

2024

Annual Impact Report



Peninsula
Community
Legal Centre



Acknowledgement of Country

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

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Chairperson's Message

It is with gratitude that I present the 2024 Annual Report for Peninsula Community Legal Centre (PCLC). This past year has been marked by significant achievements, resilience, and a deepened commitment to serving our community. As we reflect on the year gone by, we also look forward to the opportunities ahead with ongoing determination.

At PCLC, our mission has always been to provide access to justice for those who need it most. In 2024, we consolidated our services in response to the growing demand for legal assistance across Melbourne's south-eastern communities including the Peninsula region. The rising cost of living, housing challenges, and the evolving social landscape have continued to place pressure on vulnerable individuals and families. However, through the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and stakeholders, we have been able to meet these challenges head-on.

Some of the year's highlights included:

- Our work in strengthening partnerships with all tiers of government, social service agencies, and advocacy groups, whose relationships we greatly value.
- Providing legal education to groups and individuals, empowering them with the knowledge to navigate complex and daunting legal matters.
- Organisational appetite to adopt and successfully implement technology initiatives, allowing efficient and scalable legal services for the future.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the tireless efforts of our dedicated team, led by our CEO, Jackie Galloway OAM. From our legal practitioners to our administrative team, volunteers, and board members, everyone has played an important role in ensuring the continued success of the Centre. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of them for their commitment and professionalism.

Looking ahead, we are mindful of the ongoing challenges our community faces. However, we remain steadfast in our belief that access to justice is a fundamental right. In the coming year, we will continue to advocate for systemic change, explore expansion of our outreach efforts, and enhance our capacity to serve those in need.

Management Committee

Chairperson Matthew Bolle
Vice Chairperson Paul Hodgman
Treasurer Renee Thorn
Secretary Samuel Ellemor

Members

Jodie De Gregorio
Joel Silver
Lee Stubbs



Matthew Bolle
Chairperson

Strategic Plan 2024 -2026

Purpose

We deliver social justice for our vulnerable community members, so they can live a better quality of life

Vision

A fair and just society where all people have equal access to the law

Mission

To work with community to deliver tailored legal services that support vulnerable and disadvantaged community members to address their legal needs, through working towards fairer outcomes, to advocate for fair and just laws and through working with our community to deliver preventative legal education

Values

-  **Empowerment**
fairness equity respect
-  **Integrity**
quality driven
-  **Compassion**
in it together
-  **Engagement**
being community driven
-  **Social Justice**
empowering
compassionate
relationships

Focus Goals Activities



Our Year

PCLC is very proud of its work this past year delivering community legal services across our vast and diverse communities. We have operated in what could be only described as an incredibly challenging environment, with the cost-of-living and affordable housing crises firmly embedded in our community. We saw increased levels of financial hardship, mental health issues, housing hardship, family violence and relationship breakdowns, which are all determinants of social and legal needs. We saw many community members who had not accessed legal or community services before.

Amid the relentless demand and the tensions of funding uncertainties, the team rallied to deliver a year of outstanding performance with a large volume of clients assisted, a high proportion of ongoing casework undertaken for clients, a dynamic community education program and projects that went from strength to strength.

We took the law to the community, delivering services in eighteen community and health venues as well as our office intake sessions and court-based services. We engaged with our priority client groups with assertive outreach programs such as the Street Law Coffee Van and Rooming House Outreach Program, as well as piloting new initiatives such as the School Lawyer Program.

We continued to forge strong strategic partnerships with key stakeholders in the justice, health, family violence, housing and community service sectors. These partnerships enhanced our capacity, and strengthened and developed our integrated practice and sustainable service delivery models targeting our priority group clients.

Highlighting the impact of legal policy and legislation was a key focus this past year, with submissions lodged to Commonwealth Inquiries on the worsening rental crisis and family violence. We also collaborated with our community legal centre sector colleagues on elder abuse and youth justice. We actively participated in roundtables and working groups to address family violence, rooming houses and the impact of the housing crisis. We expanded our media work this past year, emphasising the impact of fines, evictions, rent increases and family violence on our communities in television, radio and the print media.

We were really pleased to launch our *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2024-2026*, which will guide our reconciliation vision over the next two years. We commend our Cultural, Diversity and Inclusion Group on their commitment and drive in producing a comprehensive approach to advancing our commitment to reconciliation.



We continue to review the scope of our operations and explore new ways to enhance and improve our services. We continually assess the quality and value of our work, and review and refine our data to ensure we are meeting our objectives and targeting our services to those most in need.

We set an ambitious quality improvement action plan incorporating the development of new child safe standards and a new comprehensive communication strategy. We also enhanced our performance management with further development of our human resource software program, ELMO. Our practice team actively participated in local and state community of practice initiatives to develop, discuss and support strategies for quality practice.

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

We offer our heartfelt thanks to our wonderful management team, staff and volunteers for their passion, commitment and resilience throughout the challenges of the year.



Jackie Galloway
Chief Executive Officer

Service Delivery 2023-2024



11,845

total legal services

6,248

total clients assisted

7,384

legal advices

2,834

duty lawyer

1,627

ongoing cases

42%

experiencing
family violence

70%

experiencing
financial disadvantage

13%

experiencing or at risk
of homelessness

28%

living with a disability or
mental illness

24%

culturally or
linguistically diverse

66%

identify
as female

33%

identify as
male

1%

other
gender

Client Comments



I just wanted to say thank you from me and my family for all your help during our stressful ordeal. We are glad it was all settled with all parties walking away happy.



I could not have asked for a better outcome, and I feel like a heavy lump of concrete has been taken off my chest. You are the best of the best. Thank you endlessly.



It has taken a massive weight off my shoulders, but I just wanted to say thank you so much for seeing me yesterday. You made me feel so much better when I walked out of your office.



Thank you for everything. Having you by my side throughout this entire ordeal is probably the only reason I was able to get through it because you made me feel like I wasn't alone and I don't think I could of done it by myself and I will be forever grateful for the kindness and care you showed me.



It has been a long traumatic process for me and having you at the end get it over the line gave me great relief and closure. I am very grateful to all the services and the staff of PCLC who have given me strength, determination and courage to continue on to completion.



Thank you for everything you've done for me. The process and support helped me a lot. It was difficult and emotional at times but it was the right decision to go ahead. I now feel validated, that someone has actually heard and believed me. That means a lot.



She guided me with the entire process including explaining the steps and the legal documentation and what I need to do every step of the way. Not only was she extending compassion with the accident; she constantly reminded me to take care of myself and not to worry about the accident as she will oversee it.



I just wanted to say thank you both so much for all your help and support today. I appreciate it immensely. I was very stressed about losing our home and with everything I have had going on, you honestly don't know how much I desperately needed to be given another opportunity to stay in our home. So, I cannot thank you both enough.



When I first met with you at my initial visit I was expecting to get a bit of advice, but much to my surprise and relief you told me that you would assist me with my case and you would try to represent me when I had to appear in court. You were extremely kind and reassuring and very professional.



Get involved

Donate

Support Peninsula Community Legal Centre by donating at www.pclc.org.au/donate

Volunteer

We gratefully utilise the commitment and skills of volunteers to extend and enhance our operations and service delivery.

Practical Legal Traineeship

Our Practical Legal Traineeship (PLT) Program helps students to develop special skills required for the legal profession

Member

Help support your local community by becoming a member of Peninsula Community Legal Centre.

Apply at www.pclc.org.au/become-a-member

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 geographic area



4 branches

Frankston, Cranbourne, Bentleigh East & Rosebud



1,650,000

catchment population



18 visiting locations

regular visits to community organisations



6 local government areas

general program



5 courts & tribunals

court representation and duty lawyer services



10 local government areas

Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program

Civil Law

The past year has been one of growth and transformation as we restructured our civil law practice to enhance our practice and to provide wrap-around support for clients with civil law issues. We welcomed the inclusion of a Senior Lawyer role to focus on our complex civil law cases and support the team with mentoring and guidance. The team enjoyed the opportunity to host Practical Legal Training (PLT) students to support their work, with the students appreciative of the occasion to tap into the expertise and wealth of knowledge that our team provides.

As our report will highlight, the demand for our services was consistently high. The civil team strived to support our vulnerable clients with a full suite of legal services including intensive casework and representation. Our data and feedback from the team confirmed that our clients were often presenting with multiple and complex civil law problems.

