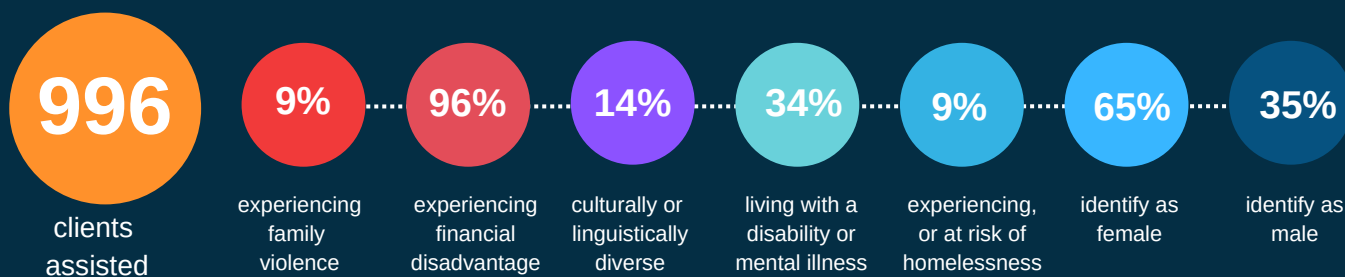
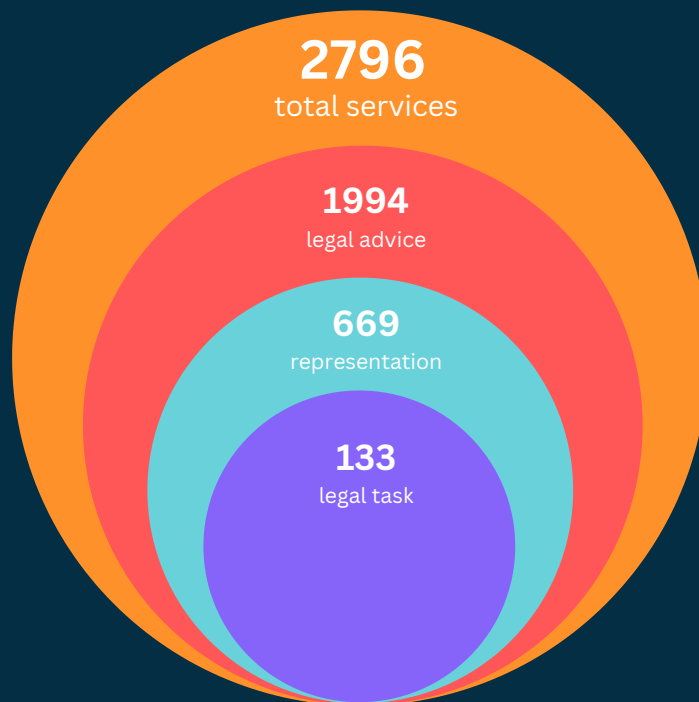
- Urgent repairs
- Bond disputes
- Breach of duty notice
- Possession orders
- Compensation claims
- Lease breaks and rent arrears
- Minimum standards

Services provided

- Information and advice
- Intake, assessment and response
- Negotiation
- Representation at VCAT
- Rooming House visits

Our impact

Housing



Landlord serves compensation claim over repairs

Michaela was a single mother with three severely autistic children. There had been major water damage to the rented property 12 months prior to the tenancy terminating. The rental provider tried to fix the leak himself, which led to him cutting off water supplies to parts of the property and he never repaired the water damage inside the property. This caused a health and safety risk to Michaela and her children. Michaela was later served with a bond and compensation claim against her by her rental provider.

PCLC unsuccessfully requested the rental provider to withdraw their claim and to refund the bond to Michaela in full. PCLC then urgently drafted a comprehensive counter claim due to the condition of the property. Upon receipt of copy of Michaela's counter-claim, the rental provider immediately withdrew his application and instructed his property manager to arrange for the full bond to be transferred back to Michaela. Michaela was extremely happy with this outcome and also withdrew her counter claim. The renter was clearly unable to advocate for herself and given her state at the time, it is unlikely she could have proceeded to VCAT without PCLC's assistance.

Survivor of family violence avoids homelessness

River was a young mother of three dependent children and was also a victim of family violence perpetrated by her former partner. She had been renting her premises since 2015, had limited family support and was solely relying on Centrelink payments. River was served with a Notice To Vacate for alleged successive breaches under s91ZP of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 concerning minor property damage. River was also served with two prior breach notices alleging damage to the property under s61. River and her three children faced the possibility of homelessness.

PCLC advised River about her rights and responsibilities and also appeared for her at her VCAT teleconference hearing. VCAT, on being satisfied with our submissions, agreed that the NTV failed to comply with the s91ZZO Form of Notice and stuck out the rental provider's application. River and her children were able to remain at the property.

