

NJUSTICE ANYWHERE

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

COP

# **ABOUT THE FEDERATION**

### WE WANT A COMMUNITY THAT IS FAIR, INCLUSIVE AND THRIVING: WHERE EVERY PERSON BELONGS AND CAN LEARN, GROW, HEAL, PARTICIPATE AND BE HEARD.

The Federation is the peak body for Victoria's Community Legal Centres. Our members are at the forefront of helping those facing economic, cultural or social disadvantage and whose life circumstances are severely affected by their legal problem.

For over 40 years Community Legal Centres have been part of a powerful movement for social change, reshaping how people access justice, creating stronger more equitable laws, and more accountable government and democracy.

We pursue our vision of a fair, inclusive and thriving community through challenging injustice, defending rights and building the power of our members and communities.

### OUR PRINCIPLES

### COMMUNITY

Our priority is to be fully accountable to the communities we serve and belong to.

### SOLIDARITY

With each other. All Community Legal Centres are a part of a movement for justice. We know that we must work together to be a powerful, effective voice. We practice our principles through our engagement with each other. We back each other up, make time and space for everyone's viewpoints to be heard, and act collectively, with a focus on long term, systemic change.

With communities most affected by injustice. We recognise that people and communities most directly affected by injustice and discrimination are experts in their own lives and have their own voices. We are allies, not saviours. The Federation:

- Enables a strong collective voice for justice and equality;
- Mobilises and leads Community Legal Centres in strategic, well-coordinated advocacy and campaigns;
- Works with members to continuously improve the impact of community legal services;
- Drives creativity and excellence in the delivery of legal services to communities;
- Helps make justice more accessible.
- Read our new strategic plan online fclc.org.au/about

### STANDING WITH FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

We celebrate the strength, leadership and resilience of First Nations Peoples. We recognise the ongoing injustices perpetrated against them, and we stand with them in fighting for self-determination and equality.

### RESPECT

In all of our work, we show respect. We acknowledge and celebrate differences and commonalities, and the strength that diversity brings to our communities.

### LEARNING

We are inquisitive and reflective, committed to adapting and growing in response to evidence about what works, and to sharing our learning with our communities. We learn from our successes and failures.

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THE FEDERATION ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL OWNERS OF COUNTRY AND WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING. WE RECOGNISE THEIR CONTINUING CONNECTION TO LAND, WATER AND COMMUNITY. SOVEREIGNTY WAS NEVER CEDED.

A FAIR AND JUST VICTORIA

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES REMAIN AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PURSUIT OF A JUST AND FAIR SOCIETY, ONE THAT VALUES EVERYONE, DEFENDS THE RIGHTS OF COMMUNITIES AND STANDS STRONG IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY.

# CHAIR AND CEO REPORT

Strong Community Legal Centres support the development of strong communities. This past year, our members have continued to support their communities through innovative practice, with hard won successes across the community legal sector as a result of their dedication and drive. As the peak body for Community Legal Centres, in the midst of rising inequality, we worked passionately alongside our members in calling for a just and fair Victoria.

With both a State and Federal Election in the past year, it was crucial that the Federation remained resolute in our role as an advocate for justice. We continued to work alongside people directly affected by the 'law and order' election narrative, working with our members to ensure that our communities had access to opportunities to build their capacity in opposing divisive rhetoric and asserting their rights.

Our State Conference, *Transforming Democracy: Claiming Our Power*, highlighted the best of our sector and grassroots activism, as we came together to develop strategic and practical ways to address critical social and economic justice challenges in Victoria, now and into the future. Summit keynote speaker Raquel Willis of the Transgender Law Centre in the US, spoke ardently about her experiences in community organising within the Black Lives Matter movement and how we can give individual stories of injustice a platform to highlight and redress systemic issues and barriers for all. The Federation this year continued to champion and support sector excellence through meaningful outcomes measurement, monitoring and evaluation. Our sector-wide client survey and research project emphasised the dedication of our members and their constant efforts to improve the services they provide to community members every day. We saw clearly how we are able to best meet the needs of community with care and compassion, with one client sharing: "They treated me like a person, an equal, a friend not a 'client'."

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We again administered the Integrated Services Fund that supports Community Legal Centres in their innovative and collaborative approaches to providing community and client services that cut through the messiness of complex life issues and support people to heal and thrive. OF THE FEDERATION AT PRIDE MARCH

PRINE

This year, we also acknowledge Belinda Lo of Eastern Community Legal Centre, who stepped into the role of CEO from July 2018 to April 2019 while Serina was on parental leave. Belinda supported the Federation team and represented the sector exceptionally. We are grateful to have had such a fierce advocate and champion of the community legal sector with a wealth of experience carry the mission of the Federation during her time as CEO.