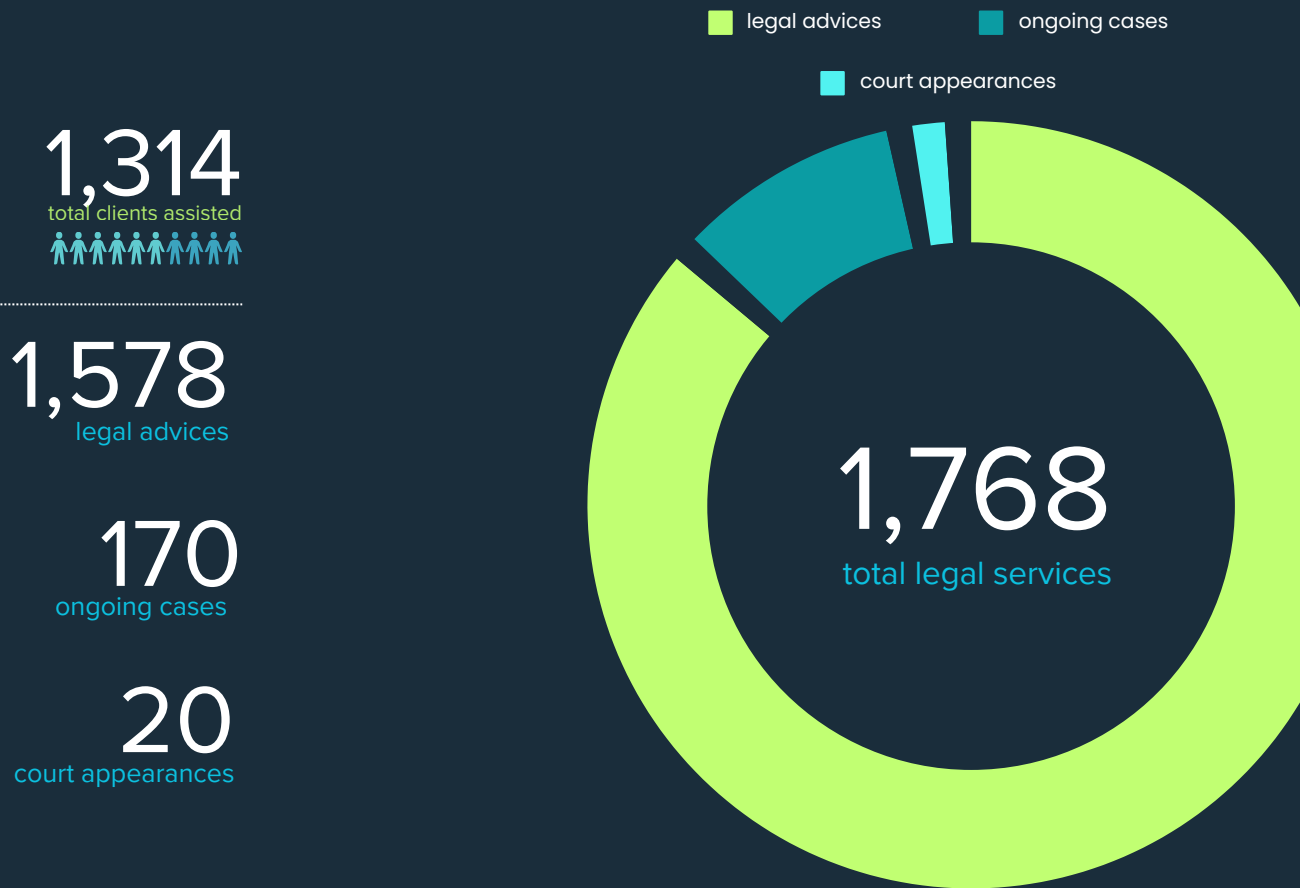
Our civil law data highlighted a steady increase in credit and debt related matters, with mortgage and cost-of-living struggles being prominent issues experienced by many households. In the last six months of the financial year, the team responded to an identified legal gap for consumer complaints with dedicated intake sessions for these matters, as well as an increased focus on victims of crime and neighbourhood dispute matters. The team settled twenty-seven debt matters, with civil debts waived to the monetary value of \$214,000. We also secured VOCAT awards on behalf of nine vulnerable clients in the sum of \$130,446. The civil team supported the Centre expanding its scope of work to cover additional areas of need, broadening our infringement work and extending the team's family law work to include divorce filings.

The team's drive to reach people who may not actively seek legal assistance was bolstered this period with a new visiting service to Mentis Assist with our Mobile Integrated Mental Health Service (MIMHS), and team members participating in our Street Law visits.

PCLC continues to support vulnerable young people with complex needs for legal support and assistance as part of our partnership with Youth Support + Advocacy Service (YSAS). Over the past year, PCLC also commenced a new School Lawyer Program at Cranbourne Secondary School to provide free legal advice and community legal education to students. PCLC continues to strive for systemic change and this new program enables us to further enhance our preventative work with young people so that their legal problems are identified and managed earlier. PCLC is appreciative of the support from the Cranbourne Secondary College.

PCLC's Migration Law Clinic targets culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients who have applied for or who hold a temporary visa, presenting with family violence issues. The clinic is undertaken in collaboration with our pro bono partners, FCG Legal. We were pleased to expand this work to create an online tool that aids community partners and support workers to help their clients navigate the family violence exemption provisions in Australian's Migration Framework. The team worked with Legal Tech Helper to develop the *Guide to Safety* tool, funded by the Victoria Law Foundation and available on our website.

“It has been such a pleasure working with you and your team, you all do such an amazing job! All of this wouldn't be possible without your inspirational work ethic at the helm” said Sherene Ozyyurek, FCG Legal.



Addressing the impact of trauma

Chandni was sexually assaulted as a child in the 1970s. She kept the abuse secret for decades, until eventually disclosing it to a medical practitioner treating her for another issue. Chandni's world fell apart after the disclosure. She began having flashbacks and her mental health spiralled, which also impacted on her physical health. Chandni required intensive and expensive medical treatment for her conditions. With the gentle encouragement of her psychiatrist, Chandni finally felt able to make disclosures to police about the abuse.

When Chandni sought advice from PCLC, she did not know much about the Victims of Crime Assistance program at all. Our lawyer broke the law down for Chandni, giving her practical advice about the likelihood of success with her proposed claim, the process that would be involved, as well as being realistic about how difficult it was going to be for her mentally and emotionally.

Chandni decided to go ahead, and our lawyer took the necessary steps to liaise with police and her treating professionals as well as helping Chandni to obtain her supporting materials without delay.

Our lawyer drafted Chandni's application and lengthy written submission, and submitted them for determination by the Victims Of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT). VOCAT indicated that, on being satisfied with our submission, it was willing to award Chandni everything we had requested in her application, except for one item. Chandni was awarded payments for her psychiatrist's and counsellor's VOCAT reports, future psychiatry and counselling sessions, as well as a large reimbursement for past medical expenses relating specifically to her mental health treatment. Chandni became very emotional and cried when we relayed this news to her, as the award both acknowledged the suffering she endured for many years and provides her with crucial supports going into the future to aid her in recovery.

Family Law

Unsurprisingly, given the high rates of family violence and relationship breakdowns, the demand for PCLC's family law advice and casework was consistently high during this financial year. We represented clients on the record in many complex cases in the Federal Circuit & Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA).

PCLC's Family Violence to Family Law (FV2FL) Continuity Program, which provides legally-aided case work and representation in family law matters that also involve family violence, experienced another increase in litigation during the past financial year. We experienced an increase in the number of clients seeking assistance after they had already been served with court proceedings initiated by the other party in the FCFCOA and were facing an imminent first return date. To assist these clients, the Program's lawyers had to submit urgent applications for legal aid and, due to time constraints, would often have to commence drafting the client's Response to Initiating Application and other court documents before the application for legal aid was approved (something private lawyers who engage in legally-aided work usually won't do). These matters were also very complex, involving a range of issues including mental health issues, substance abuse, concurrent criminal matters and significant to extreme family violence. Due to the impact of their experiences and trauma, these clients often presented difficulties in obtaining instructions, in turn increasing the complexity and difficulty for the Program's lawyers. The previous increase in Interim Defended Hearings continued, with the concurrent additional documentation required for such hearings. The Program also represented clients at lawyer-assisted mediation through Victoria Legal Aid's Family Dispute Resolution Service, with the

aim of resolving family law disputes without the need for litigation, but often involving multiple mediations. Despite the continued high demand and complexity of family law matters, the Program's lawyers continued to achieve outstanding outcomes for vulnerable and often traumatised clients who could not represent themselves and who had nowhere else to obtain such representation. In many matters, the Program obtained final orders that enhanced the safety and security of clients and their children.

For clients who are ineligible for legal aid but who cannot afford a private lawyer, PCLC's generalist family lawyers provided legal assistance to many clients who would otherwise not obtain assistance. These included parenting matters where our generalist lawyers prepared court-ordered documents for clients, enabling the clients to raise and address issues in a way that could drastically improve their position in the proceedings. Our generalist lawyers also assisted clients in small-pool property matters and in divorce applications, which can involve complex procedural requirements that are difficult for many unrepresented clients to understand and comply with. We also represented clients at lawyer-assisted family dispute resolution sessions for parenting issues in a pilot program with Berwick Family Relationship Centre and South-East Monash Legal Service, for clients who would usually be screened out of standard family dispute resolution due to family violence allegations.

PCLC's Family Advocacy and Support Service (FASS) duty lawyers appear daily at the Dandenong registry of the FCFCOA, providing high quality family law advice and assistance to unrepresented parties who have been affected by family violence.

The FASS duty lawyers' role can include making submissions to the Court on behalf of clients, negotiating with other parties or their lawyers to attempt to resolve issues and obtain consent orders, which not only benefits the parties but also the Court. FASS duty lawyers also assist with urgent applications for airport watch list orders to prevent potential child abduction.

Crucially, FASS duty lawyers assisted many primary carers of young children where the other party had taken the child/children without consent, preparing urgent applications for recovery orders leading to the children being returned to their primary carers.

The family law practice continued its small pool property program that focuses on assisting women who are victim-survivors of family violence to obtain family law financial settlements. Unfortunately, without assistance we know that many victim-survivors are agreeing to unfair settlements in response to family violence perpetrators trying to drag out court proceedings to maximise the impact and costs for victim-survivors. Due to current resources this program is only staffed for two days per week, yet it managed to successfully obtain financial settlements in thirteen matters during the financial year at a combined monetary value of \$1,530,995. These settlements provide our clients with a financial base to re-establish their lives. These clients could not have afforded to engage private lawyers or obtain deferred fee arrangements and they could not have self-represented. Without the assistance of PCLC's small pool property program, they would not have obtained a financial settlement at all.