Fines & Transport Law

Challenges & Achievements

In the past 12 months, PCLC has continued to work hard for improvements to Victoria's infringements system and to protect our more-vulnerable members of the community.

The issuing of infringements by police and health agencies continued to be a key feature of the government's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2021/22. The huge number of infringements issued and the high penalty amounts was widely reported in the media.

PCLC, together with other CLCs and community groups, successfully advocated for the introduction of the COVID-19 fine concession scheme. The scheme which came into effect on 30 August 2022, allows concession card holders and people applying for or holding a protection-related visas to apply for concession amounts for some COVID 19 fines.

Also, in response to lobbying from the CLC community, Parliament has now passed legislation allowing toll road operators to withdraw or 'call back' toll fines that have been registered with Fines Victoria in cases where the person is experiencing financial hardship. At this stage, it is unclear exactly how the scheme will work but PCLC remains hopeful that this will lead to better outcomes for people already struggling to manage the increased costs of living.

In 2021/22, PCLC fines clinic workers assisted approximately 70 clients in revoking over \$872,000 in outstanding fines (an average of over \$12,500 per client). Approximately 70% of the revocations related to successful Family Violence Scheme applications and more than 25% for people affected by special circumstances such as mental illness, homelessness and drug or alcohol addiction. PCLC supported changes to Fines Victoria's guidelines in assessing Special Circumstances applications which has made it easier for people to seek revocation of their outstanding fines.

Problem type

- Infringements
- Traffic fines
- Traffic offences
- Vehicle impoundments

Services provided

- Legal advice
- Assistance with applications to Fines Victoria
- Work Development Permit Scheme Project
- Court representation

Work & Development Permit Project

Our Work & Development Permit Scheme (WDP) Project-Worker continued to work closely with Health and Community Services to raise awareness of this important initiative and grow the number of accredited sponsors. Since 2019, PCLC has played a key role in seeing the number of sponsors in the Southern region increase from 10 to 92. PCLC continues to engage with other major health providers and expects to see further growth in sponsors in the coming year.

In the past year, PCLC's Fines Clinic has provided around 77 clients (with approximately \$600,000 of outstanding fines) with information and advice regarding the WDP Scheme. PCLC effectively 'linked' 63 of these clients with accredited WDP sponsors allowing them to undertake activities to 'work-off' their fines debt.

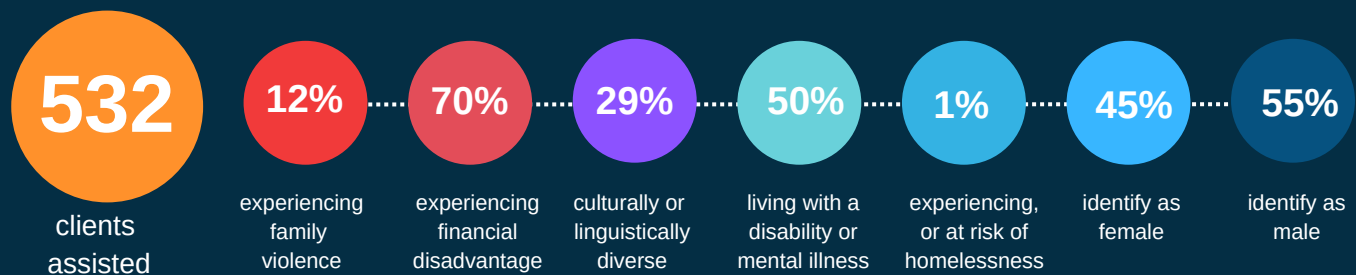
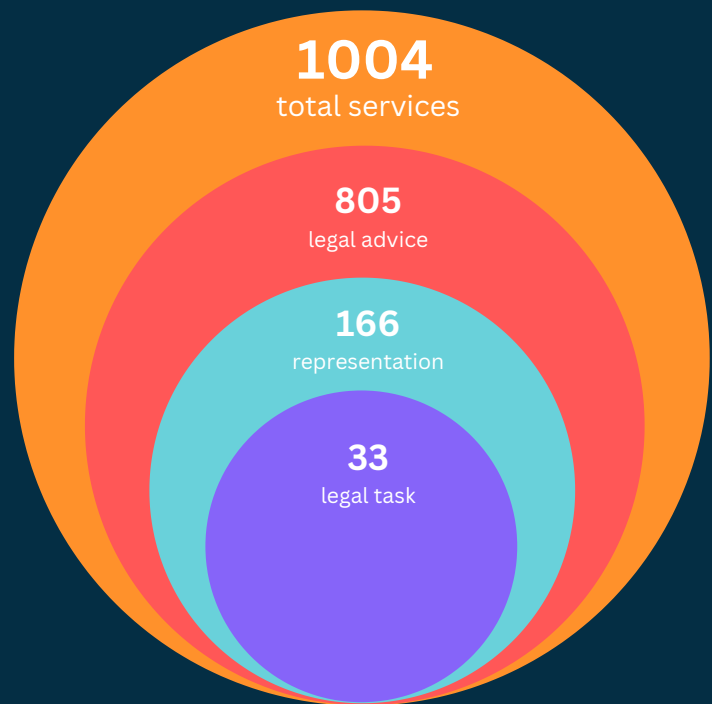
Since the WDP was introduced by government in 2017, there have been over 2,000 WDPs completed in the Southern region, allowing vulnerable people, including many PCLC clients, to 'work-off' more than \$8.5million worth of outstanding fines.

Our impact

Fines & Transport

\$872,000

total fines revoked



Abuse victim escapes fines

Libby sought PCLC's assistance when John, a friend of Libby's abusive ex-partner, borrowed her vehicle and refused to return it. Libby only agreed to loan the vehicle to John out of fear of what her ex-partner might do to her if she refused.

John used Libby's car to commit a number of crimes before crashing the vehicle, causing it to be 'written off'.

John's unauthorised use of Libby's vehicle left her with a number of outstanding infringements, including two excessive-speeding infringements. Further, because of the time that had elapsed since the offences had been incurred, Libby was unable to nominate John as the actual driver.

Despite significant legislative and regulatory barriers, PCLC negotiated with the withdrawal of various infringements by the Traffic Camera Office. We also assisted Libby with a successful application to Fines Victoria under the Family Violence Scheme provisions. This also resulted in the withdrawal of any relevant demerit points by VicRoads.

Toxic relationship incurs debts

When Shanti first came to PCLC she had over \$13,000 in outstanding fines debt. These fines were actually incurred by her abusive ex-partner, Travis, who would drive the vehicle which had registered in Shanti's name. Shanti knew that Travis was incurring fines and infringements in her name but she felt powerless to stop him. Asking him to pay the fines may put her at risk of further violence.

PCLC assisted Shanti in preparing support documents, obtaining medical certificates, obtaining a Family Violence Intervention Order and applying to Fines Victoria under the Family Violence Scheme. Ultimately, all of Shanti's outstanding fines were revoked and withdrawn.

In addition to her fines, Shanti also owed a significant civil debt to one of Melbourne's toll-road operators. With Shanti's instructions, PCLC was able to seek a waiver of the debt, again on the basis that the tolls had in fact been incurred by her ex-partner. The support materials we had helped prepare for Shanti in respect of her FVS application were instrumental in convincing the toll road operator to waive the debt.

Community Legal Education

PCLC conducts community legal education (CLE), engagement and outreach activities to increase awareness of the law and legal services and promote community access to justice.

The opportunities to conduct activities online which were brought about during COVID-19 have become a regular feature of our community education and engagement work, with many talks conducted via Facebook, webinars and other online platforms both during and after the COVID lockdowns.

This year we were also able to gradually resume in-person activities and events at a wide variety of venues for a range of audiences including older people, high school and VCAL students, and CALD communities.

Supporting Older People

PCLC's catchment is home to a significant number of senior communities and we provide support to older people through a range of programs and services.

Elder Law Forums

A highlight of our CLE and community engagement work was two elder law forums that we held on the Mornington Peninsula and in the City of Kingston. The Commissioner for Senior Victorians, Gerard Mansour, opened the first forum in Safety Beach in March 2022 by noting that for many of the participants, including himself, it was the first in-person event that he had attended since COVID-19 lockdowns had been lifted. He noted that this represented a welcome return to the kind of community engagement that is so crucial for people as they age.

Commissioner Mansour also launched PCLC's monthly elder law service at the forum. This service is held monthly at our Rosebud office and is staffed by lawyers from PCLC and Russell Kennedy Lawyers.

The second forum was held at the Moorabbin town hall in April 2022 with the same speaker line-up, including Commissioner Mansour, John Kenney from Russell Kennedy Lawyers, Meg Dalling from the ANZ Bank, and PCLC's Will Betts. Both of the forums were organised in partnership with the Mornington Shire and the City of Kingston councils.