In the previous financial year, the Australian Government proposed amendments to the Family Law Act and PCLC made a submission to the Consultation on the Exposure Draft – Family Law Amendment Bill 2023. On 6 May 2024, the amendments to the Family Law Act came into effect and PCLC's family lawyers engaged in a range of training to be ready for these substantial amendments. We have since been reviewing the initial impact of the amendments. Further, in June 2024 the House of Representatives' Standing Committee of Social and Policy Legal Affairs launched an inquiry into Family Violence Orders requesting written submissions and PCLC's family lawyers contributed to the drafting of a submission from PCLC.

The demand for family law casework is beyond what PCLC can currently meet, and only continues to increase with the ongoing issues of the rising cost of living, the housing crisis and the high levels of family violence in the community.

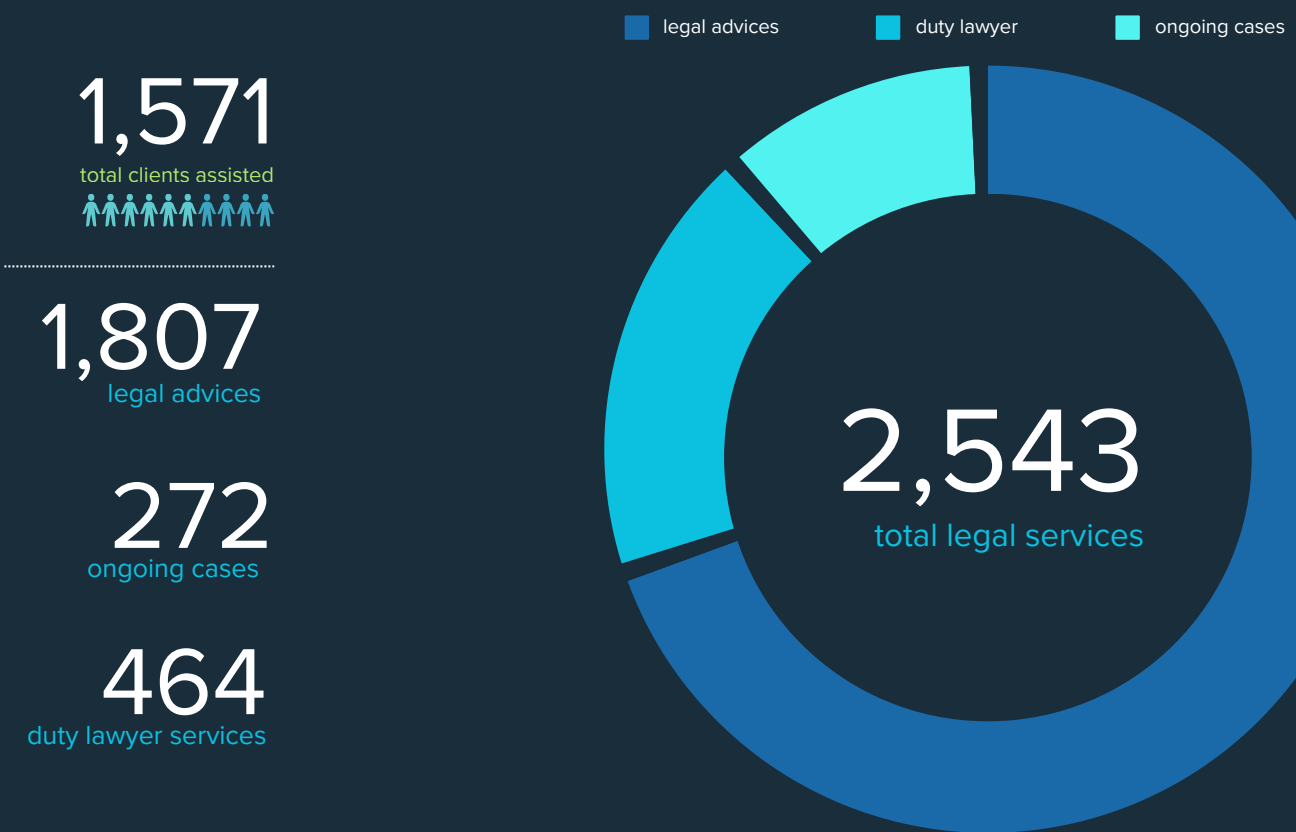


Trauma-informed assistance

Kim had been served with an Initiating Application in the FCFCOA in relation to parenting, and had an imminent first return date. The lawyer involved obtained an urgent litigation grant of legal aid to respond. The other party was under investigation by a Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT) in relation to allegations of various sexual offences against Kim. She had to be careful to comply with her disclosure obligations in her affidavit without prejudicing the Police investigation, which was at the arrest phase. This involved our lawyer having discussions with various Police departments. The other party was eventually charged but was released on bail. Kim was under extreme fear for some time until the other party was remanded in custody due to drug and weapons charges and further family violence offences.

The matter continued with the other party appearing from prison and we represented Kim to obtain final orders, including that she has sole parental responsibility for the children and that the other party spend no time with the children. Kim would not have been able to pay for a private lawyer or obtain a deferred fee arrangement.





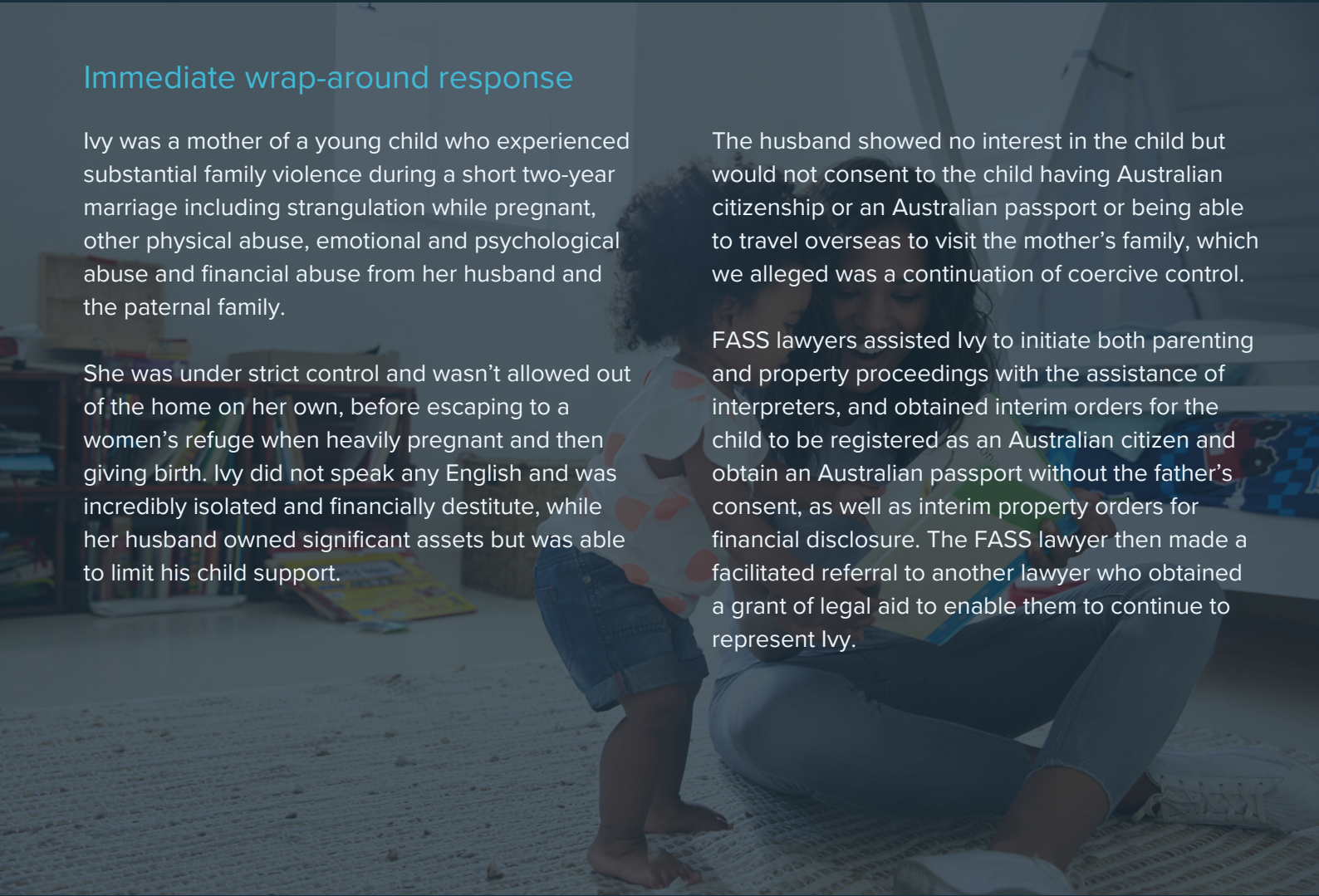
Immediate wrap-around response

Ivy was a mother of a young child who experienced substantial family violence during a short two-year marriage including strangulation while pregnant, other physical abuse, emotional and psychological abuse and financial abuse from her husband and the paternal family.

She was under strict control and wasn't allowed out of the home on her own, before escaping to a women's refuge when heavily pregnant and then giving birth. Ivy did not speak any English and was incredibly isolated and financially destitute, while her husband owned significant assets but was able to limit his child support.

The husband showed no interest in the child but would not consent to the child having Australian citizenship or an Australian passport or being able to travel overseas to visit the mother's family, which we alleged was a continuation of coercive control.

FASS lawyers assisted Ivy to initiate both parenting and property proceedings with the assistance of interpreters, and obtained interim orders for the child to be registered as an Australian citizen and obtain an Australian passport without the father's consent, as well as interim property orders for financial disclosure. The FASS lawyer then made a facilitated referral to another lawyer who obtained a grant of legal aid to enable them to continue to represent Ivy.