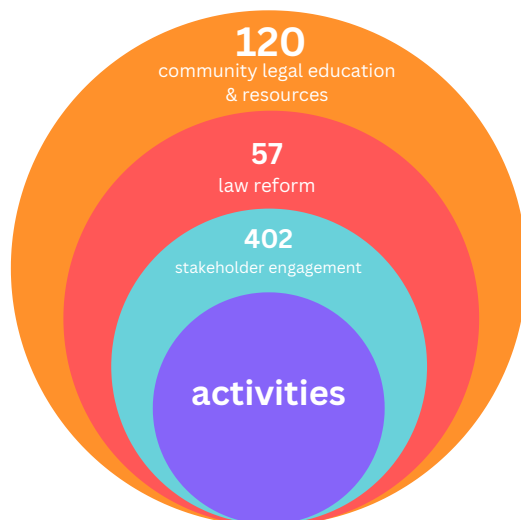
Parliamentary Inquiry into Support for Multicultural Seniors

PCLC made a submission on legal services and elder abuse to the Victorian parliamentary inquiry into support for older Victorians from migrant and refugee backgrounds. PCLC's submission included 8 recommendations, a number of which were reflected in the final report. These included recommendations on the need for more translations of legal resources relevant to older people, greater data collection on elder abuse in migrant and refugee communities, and more funding for culturally appropriate elder law/elder abuse services for CALD seniors in community legal centres.

PCLC's CEO Jackie Galloway and Community engagement, education and legal policy officer Kirsten Young gave evidence at the Legal and Social Issue Committee's public hearings.

Community Legal Education sessions for multicultural seniors

PCLC delivered a series of online and in-person information sessions with the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria targeted towards seniors in several specific cultural communities. The sessions covered a series of different areas of elder law including estate planning, powers of attorney and advance care directives. The sessions were extremely popular and will be continued into the coming year.



Strengthening Legal Pathways for CALD Communities

PCLC's catchment area is home to a significant number of multicultural and multi-faith communities. Over the past two years we have developed a number of innovative projects to deepen our connections with these communities in order to strengthen their access to justice.

Our Strengthening Legal Pathways project for CALD women was set up in early 2021 to help CALD women increase their legal literacy on family violence/family law issues through community legal education tailored to their cultural and linguistic community. In 2022 we added a new community legal education project for CALD youth on family violence and forced marriage, using theatre and story-telling to convey age-appropriate messages. The education and information sessions for both projects have been co-designed with a wide range of multicultural community partner organisations such as Wellsprings for Women, Bakhtar Cultural Organisation and Uniting's Komak program, to name a few.

These projects are enabling us to reach out and engage directly with people from migrant and refugee communities who would not normally be aware of or seek out free legal services. As a result, we have seen an increasingly large number of people from newly arrived communities contacting our bi-cultural project worker to book them in for appointments with our legal teams. More than 32 clients have been directly assisted with legal and non-legal support as a result of the project's outreach activities.

Two short animated video resources on coercive control and family violence services were also developed as part of the project with creative input from Arts students from the University of Melbourne. The videos have been translated into Arabic, Dari and Hindi.

Case Study

Following an online legal education session we had conducted, Sarah* was referred to our Community Engagement Officer through one of the administrators of a private Facebook group for women only.

Sarah spoke very little English and came from a culturally diverse background. She lived an isolated life with limited social contact. The private Facebook mothers group was one of her few social outlets. She had been subjected to family violence for a long period of time, particularly economic abuse by her former partner who controlled all of their finances.

Sarah became a single mum when her ex-partner decided to suddenly leave her. He continued his pattern of economic abuse by refusing to support Sarah and the children other than by paying the rent. This meant that Sarah did not have any source of income and at one point she could not even afford to feed herself and her children.

Sarah had applied to Centrelink for financial support but her application was refused due to mistakes with her application. Sarah had found the application process extremely difficult and confusing due to her limited English language skills. She did not know anything about her rights to child support or a property settlement from her former partner.

Our Community Engagement Officer contacted Sarah and booked her in with one of our Family Lawyers to receive advice about her family law rights and how to apply for child support. Sarah was also referred to Social Security Rights Victoria for advice on her Centrelink entitlements and as a result she was able to successfully obtain Centrelink support.

Our Community Engagement Officer also provided Sarah with non-legal support by referring her to Emergency Relief Fund providers in her local area to receive urgent food relief, as well as the Orange Door for ongoing assistance from family violence support workers.



Elder Abuse Prevention

We continued our work as a member of the Steering Committee of the Frankston Mornington Peninsula Respecting Seniors network. The network is a primary prevention initiative aimed at preventing elder abuse, and supports organisations across the legal, local government, health and community sectors to work together to raise awareness and increase capacity to address elder abuse in our region.

To mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the network conducted another social media campaign to highlight financial elder abuse. The campaign drew on the resources developed by the network the previous year for its highly successful "Inheritance Not an Entitlement Campaign".

16k's in 16 days of Activism Campaign

PCLC was actively involved in the organisation of the Frankston Mornington Peninsula Respecting Senior's network campaign to raise awareness about violence against older women during the 16 Days of Activism on violence against gender-based violence. The campaign was conducted in partnership with Zonta International, and encouraged community members to walk 16 K's in 16 Days, with organised walks taking place in Frankston, Mornington and Rosebud.