Family Violence

Our organisational goals to improve access to justice have never been more critical than in our family violence work, as we grapple with the high rates of Police-reported family violence incidents in our vast catchment region. This year 46% of all client's presenting to PCLC for legal assistance reported experiencing family violence.

The Family Violence Team provides daily duty lawyer services at the Frankston and Moorabbin Specialist Family Violence Courts. Our aim is to ensure that the voices of vulnerable victim-survivors are heard, and that they receive comprehensive legal assistance to help them navigate their family violence proceedings. We experienced a high demand for our services at the Courts and well exceeded our targets again this financial year. Due to the high volume of referrals received, a key challenge has been our ability to accept all duty lawyer referrals.

PCLC continued to offer pre-Court advice to help clients understand their rights and make informed decisions before their hearings, followed by representation in Court. We are committed to working with the legal assistance sector on early intervention to maximise access for those experiencing family violence, reduction of trauma and stress as well as minimising conflict of interest issues. This collegiate and best practice approach has been extended to the Orange Door Pilot Project.

In addition, our team provides intake services at various locations, including the Orange Door, Maternal Child & Health Centres, and Wellsprings for Women's Clinic, to strengthen and enhance our response to family violence.

Despite the pressures of our duty lawyer roles and intake work, we continue to handle complex cases where clients would be at a significant disadvantage and potentially at increased risk of harm if self-represented. We offer ongoing assistance, and make in-house referrals where appropriate to ensure comprehensive support is provided to the clients, including with family law issues. Recently, three of our paralegals transitioned to family violence lawyer roles, enhancing our capacity to serve the community.

Many of PCLC's clients report an escalation of family violence during separation and family law proceedings. In our experience, many perpetrators use the legal system itself to continue and increase the abuse of the partner and children, often over many years, as an ongoing method of coercive control. The escalation of risk is compounded by the fragmentation of the federal and state jurisdictions, the nature of the adversarial legal system itself, and other systemic barriers, including the lack of sufficient affordable or free legal services to assist victim-survivors of violence to navigate their way through the complexities of the fragmented legal system. These combined factors constitute a major barrier to their safety and to achieving a just and fair outcome.

PCLC continues to be alarmed at the number of women who have been misidentified as the perpetrators of family violence. We continue to achieve notable outcomes, such as having many cross-applications for family violence intervention orders struck out where perpetrators lodge their own applications to retaliate and/or continue coercive control. We also successfully reunited children with their primary carer in another matter, as well as having children listed on Family Violence Intervention Orders where they have been exposed to and impacted by the family violence.

We have also provided secondary consultations and community legal education to caseworkers at the Orange Door, Wellsprings, and Family Life, improving their understanding of the Court process and enhancing their ability to assist victim-survivors of family violence. The team worked with PCLC's Continuing Legal Education (CLE) team and Legal Tech Helper in the development of the Centre's online *Guide to Safety* tool.

We were appreciative of the ongoing support from Deakin University with legal internships to support our family violence program. The law students gain invaluable practical legal experience working under the supervision of PCLC's lawyers in the Specialist Family Violence Courts. It has been wonderful to hear the students share their overwhelmingly positive experience of completing their internship at PCLC. One of our recent students has this to say about the program:

“Thank you very much! I had an amazing experience and am incredibly grateful for the time spent with everyone at PCLC. I learnt so much and found it incredibly rewarding being able to assist in helping people who are going through difficult times...” said Nic Xerri.

PCLC rolled out our tailored “Actionstep” legal management system to our Family Violence program for direct data entry as part of our quality improvement and ongoing responsive legal services. It was a delight to witness such a smooth transition and how the team embraced and supported this vital new system, as we left the days of paper files behind us.





Lasting protection

June met with our family violence duty lawyer at the Moorabbin Justice Centre and sought to extend her final Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO), which had already been in place for 2 years to protect her from her former partner, Mark.

Mark has subjected June to significant family violence, including imprisoning her, which had incredible lasting effects.

Our duty lawyer took instructions, negotiated and also represented June in Court. They managed to successfully obtain an indefinite FVIO for June (that is, an order without an expiry date). June was very grateful to our duty lawyer service for obtaining lasting protection for her so she can heal and move forward in her life.

■ legal advices ■ duty lawyer ■ ongoing cases

1,657
total clients assisted


1,111
legal advices

128
ongoing cases

2,238
duty lawyer services

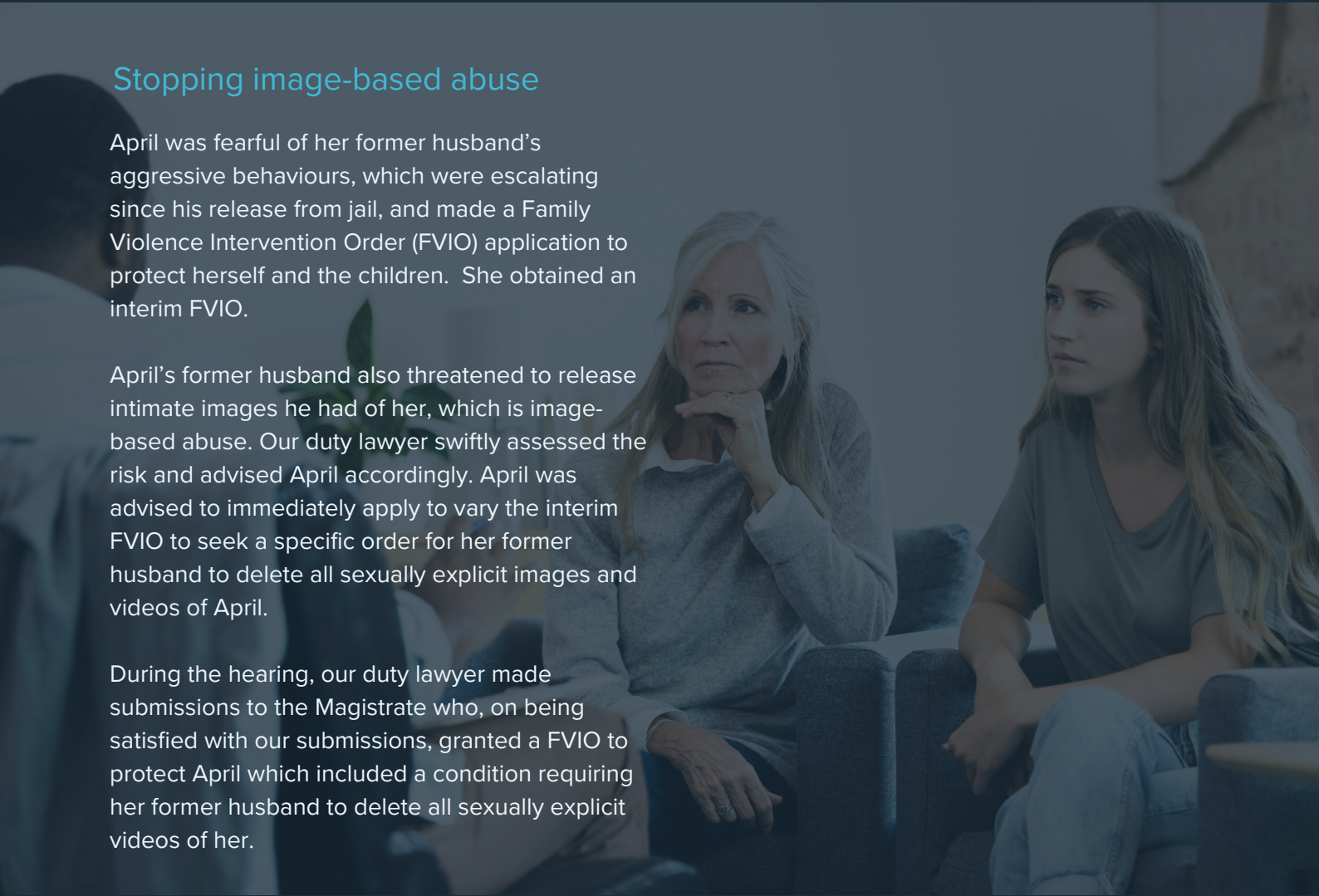


Stopping image-based abuse

April was fearful of her former husband’s aggressive behaviours, which were escalating since his release from jail, and made a Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO) application to protect herself and the children. She obtained an interim FVIO.

April’s former husband also threatened to release intimate images he had of her, which is image-based abuse. Our duty lawyer swiftly assessed the risk and advised April accordingly. April was advised to immediately apply to vary the interim FVIO to seek a specific order for her former husband to delete all sexually explicit images and videos of April.

During the hearing, our duty lawyer made submissions to the Magistrate who, on being satisfied with our submissions, granted a FVIO to protect April which included a condition requiring her former husband to delete all sexually explicit videos of her.



Criminal Law

Our criminal law practice has seen substantial development over the past year. With the promotion of a Senior Criminal Lawyer, this role has been pivotal in guiding our criminal law practice, overseeing complex cases and leading our team through summary case conferencing and contest mention hearings.

Our clients continued to face significant challenges, including economic insecurity and complex mental health issues. These factors contributed to the complexity of the legal matters the team handles, requiring a nuanced and compassionate approach by the team.

We expanded our criminal law services to include road traffic offences, providing comprehensive legal support to clients facing driving charges with the aim of mitigating the impact of penalties such as loss of license for vulnerable community members.

During the last year the team made 211 court appearances across several Magistrates' Courts in the region, dealing with consolidated criminal matters from drug offences, to road traffic offences and breaches of intervention orders.

Recognising the intersection between legal issues and mental health, we developed targeted mental health programs. This included a new outreach initiative as part of our Mobile Integrated Mental Health Service (MIMHS) to include a visiting service to a mental health service, Mentis Assist. The team's drive to reach people who may not actively seek legal assistance was bolstered this period with team members actively participating in our Street Law visits to homelessness services.

With crime statistics showing a significant increase in crime across the Centre's catchment, it was not surprising that demand for our criminal practice continued to climb. According to the Crime Statistics Agency, all six Local Government Areas in our catchment recorded an increase in criminal incidents for the year ending March 2024. Frankston recorded an 18.2% increase, followed by Kingston with a 17% increase and Casey with a 13.3% increase. We remain dedicated to providing high-quality and timely legal assistance and advocating for the rights and wellbeing of our community members facing criminal charges.

PCLC joined with its community legal sector colleagues in calling for the the minimum age of criminal responsibility to be raised. We endorsed a joint statement by the Human Rights Law Centre, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Services and WEstjustice in response to the Victorian Youth Justice Bill. With the aim of diverting young people away from the criminal justice system, we urgently sought that the minimum age of criminal responsibility be raised from 10 to 14 years without exceptions, establishment of just and safe youth bail tests, prohibition of harmful detention practices, and opposed any new Police powers.

555
total clients assisted


619
legal advices

101
ongoing cases

57
court appearances



Avoiding a criminal conviction

Iris was in her 40s and a mother of two dependent children, who were taken away into care by Child Protection due to her diagnosed schizoaffective disorder. After being told the children were not going to spend any time with her in the near future, Iris took knives from her kitchen drawer and went out into the garage with the intention of harming herself. Her husband, who saw the warning signs, followed her and attempted to restrain her but Iris responded poorly to this, causing superficial wounds to him.

A family relative was also present in the house, heard the disturbance and came out and was able to calm Iris down. The husband went back into the house and called 000, not for his own injuries but because he knew Iris was undergoing a psychiatric episode, which he described at the time as a 'mental breakdown'. By the time Police arrived, Iris was no longer so distressed.

The husband declined to make a statement and did not want his injuries documented. Even so, the

police arrested Iris and took her to a police station where she made some unfortunate statements about not liking her husband and resenting him. Her explanation of events could have been interpreted as either Iris acting in self-defence or accidentally injuring her husband. Despite this, the police decided to charge her with 'Intentionally Causing Injury', a serious charge. Only then did they refer Iris to a psychiatric unit where she was admitted as an in-patient for several days, before being transferred to a recovery centre subject to a Community Treatment Order. Despite her challenges, Iris had never been in trouble with the law before. The criminal justice system could not have assisted Iris with her mental health and family issues.

The lawyer involved advocated on her behalf that Diversion was the appropriate outcome. The prosecution agreed and recommended her, and the Court placed Iris on a three-month plan, the only condition being that Iris be of good behaviour.

Fines & Transport Law

Many of Melbourne's road toll and other fines are hitting those who can least afford them, including many in our catchment. The Centre has needed to broaden our fines assistance program to help more clients to navigate and resolve their fine-related issues. This is largely due to the cost-of-living crisis, where many of our clients are now at increased risk of facing the criminal justice system as they simply do not have the means to pay outstanding fines and penalties associated with infringement/s issued.

Given the unprecedented demand for our fines services, it was not surprising that in 2022-23, 40% of all road toll fines issued across Victoria were in the seven local government areas of Melbourne's south-east, including Frankston, Dandenong and Cranbourne. A common theme across the region was the high rates of toll fines that progressed to enforcement, with the City of Casey showing the highest with \$9 million, followed by Cardinia at \$5.7 million and Frankston at \$4.5 million. A staggering \$29.5 million dollars was outstanding in 2022/23 in our region, which comprises 48% of the total of \$61 million outstanding in Victoria.

Over this past year, the fines team targeted the most vulnerable community members, with many people presenting with multiple complexities. Our data showed:

- 87% of clients reported financial hardship.
- 55% presented with a disability.
- 41% were from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background.

The fines clinic team managed to have over \$1.3 million in outstanding fines revoked on behalf of these vulnerable community members.

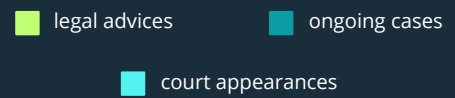
Our integrated response not only assisted clients with casework services to resolve their fines -

including applications for special or exceptional circumstances, Family Violence Scheme applications, applications under section 165 of the *Fines Reforms Act 2014* (Vic), and internal reviews - it also provided support and pathways into treatment to address their health and wellbeing needs with our Work and Development Permit Scheme Program. This Scheme allows vulnerable and disadvantaged people to work off their fine debt by participating in certain activities and treatment, including by attending medical treatment or counselling.

The team actively participated in the highly successful Bring Your Bills Days organised by South-East Community Links. Several of these events were held across south-eastern Melbourne this past year, with PCLC's fines stall often attracting the longest queues.

PCLC has been working in the infringement space for many years, with our research confirming the correlation between disadvantage and toll fine escalation. We are strong advocates for a therapeutic response to fine debt, to minimise further penalties and counter the increased risk of clients entering the criminal justice system. For the past years we have been working with Fines Victoria as part of our Work and Development Permit Scheme Program to increase the number of sponsors and Work and Development Permits offered to our community.

We will continue to raise the profile of unpaid fines as the cost-of-living crisis continues to impact on our most vulnerable community members. This past year, PCLC was featured discussing infringement issues on ABC Online, Mornings on ABC Melbourne with Rafael Epstein, and ABC News.



656
total clients assisted

718
legal advices

203
ongoing cases

37
court appearances



Reducing the burden of significant debt

Miley was a victim-survivor of family violence, whose mental health was impacted by the severity of the violence. Miley’s support worker referred her to PCLC in relation to her infringements, valued at over \$15,000.

The lawyer involved assisted Miley with her application under the Family Violence Scheme through Fines Victoria, detailing the effect of the family violence she had experienced and its consequent impact on her mental health. This application was ultimately successful, resulting in the removal of demerit points incurred in Miley’s name as well as the withdrawal of her entire outstanding fines.

Miley can now focus on her trauma recovery journey without the burden of this significant debt.

Wrap-around support in trying times

Tilly was referred to us with multiple legal issues, including a significant fines debt of over \$20,000, dating back over a decade. Tilly had limited English and her life since she arrived in Australia as a refugee had been nothing but difficult. Following the breakdown of her marriage, Tilly was left with sole parental responsibility for her children. Her home was subsequently ravaged by fire, following which she and her children were left without secure housing for months. Once in new housing, Tilly struggled to pay rent and bills. The PCLC lawyer referred Tilly to other services for additional financial support and, after providing advice, negotiated over many months to have Tilly “arrested and bailed” so her all fines could be dealt with together at a Court hearing. The lawyer organised to obtain supporting materials in preparation for the hearing and appeared on behalf of Tilly, making submissions about Tilly’s circumstances. The court agreed with our assessment and wiped the entire \$20,000 fines debt. Tilly left the court in tears, expressing that she felt a huge sense of relief and commented that she could not have done this herself.

Housing

The housing crisis continues to significantly impact Victorians, with renters facing a critical shortage of affordable rental premises, consistently low vacancy rates and record levels of rent. Increasingly, vulnerable renters are being priced out of the rental market altogether. PCLC's Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program ("TAAP"), which assists private tenants, rooming house and caravan park residents with tenancy issues, assisted over 1,152 clients across the Bayside and Southern region in the past year, with a focus on sustaining housing for vulnerable community members. Through the TAAP program, PCLC prevented many renters from being evicted, or assisted renters to extend their tenancies until they could find suitable alternative accommodation. Many clients accessing TAAP were grappling with multiple notices to vacate, as a result of rental providers pursuing higher paying renters.

Renters often presented to the Program with multiple tenancy issues. A TAAP worker may assist a renter with urgent repairs, followed by a rent increase, and ending with a retaliatory notice to vacate issued by the rental provider. These matters are often drawn out over the course of several months, which requires TAAP workers to be engaged with the client on a continuous basis. Simultaneously, clients presented with a number of risk factors to their housing. In the past year, 19% of our TAAP clients presented with mental health issues, and 27% experienced a significant life event.

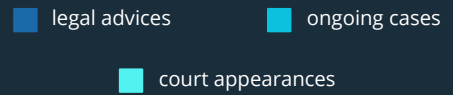
The Centre was challenged with renters presenting with urgent matters and pending Tribunal proceedings. We constantly reviewed the resources in our intake and response service to meet the large demand.

We were proud of the team's commitment and flexibility to provide a timely response to requests for assistance, responding to over 20% within two days. This was quite challenging, as often workers were juggling urgent matters and the preparation of documents in very short timeframes.

In response to the housing crisis, the TAAP program increased its presence in front-line housing and homelessness agencies with onsite visiting services. These agencies provide direct access to the most vulnerable members of the community facing homelessness. These weekly services helped to build close working relationships with housing workers, fostering a cross referral pathway and timely responses to prevent homelessness. The TAAP team provided tenancy services in six housing and community venues in the region during the financial year.

The Duty Advocate Service (DAS) continues to expand as the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) increases in-person hearings. The service was based in two VCAT venues - Oakleigh and Frankston. It is not uncommon to have two VCAT listings occurring simultaneously. The DAS service, like our other outreach endeavours, allows the Centre to reach clients who fail to engage directly with the TAAP program. We are providing assistance when it is most needed at the time of crisis.