PCLC's Street Law Coffee Van attended the walks at Frankston and Rosebud to provide free coffee and legal information and to encourage walkers to take a selfie with the campaign selfie frame.

Law Week 2022

PCLC's Street Law Coffee Van team partnered with Rye Community House and Orwil Street Community House in Frankston to conduct legal health checks and to provide legal information and advice sessions as part of Victorian Law Week in May 2022.





Our volunteers

PCLC recognises that the past 12 months have been another tough period for our volunteer program, however we managed to resume our volunteer services in February 2022. We also enhanced our systems to streamline our intake process and maintain the highest standards of legal assistance.

We extend our gratitude for their ongoing commitment and support.

Lawyers

Matthew Andrews
Anna Araneta
Katherine Awad
Veronica Bar
Kristen Beagley
Helen Betros
Samuel Bracher
Emily Cain
Salima Catherine
George Chabvonga
Richard Chapman
Damien Christmas
Tianna De Silva
Michael Denison
Despina Djumas
Amelia Edwards
Steven Eley
Sue Ellison-Whyte
George Erlichster
Marcus Frajman
Loredana Giarrusso
Christopher Hill
Vinu Kumar
Elizabeth Lee
Joshua Levenda-Freeman
Stephanie Mahon
Hannah Malewska
Alex Marcou
Luke Martin
Taylor Maskew
Laura McDonnell
Mary Nasser
Louise Naylor
Thierry Pascal
Villy Raki
Trish Samson
Lily Sarkar
Thirumalai Selvi Shanmugam
Joel Silver
Nicholas Smith
Angelica Suarez
Jacqueline Van Dort
Claire Williams
Maria Zambrano

Paralegals

Laili Aladin
Tayla Archard
Georgia Arranga
Faith Brack
Laura Buckley
Nathan Chau
Holly Cunningham
Olivia De Rozairo
Aija Dowling
Jay Fergus
Misha Gillett
Anna Grage
Nadeera Gunawardena
Ines Hage-Nebyl
Emma Higgins
Nicola Hughes
Minoli Jayamaha
Lauren Kavanagh
Alice Land
Ruby Leonard
Justin Leung
Chaniece Lewis
Danielle McCartin
Emma Morgan
Benjamin Needleman
Barbara Padfield
David Pascal
Janet Power
Rosemary Rawlings
Aaron Rielly
Mikaela Rimbaldo
Hayden Silver
Nathan Tai
Jessica Toomey
Karolina Wlodarczak
Gabriela Zanin

Practical Legal Trainee

Rachael Adkins
Kathryn Ashe

Field Placements

Akram Ali
Matthew Comerford
James Moloney
Hannah Mowat
Laurence Panozzo
Zoe Miette Waters

Life Members

Congratulations to our 2021 Life Member Award recipients

They have all had a significant and positive impact on the Centre's mission and continual development with their governance, mentoring and legal support roles.

With a combined service record of in excess of 50 years, their contribution to PCLC has been outstanding.