As the housing crisis deepens, we are very concerned that the lack of housing supply is forcing people into precarious and unsafe arrangements such as cars, sheds, caravans, and tents. We will continue to advocate for affordable housing and support for renters to sustain their housing. We also regularly receive feedback from renters about the declining conditions of their rental properties. We welcomed the focus on minimum rental standards and the implementation of the new Consumer Affairs Victoria Renting taskforce.



1,152
total clients assisted

1,540
legal advices

272
ongoing cases

510
court appearances



Client in crisis supported

Noelene was a sole parent of one child and a victim-survivor of family violence residing in the City of Casey. The perpetrator, her former partner, refused to leave the property so Noelene sought advice and assistance from PCLC in relation to her rights.

Noelene was in crisis and had tried to obtain a Family Violence Intervention Order to exclude her former partner from the property, but had been discouraged to do so as there had not been any 'physical' violence.

The TAAP caseworker assisted Noelene to lodge an application to VCAT seeking Orders to terminate the existing lease (due to the family violence) and enter into a new agreement with the rental provider. VCAT heard the application within a few days and made Orders in favour of Noelene and her child, requiring the perpetrator to leave the premises and giving Noelene sole occupancy on a new agreement.

Homelessness averted

Jason was a single man residing in the City of Frankston who was experiencing financial distress and suffering from depression. He had lost his job and built up a significant amount of rent arrears resulting in the rental provider issuing a 14-day Notice to Vacate (NTV). He had also received another 60 day NTV for the rental provider or their family member to move into the premises.

The TAAP lawyer assisted Jason in challenging the possession applications at VCAT. At the first hearing (regarding the 60 day NTV), PCLC successfully argued the rental provider had not met the requirements under the Residential Tenancies Act and the application was dismissed. In the second matter, although the rent arrears were substantial, the TAAP lawyer was able to obtain a payment plan Order for Jason and he was able to maintain his tenancy.

Rooming House Outreach Program

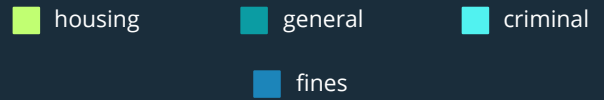
The Rooming House Outreach Program (RHOP) plays a crucial role in giving a voice to marginalised rooming house residents. RHOP regularly visits residents in the 800 rooming houses across the Southern and Eastern regions of Melbourne providing tenancy advice, housing support and referrals.

In the past year, RHOP visited 361 properties and contacted 411 residents across 17 local government areas, with 68.7% of these visits involving joint efforts with partner agencies. These partnerships have been pivotal in broadening the program's reach and impact to address the legal and health needs of rooming house residents. This collaborative approach has led to deeper engagement with residents, ensuring that their unique challenges are met with comprehensive, tailored solutions.

In the past year, the RHOP program proactively engaged with a broad spectrum of community and government stakeholders to address the pressing issues faced by rooming house residents. RHOP conducted over 20 presentations across multiple municipalities to raise awareness, foster collaboration, and enhance collective efforts in the community. These presentations have not only highlighted the critical challenges faced by vulnerable residents, but also built strong partnerships, creating a robust support network, and expanding advocacy efforts. The sharing of best practices and innovative solutions has enhanced the program's effectiveness, allowing for a more tailored service-delivery model based on a deeper understanding of community needs.

Additionally, RHOP's active participation in rooming house working groups hosted by local councils has strengthened the program's ability to provide effective assistance, contributing to the creation of safer living environments.

As the housing crisis continues to strain homelessness entry points, RHOP remains committed to re-engaging individuals who have previously disengaged from the system. By addressing both immediate housing needs and underlying issues, such as mental health and financial instability, RHOP remains dedicated to creating sustainable solutions that offer renewed hope and practical support. Looking forward, RHOP aims to expand its reach through further community education, strengthened partnerships, and innovative advocacy, ensuring that every individual has access to safe, stable, and affordable housing.



411
total clients assisted

361
rooming house visits

309
vouchers supplied

189
health packs delivered

Positive and timely intervention

Tin lived in an unregistered rooming house with unsafe conditions, including poor wiring, rampant drug use, and violence. These conditions led to a decline in his mental health. Tin was paying \$260 per week without a lease or bond.

The RHOP team intervened and created a support plan, connecting Tin with housing services and lodging complaints with local council and Consumer Affairs Victoria. These efforts led to Tin securing safer crisis accommodation.

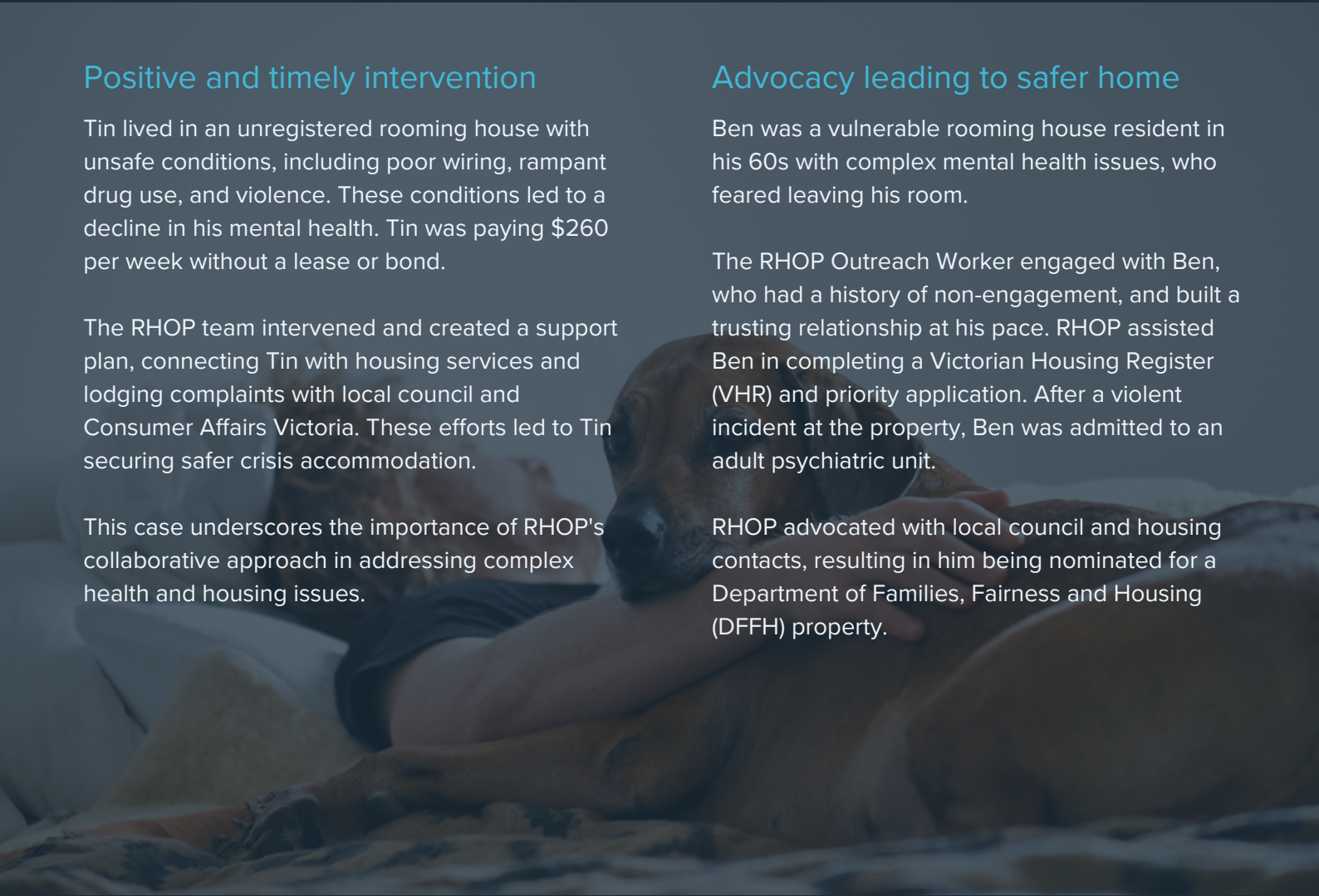
This case underscores the importance of RHOP's collaborative approach in addressing complex health and housing issues.

Advocacy leading to safer home

Ben was a vulnerable rooming house resident in his 60s with complex mental health issues, who feared leaving his room.

The RHOP Outreach Worker engaged with Ben, who had a history of non-engagement, and built a trusting relationship at his pace. RHOP assisted Ben in completing a Victorian Housing Register (VHR) and priority application. After a violent incident at the property, Ben was admitted to an adult psychiatric unit.

RHOP advocated with local council and housing contacts, resulting in him being nominated for a Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) property.



Street Law Coffee Van Project

PCLC was delighted to be the recipient of a grant from the Victorian Legal Services Board to continue and expand our Street Law Coffee Van Project for the next two years. In partnership with Social Engine and HomeGround Cafe, the Street Law Coffee Van takes legal services from the office onto the streets, visiting isolated and disengaged communities across south-eastern Melbourne, delivering “legal health checks” (which screen for legal issues) and other legal services and referrals.

The Street Law Coffee Van Program gave the PCLC team opportunities to engage with community members in settings that are familiar and comfortable for them. Over a free barista-made coffee, legal health checks were conducted which identified many legal issues that PCLC were able to offer advice and assistance on. Some advice was able to be given on the spot, while other legal matters were referred into PCLC specialist teams. This past year, the Street Law Coffee Van carried out 38 visits and conducted over 1,000 legal

health checks, with 125 legal services provided and 66 non-legal referrals offered. The data highlighted that 35% of legal health checks conducted identified a legal issue. The top five legal issues identified were rental evictions, family violence, fines, family law and rent increases. Many of these legal issues are likely to cause increasing problems for the client if they are not identified and addressed.

We could not provide the service without the support of our community partners, who provided venues, promoted the visits through their teams and social media, and collaborated on securing the best outcome for the participants. The Street Law Coffee Van also raised awareness of legal issues, with community legal education sessions on topics such as consumer rights and wills.

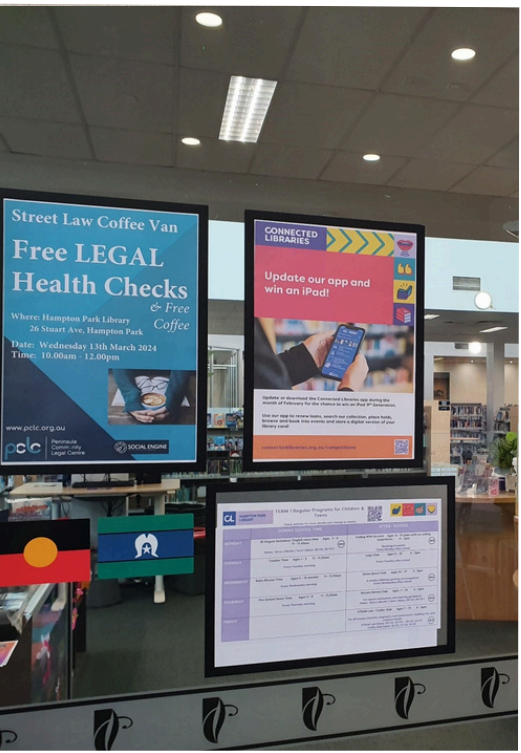
From a car to a secure home

The Street Law Coffee Van outreach worker met Steffi during a visit to a program that supports people experiencing homelessness. Over a coffee, Steffi explained she had been served with a Family Violence Intervention Order, which included a condition that she could not return to the home she had previously shared with her ex-partner. As a result, Steffi was now living in her car. Steffi was very upset and felt very vulnerable.

Steffi believed that her ex-partner had moved out of the house they had previously shared. She was understandably frustrated that because of the conditions of the Intervention Order, she could not return to the home which was sitting empty.

The Street Law outreach worker linked Steffi into the PCLC Family Violence team for assistance. Within a couple of working days, one of our family violence lawyers successfully sought a variation to the Intervention Order in Court, meaning Steffi could move back into her house and would no longer have to live in her car. Steffi was most grateful for the PCLC team’s assistance in getting her into her home where she felt safe.

The above highlights the value of the Street Law outreach program and how a quick legal health check conducted over a cup of coffee, followed by a referral to a PCLC lawyer for support, can lead to a significant positive impact in someone’s circumstances.



Our Volunteers

Volunteering opens the pathway to sharing legal knowledge and expertise, and it is one of the greatest contributions to help vulnerable community members. We are incredibly proud of all PCLC's volunteers for the difference they make for our communities. Their strong commitment and support are integral to PCLC's volunteer program, and it has been great working with so many of them and hearing how much they enjoy supporting PCLC's vulnerable clients.

Volunteer Long Service Awards

20 years

Trish Samson

10 years

Joel Silver

Marcus Frajman

Kath Nielsen Memorial Award

Despina Djumas

Volunteer Excellence Awards

Faith Brack

Sherene Ozyurek



Volunteer Lawyers

Manal Amro
 Matthew Andrews
 Anna Araneta
 Katherine Awad
 Laura Buckley
 Joshua Butland
 George Chabvonga
 Damien Christmas
 John Corcoran
 Michael Denison
 Despina Djumas
 Amelia Edwards
 Sukanya Ellison-Whyte
 Danielle Fernandez
 Claire Finegan
 Marcus Frajman
 Loredana Giarrusso
 Christopher Hill
 Vinu Kumar
 Alice Land
 Hannah Malewska
 Angeline Martin
 Mary Nasser
 Sherene Ozyurek
 Thierry Pascal
 Joanne Poole
 Villy Raki
 Anish Rebello
 Louise Russell
 Trish Samson
 Lily Sarkar
 Thirumalai Selvi Shanmugam
 Joel Silver
 Angela Williams
 Claire Williams
 Maria Zambrano

Volunteer Paralegals

Natashan Adams
 Georgia Bailey
 Jasmine Baird
 Faith Brack
 Holly Cunningham
 Alyssa Davies
 Chanttel Forbes
 Anna Grage
 Nadeera Gunawardena
 Emma Higgins
 Lauren Kavanagh
 Riley Lenard
 Ruby Leonard
 Justin Leung
 Sarah Mahne-Brown
 Rachel Malley
 Adam Marshall
 Danielle McCartin
 Natasha Mirvis
 Emma Morgan
 David Pascal
 Janet Power
 Aaron Rielly
 Rosemary Rowlings
 Rosemine Roy
 Jessica Toomey
 Nicholas Tsanaktsidis
 Madeline Wicks
 Karolina Wlodarczak

Practical Legal Trainee

Andrea Weaich

Field Placement

Josh Bell
 Anastasija Brikc
 Michael Brkic
 Makaya Pollard Chivers
 Joanna Louisa Kirksz
 Neha Kumar
 Zuhal Masudy
 Emma-Jane Perry
 Camila Rodriguez Terreni
 Nic Xerri

Our People

Executive Team

Chief Executive Officer Jackie Galloway
Director of Legal Services Sokha Um
Director of Business & Operations Sue Vincent

Leadership Team

Practice Managers
Family Law Chris Daniels & Saskia Rijfkoogel
Family Violence Sousan Gholami
Civil & Crime William Betts
Tenancy Catherine Currie & Robert Braun
Coordinator Business & Operations Hellen Argiriou

Finance

Mark Duque

Engagement, Systems & Projects

Engy Abdelsalam
Jackie Currie
Kay Taranto
Kirsten Young
Krissy Beckerleg
Mark Patton

Administration Team

Jasminka Kumbaric
Nina Mitris
Caitlin Ruka
Louise Grant
Melanie Jones
Melissa Liapis
Nic Xerri

Senior Lawyers

Ashleigh Walker
Chris Gunasekera
Daniel Hombsch
Kate Bell
Sandy Watkins
Theresa Lam

Legal Team

Aaliya Ishaque
Alison Laird
Ash Galvin
Brendan Stackpole
Casey Hill
Emily McAlister
Emily Mineo
Faaizah Esaq
Kate O'Brien
Kathleen Hyland-Egan
Laura Di Felice
Michele Simpson
Nathan Locke
Nina Zec
Paul Rosenblum
Sam Fung
Sharon Matashu
Tanika Donald
Tanya Lakic
Teddy Polydor
Vanessa Saunders
Warren Wheeler
Yih-Laine Teen
Zahraa Albadri

Paralegals

Grant Williams
Joanna Dirks

ative
ng
MORNINGTON
PENINSULA
Shire
Mornington Peninsula



Peninsula
Community
Legal Centre



FEDERATION
OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES VIC

ACCESS
VOICE
IMPACT
GROWTH

A fair and equitable Community FELCORG.AU

Community Legal Education, Engagement & Law Reform

Connecting with our community through community legal education (CLE) and engagement events is a crucial part of PCLC's work to improve our community's access to justice. Our team delivers legal education to the public, and to the workers who support them, to help them better understand their rights and build their capacity to navigate the legal system.

We have continued our efforts to develop creative, innovative approaches to reach our communities through a diverse range of methods, including face-to-face and online sessions, assertive outreach information sessions by our Street Law Coffee Van team, multicultural partnerships, and projects in schools. PCLC has a heavy focus on providing legal education to those who are in dire need due to the housing and cost-of-living crises, older people, CALD communities, and young people. Sessions covered topics including wills, powers of attorney, tenancy, family law, family violence, forced marriage, migration law relevant to family violence, traffic law, common neighbourhood disputes, fines and legal issue spotting.

We were delighted to deliver ongoing performances of our *This is Not Who I Want to Be* project, funded by the Victoria Law Foundation. This is a highly innovative, early-intervention initiative which uses participatory theatre performance on the topics of family violence and forced marriage at secondary schools in the City of Casey. The findings of the project were integral to the development of our School Lawyer Pilot, enabling the regular delivery of CLE on youth law issues across the school to enhance our preventative work with young people so that their legal problems are identified and managed earlier.

Our work in elder law was enhanced this past year with large sold-out elder law events on wills and powers of attorney on the Mornington Peninsula and at the City of Kingston World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event. We also presented a number of sessions to local community groups.

Our law reform and policy work focuses on challenging unfair laws and practices, and making recommendations to improve the legal system. We continued to highlight the impact for our clients in submissions, media, roundtables and working groups, often in collaboration with our community legal centre sector colleagues.

211
CLE activities


71
law reform activities

Highlights

Winner of Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Bronze Award 2024 for our *This is Not Who I Want to Be* youth theatre project on family violence and forced marriage.

Launch of our *Guide to Safety* online tool on how to access protection under family violence provisions of the Migration Framework for clients on temporary visas.

Our fines and tenancy teams gave advice to hundreds of people at *five Bring Your Bills Days* across the south-east, in partnership with South East Community Links.

Our new *school lawyer project* started at Cranbourne Secondary College and delivered legal education on youth law issues across the school.

Ongoing performances of our *This is Not Who I Want to Be* theatre project on family violence and forced marriage at high schools in the City of Casey.

Large *elder law events* on wills and powers of attorney at Safety Beach and City of Kingston World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event.