Chris Gallagher

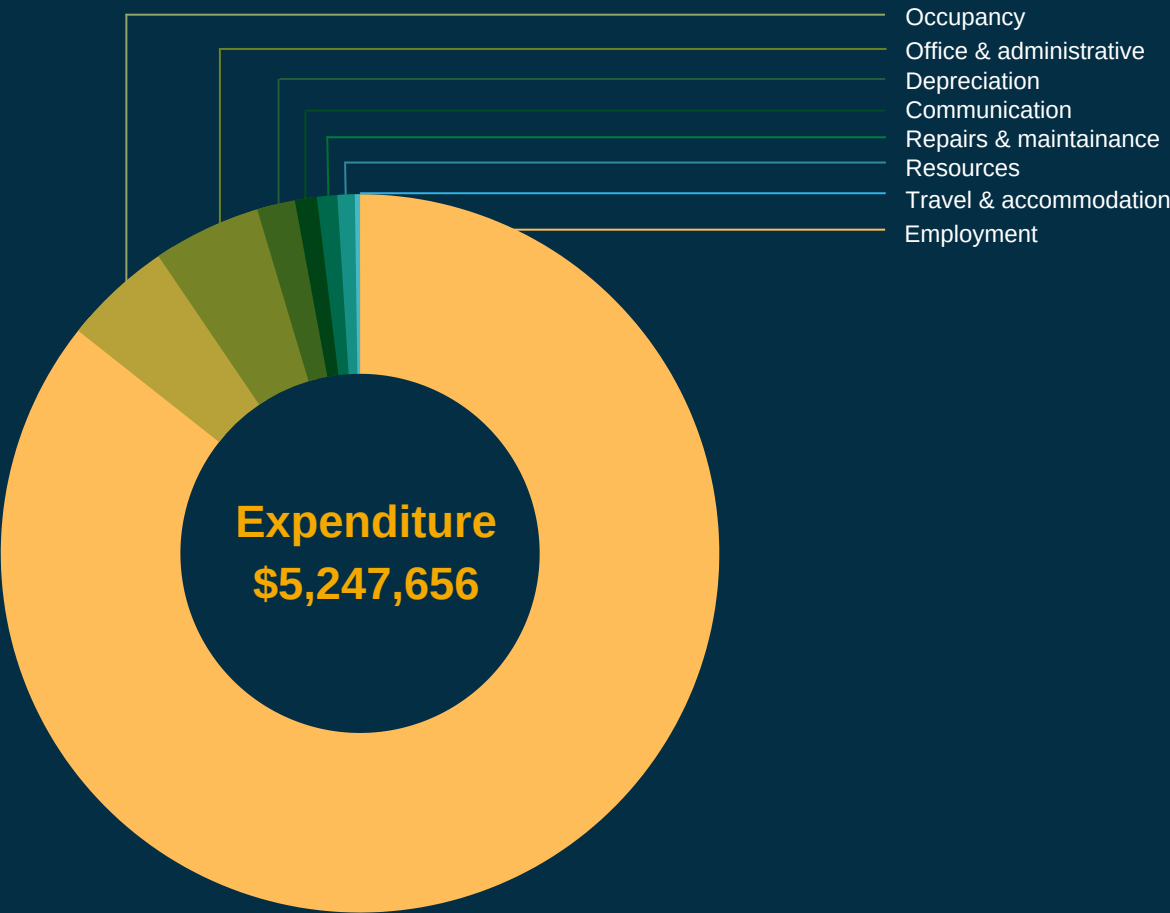
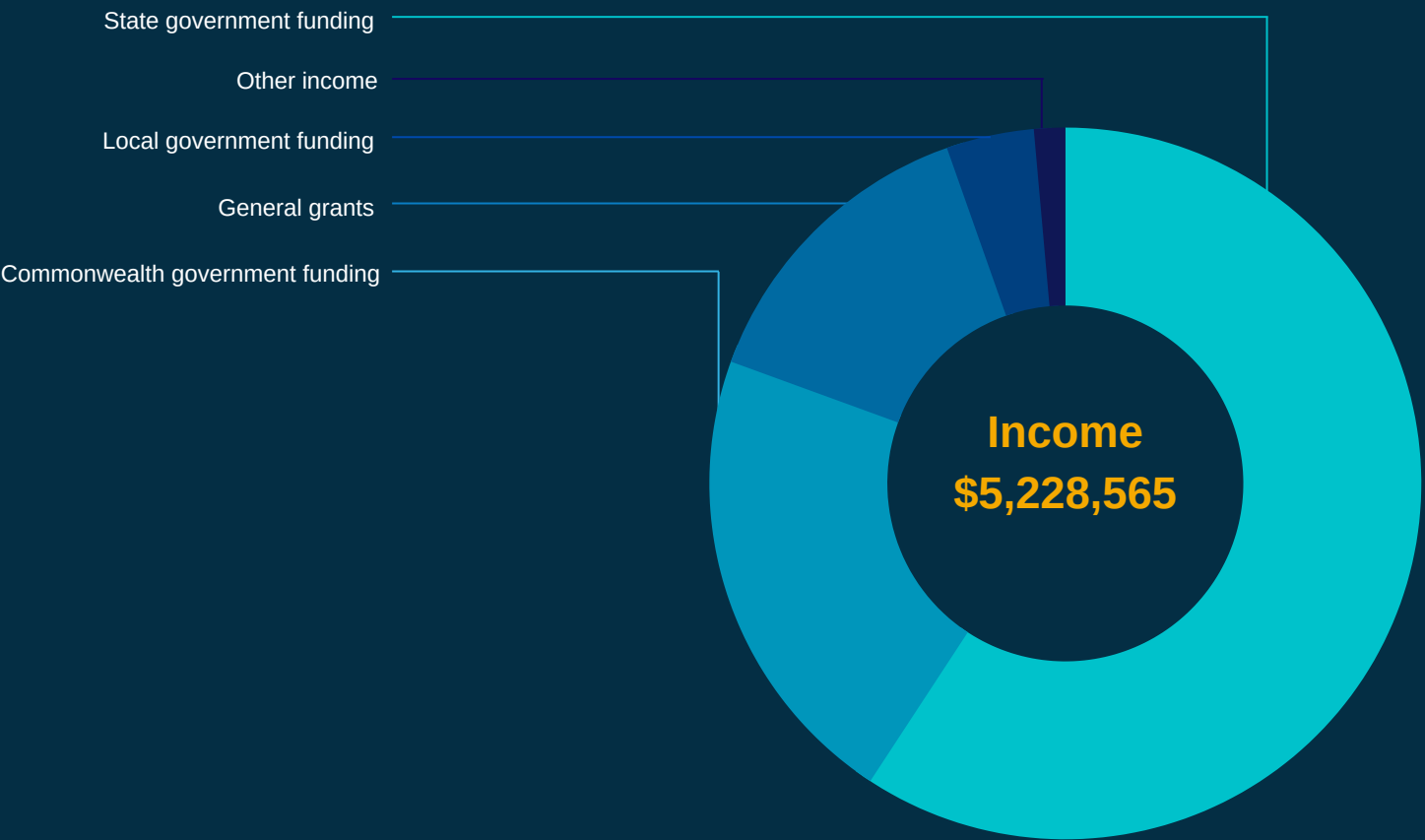


Lance Guymer



Victoria Campbell

Financials



Financials

Comprehensive Income

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2022

CONTINUING OPERATIONS		2022	2021
Income			
Grant funding	2	5,154,642	4,848,081
Other income	3	73,923	187,217
		5,228,565	5,035,298
Expenses			
Communication expenses		(51,736)	(46,087)
Depreciation expenses		(89,606)	(123,338)
Employment expenses		(4,481,158)	(4,226,709)
Finance expenses		(15,177)	(11,618)
Occupancy expenses		(255,134)	(253,393)
Office & administrative expenses		(254,423)	(297,783)
Repairs & maintenance expenses		(47,504)	(59,428)
Resources expenses		(40,808)	(50,099)
Travel & accommodation expenses		(12,110)	(15,651)
		(5,247,656)	(5,084,106)
NET PROFIT		(19,091)	(48,808)
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		(19,091)	(48,808)

Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2022

		2022	2021
Current Assets			
Cash at bank and on hand	11a	1,515,453	1,254,715
Receivables		74,473	-
Investments - term deposit		1,000,000	1,000,000
Other assets	4	21,731	39,667
Total current assets		2,611,657	2,294,382
Non - Current Assets			
Fixed assets	5	74,644	153,940
Total non current assets		74,644	153,940
TOTAL ASSETS		2,686,301	2,448,322
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	6	153,691	130,408
Payroll liabilities	7	216,400	221,647
Grants in advance	8	351,579	147,348
Employee provisions	9	640,196	609,736
VLA unused funds	12	422,061	441,265
Total current liabilities		1,783,927	1,550,404
Non - Current Liabilities			
Employee provisions	9	72,464	48,917
Total non current liabilities		72,464	48,917
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,856,391	1,599,321
NET ASSETS		829,910	849,001
Equity			
Retained Earnings		829,910	849,001
TOTAL EQUITY		829,910	849,001

Our relationships

PCLC engages extensively within our local community, strengthening our connection with service partners to improve legal outcomes within a collaborative service response model.

We also engage in a broad range of initiatives and partnerships with the legal assistance sector and government to increase understanding of community legal need and improve access to justice for clients and communities.

Community relationships

- Arab Australia Ladies Club
- Bakhtar Cultural Association
- Balla Balla Centre
- Bayside Peninsula Integrated Family Violence Partnership
- Botanic Ridge Community Centre;
- Bunjilwarra Koorie Youth Healing Centre
- Cardinia Shire Youth Network
- Casey Nth Services Network
- Casey Cardinia CLD Network
- Casey/Cardinia Homelessness Network
- Casey Relief & Recovery Network
- City of Casey Youth Network
- Community Workers in Cardinia Shire (CWICS) Network
- Connect Health & Community
- Cranbourne & District Community Services Group
- Cranbourne Secondary College
- Cranbourne West Community Hub
- Crib Point Community Centre
- David Scott School
- Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- Dromana Community House
- Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
- Fountain Gate Secondary School
- Fountain Gate Primary School
- Frankston Charitable Fund Committee
- Frankston City Strategic Homelessness Alliance
- Frankston Community Support
- Frankston Homelessness Network
- Frankston Emergency Relief Providers Network
- Frankston Mornington Peninsula Family Violence Network
- Frankston Mornington Peninsula Respecting Seniors Network
- Frankston Zero
- Glen Eira Community Group Committee
- Glen Eira Rooming House Working Group
- Glen Eira Community Safety Committee
- Greater Dandenong Youth Network
- Hampton Park Library
- Hampton Park Secondary College
- Health Justice Australia
- Kananook Community Trust
- Living Free Steering Committee
- Manna Gum Community Centre
- Mayone-Bulluk Family and Community Centre Friendship Café
- Melbourne Metropolitan Rooming House Group
- Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre
- Moira Youth Services
- Mornington Community Support Second Bite Program
- Mornington Peninsula Housing Network
- Mornington Peninsula Combined Service Provider Network
- Nairn Marr Djambana Gathering Place
- Orwill Street Community House
- Peninsula Health (Elder Abuse Liaison)
- Port Phillip Homeless Network
- RAD-FMP Steering Committee
- Rye Community House
- Seawinds Community Hub
- Social Engine
- Somerville Community House
- South East Community Links
- South East Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN)
- Southern Migrant Resource Centre
- Southern Peninsula Laundry & Shower Program (SPLaSh)
- TaskForce Community Agency
- The Orange Door
- Uniting Church Hampton Park
- Uniting Komak Program
- Wallaroo Community House
- WASEMA Friendship Cafes
- Wellsprings for Women
- Westall Community Hub Service Providers Network
- Westernport Community Support
- Willum Warrain Gathering Place
- Whitelion;
- Womens Housing Ltd
- Youth Support & Advocacy Service
- VicPol Financial Elder Abuse Trial Steering Committee
- Zonta International