PCLC contributed to Eastern Community Legal Centre's elder abuse submission in response to the *2023 Strong Foundations – Building on Victoria's Work to End Family Violence*.

PCLC submission to *Commonwealth Inquiry into Family Violence Orders*.



Feedback

“Thank you so much for facilitating and hosting our Legal Forum. It was extremely informative and presented with lightness and humour. Our residents were very appreciative and gave great feedback.”

“Just wanted to provide feedback as a community support worker. I am so grateful for the collaborative efforts of the staff working with my client. From the initial appointment, to follow up, keeping me in the loops and being clear on what is needed and when. As a result, we have had some great outcomes for clients, both with VCAT and with Fines Vic and they are so grateful that they have someone in their corner.”

“Terrific, thanks so much for all your help. You have been wonderful to work with and your guidance through this process has been invaluable.”

“Thank you so much for all your help and guidance. [Client's name] will be thrilled to hear this news.”

“Thank you...A great outcome for [client] and her children. We couldn't have been achieved without your assistance. [Client] expressed her gratitude for your help on the phone to me today”.





Our Community Relationships

PCLC is proud of its strong connection to community.

We place great emphasis on our collaborative relationships with our community and health sector partners to increase understanding of community legal need, facilitate warm referral pathways and support our vision and commitment to improve outcomes for our community.

We work with our legal assistance sector colleagues and organisations in our service planning to address unmet, health-harming legal needs and effect system improvements.



536
stakeholder engagements



19
practice working groups



14
steering committees



60
community partners



18
community networks

We value our relationships with our community partners and are grateful for their support to improve access to justice.

- Access Health – Camcare
- Bayside Peninsula Orange Door
- Berwick Carers Network
- Berwick Family Relationship Centre
- Better Health Network
- Bolton Clarke Homeless Persons Program
- Carrum Downs Library
- Casey North Community Information and Support
- Chelsea Community Support
- Community Support Frankston
- Crib Point Community House
- Dromana Community House
- Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- Endeavour Hills Library
- Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
- Family Life
- Foothills Community Care
- Frankston City Library
- Frankston City Council Maternal and Child Health
- Frankston North Community Centre
- Glen Eira City Council Maternal and Child Health
- Good Shepherd
- Hallam Community Centre
- Hampton Park Library
- Hampton Park SecondBite
- HomeGround Cafe
- Launch Housing
- Living & Learning Pakenham
- Kindred Clubhouse
- Mayone-Balluk Family & Community Centre
- Melbourne City Mission
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Local
- Mentis Assist
- Merinda Park Learning and Community Centre
- MOIRA Disability Services
- Mornington Community Support Centre
- Oakgrove Community Centre
- Orwil Street Community House
- Peninsula Health
- Reclink Cardinia
- Reclink Frankston
- Salvation Army Dandenong
- Salvation Army Pakenham
- Salvation Army St Kilda
- SecondBite Mornington
- Social Engine
- Somerville Community House
- South East Community Links
- Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
- Southern Peninsula Community Support
- St Vincent De Paul Society
- Uniting Place Hampton Park
- Uniting Vic Tas
- Wallaroo Community House
- Wellsprings for Women
- Westall Community Hub
- Western Port Community Support
- Willum Warrain
- Wintringham
- Women’s Housing Mt Martha
- Youth Support + Advocacy Service (YSAS)



Thank You

We are so grateful to everyone who has supported PCLC this past year. We could not achieve our goals without your support, involvement, investment and enthusiasm.

Probono Partners

Our pro bono partnership with Russell Kennedy Lawyers continues to strengthen our capacity and legal practice capabilities to enhance our mission to improve access to justice. Our partners at Russell Kennedy Lawyers have provided legal mentoring, professional development, elder law clinic, PCLC's disbursement fund, governance, and business support over this past year. Special thanks to Emma Dunlevie, Principal, and John Corcoran AM, Principal, and the entire Russell Kennedy team.

We were delighted to partner with Legal Tech Helper to develop our web-based *Guide to Safety* tool. Funded by the Victoria Law Foundation, the tool has been developed in the context of PCLC's focus over the past few years on the development of innovative and creative ways to assist migrant and refugee women who are experiencing family violence, given the well-known barriers they face in accessing justice. We thank Sam Lovich and Tatiana Lenz of Legal Tech Helper who committed many hours of pro bono work to complete the tool.

Legal Community

PCLC highly values the support from our legal community whose members often support the Centre's clients with services on a pro bono basis or with significantly reduced-fee briefs, provide specialist mentoring, contribute to our volunteer program and deliver professional development sessions to our staff.

Sponsors

Russell Kennedy Lawyers generously support our client disbursement fund, providing much needed assistance to support clients with disbursement costs related to their legal matter (such as application or report fees).

We would also like to acknowledge our staff who through our staff giving program support our client welfare fund. This fund provides much needed assistance to vulnerable community members with emergency relief and health packs to disadvantaged rooming house residents.

Legal Mentors/Counsel

Sherene Ozyurek, FCG Legal
John Corcoran, Russell Kennedy Lawyers
Marie Wilkening-Le Brun, Howells List
Bonnie Renou, Svensons List

Legal Firms

FCG Legal
Justice Crew Legal Services
Maurice Blackburn
MDL Law
Southern Legal Group
Victoria Legal Aid

Funders

Government

- Australian Government Attorney-General's Department
- Victoria State Government Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Victoria Legal Aid
- Homes Victoria
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- City of Glen Eira
- City of Casey
- Frankston City Council
- City of Kingston
- Mornington Peninsula Shire

Philanthropy/Trusts

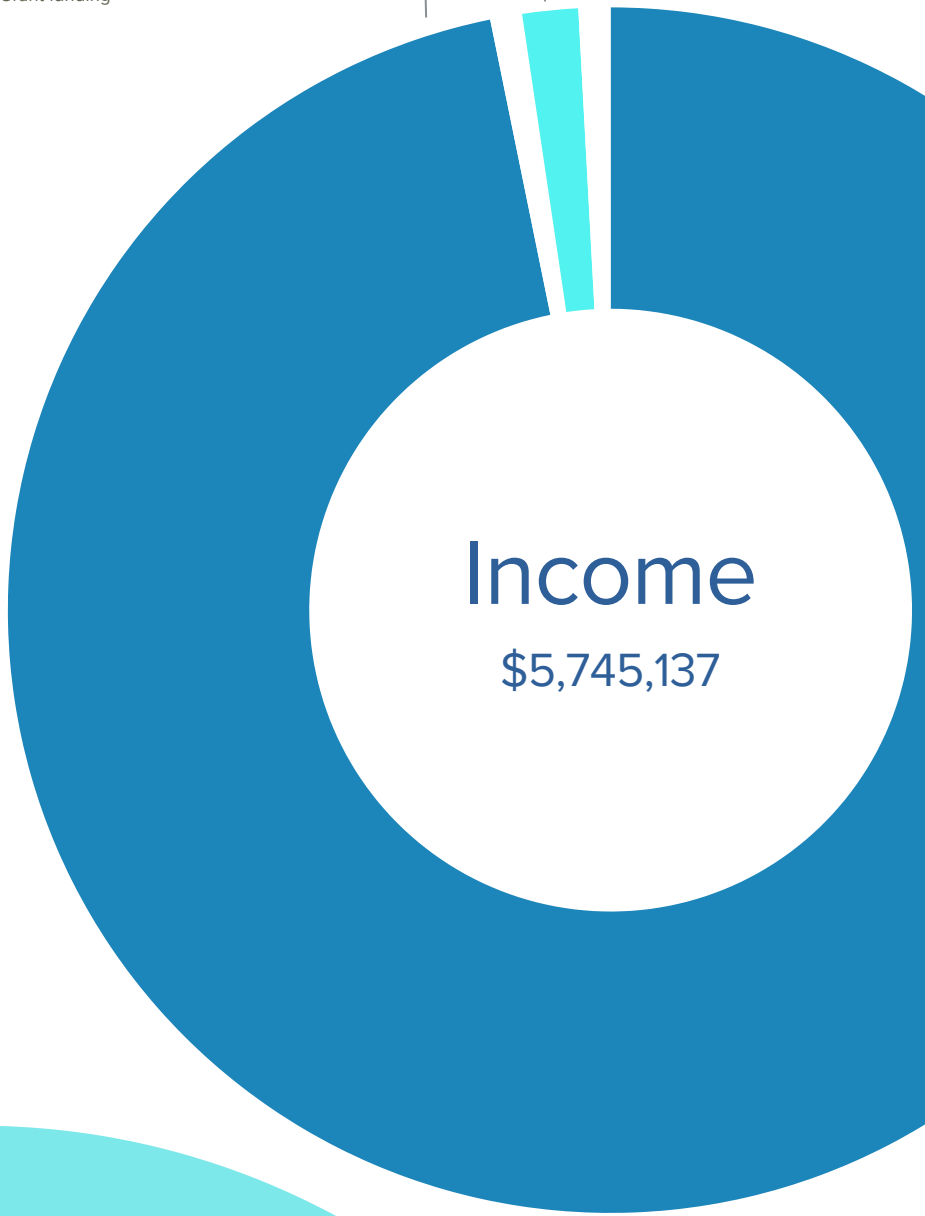
- StreetSmart Australia
- The William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Trust
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victorian Legal Services Board

Education

- Monash University Law School
- Chisholm Frankston
- Cranbourne Secondary College
- Deakin University Melbourne Internship Program (Burwood Campus)

Financial Overview

Other income
Grant funding



- Employment
- Finance
- Travel
- Depreciation
- Communication
- Repairs & maintenance
- Resources
- Office & administration
- Occupancy





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Legal Centre

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