Regional

- ANZ Bank Customer Vulnerability Team
- Federal Circuit Court Users Group
- Southern Metropolitan Partnership
- South East Region CLE & Community Development Network
- SFVC Court Users Group (Frankston & Moorabbin)
- SFVC Direct Service Providers
- University of Melbourne
- Victorian Multicultural Commission
- VLA Communities of Practice

State

- Access to Justice/Jurisdictional Planning Working Group
- Federation Family Violence Working Group
- FCLC Community Development and CLE Working Group
- Infringements Working Group
- Management Committee of Federation of CLCs
- Principal Lawyers' Network
- Residential Tenancies Commissioner Stakeholder Reference Group
- Smart Justice for Youth Working Group
- Tenancy Coordination Group
- Tenancy Working Group
- VCAT Residential Tenancies Users Group
- Victorian Family Law Pathways Network

Thank you

It is only through the support of our committed network of supporters and funders that PCLC continues to improve access to justice and deliver just outcomes for our vulnerable community members and communities. Their support is critical to our success. Our deepest thanks to you all.

Pro Bono Partners

Our pro bono partnership with **Russell Kennedy Lawyers** continues to strengthen our organisational capacity and practice capabilities to provide free legal services to the most in need. This past year Russell Kennedy Lawyers have provided legal mentoring, professional development, elder law clinic, PCLC's disbursement fund, governance, and business support. Special thanks to Emma Dunlevie, Principal and John Corcoran AM, Principal and the entire Russell Kennedy team.

Legal Community

Our Legal Community frequently provides PCLC's clients with services on a pro bono basis or with significantly reduced fee briefs. PCLC highly values this support along with specialist mentoring, firm contribution to our volunteer program and training and resources to enhance our practice and the services we provide to vulnerable community members.

Legal Mentors

Gamini Jayasinghe - Easton Legal
Ananda Jayasinghe - Easton Legal
Andrew Burnett - Svensons List
Suzanne Bettink - Victoria Legal Aid

Legal Counsel

Marie Wilkening-LeBrun - Howells List
Jason Korke - Svensons List
Anne-Louise Juneja - Svensons List

Legal Firms

Easton Legal
Justice Crew Legal Services
Maurice Blackburn
MDL Law
Southern Legal
Victoria Legal Aid
Youth Law

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.

Funders

Government

- Australian Government Attorney Generals Department
- State Government Victoria, Department of Justice and Regulation
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- City of Glen Eira
- City of Casey
- Frankston City Council
- City of Kingston
- Mornington Peninsula Shire

Philanthropy / Trusts

- Australian Communities Foundation
- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
- The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
- Slater and Gordon
- StreetSmart Australia
- Taskforce Community Agency
- The William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Trust
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victorian Legal Services Board
- Youth Support & Advocacy Service (YSAS)

Universities

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

Support Services

PCLC Rooming House & StreetLaw Outreach Programs were boosted this past year with collaborative visits, material aid and additional funding to support vulnerable community members. With this extra support, the Programs was able to deliver relief vouchers and health care packages to clients impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Star Health
- Bolton Clarke Homeless Persons Program
- Port Phillip Community Group
- Access Health & Community
- City of Casey Quick Response Grant
- StreetSmart Australia
- PCLC Welfare Fund
- Social Engine



441 Nepean Highway, Frankston Vic 3199
e pclc@pclc.org.au t 03 9783 3600 f 03 9770 5200

Branches

82 Brady Road, Bentleigh East 3165
65 Berwick-Cranbourne Road, Cranbourne East 3977
1375 Point Nepean Road, Rosebud 3939

Reg A8T
ABN 23591244622



www.pclc.org.au