FEDERATION



KRISTEN WALLWORK, BELINDA LO, CHAIRPERSON CEO, JULY 2018 -APRIL 2019 SERINA MCDUFF, CEO, RETURNED FROM LEAVE MAY 2019

# A FAIR, INCLUSIVE AND THRIVING VICTORIA IN DEFENCE OF JUSTICE

🗇 IDIL ALI - SUMMIT M

WORKING COLLECTIVELY, ALONGSIDE OUR MEMBERS, WE WORK FOR WHAT IS RIGHT, JUST, AND IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES. IN THE FACE OF RISING INEQUALITY, WE STRIVE FOR A COMMUNITY THAT IS FAIR, INCLUSIVE AND THRIVING: WHERE EVERY PERSON BELONGS AND CAN LEARN, GROW, HEAL, PARTICIPATE AND BE HEARD. In the context of 'law and order' political campaigns we took a stance against unjust laws. We know that half of the people who end up in prison come from only six per cent of postcodes. For a healthy and thriving community it is imperative that we strongly oppose that which undermines justice and the ability for people to be treated equally before the law.

With our members and the Smart Justice Coalition we continue to advocate for a justice system that tackles disadvantage and allows all people, no matter who their parents are, where they grew up, or the colour of their skin, a chance to thrive.

We continue to lead Smart Justice, a coalition of over 60 organisations committed to shaping the agenda on criminal justice towards fairness and equality. We continue to advocate for law and policy that is based on evidence and human rights, elevating the voices of those unfairly targeted by the criminal system.

# CALLING FOR Smart Justice

OUR MEMBERS, WHO WORK EVERY DAY WITH THOSE WHO FACE SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE RECOGNISED THAT THE MANDATORY SENTENCING CHANGES WOULD CAUSE SERIOUS HARM TO VICTORIANS EXPERIENCING VULNERABILITY, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE, PEOPLE WHO ARE MENTALLY UNWELL, AND SURVIVOR-VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE.

In late 2018, sentencing changes were introduced that made the offence of causing injury to police and emergency service workers the highest category of offence, alongside very serious offences. Concerned about the impact that the proposed mandatory sentencing legislation would have on Victorian families, the Federation alongside our members and leaders from Victoria's community, family violence, youth, drug and alcohol and community legal sectors, unanimously opposed the introduction of the laws. "When people and families in our community are in distress, they need to trust that they can call emergency services for help." -SMART JUSTICE COALITION JOINT STATEMENT

Despite a strongly concerted effort by the Federation, our members, community allies and other social service organisations, the legislation ultimately passed. However, we were successful in securing an amendment that will require the effect of the laws to be reviewed in three years, continuing our call for a smart justice approach.

### RAPID ACTIONS LED BY THE FEDERATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE SMART JUSTICE COALITION

**Open lette** 

Open letter to the Premier

signed by over 30 organisations

Coordinated meetings with key decision makers highlighting our role as a trusted advocate

> Petition opposing the legislation received nearly 1,000 SIGNATURES and widespread media coverage

### h Join

Joint statement: United Opposition to Unfair Mandatory Sentencing Laws\*

\*Inclusive of: Fitzroy Legal Service Inc, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, the Victorian Council of Social Service, Jesuit Social Services, Domestic Violence Victoria and the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association. 7

# PROTECTING COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND RIGHTS

When we address systemic causes of social exclusion and discrimination, crime decreases. When it comes to reducing reoffending and reintegrating people into society, what works is restoration and rehabilitation.

With our members and community allies we actively opposed the anti-association laws proposed in the *Justice Legislation* (Unlawful Association and Criminal Appeals) Bill 2018.

Introduction of these laws could override the presumption of innocence, disrupt cultural practices and obligations and impinge upon the civil liberties of all Victorians. The Federation and our members were resolute in affirming that Victorians should be free to socialise with whoever they choose.

IT'S NOT BASED ON ANY EVIDENCE OF WHAT WORKS 10 REDUCE CRIME. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND REHABILITATION IS WHAT WE KNOW REDUCES YOUTH CRIME.

//

- DANIEL STUBBS, CEO INNER MELBOURNE COMMUNITY LEGAL (FEATURED IN PHOTO)



In the face of rising inequality, public homes allow people to live in dignity, security, and comfort. Through the advocacy of the Federation and its members, in particular Inner Melbourne Community Legal, West Heidelberg Community Legal Service, Justice Connect, Tenants Victoria, and our Tenancy Working Group (TWG), we advocated for improved rights, safety and security for tenants and worked to protect and uphold the rights of tenants facing major changes to their public housing.

- Achieved a better process for relocation of tenants;
- Improved information provided to tenants;
- Consulted on safeguarding tenants' right of return;
- A Government election commitment to build 1,000 new public housing properties.

Homes are the cornerstones of our lives - access to secure and stable housing allows us to thrive, raise a family, go to work and stay physically and mentally well.

Legal representation is crucial in preventing evictions and homelessness and giving renters the confidence and security they need to stand up for their rights. Our specialist community lawyers provided housing services to almost 7,000 Victorians in the last year.

### WE REMAIN COMMITTED 10 ADVOCATING FOR STABLE, SAFE AND SUITABLE HOMES FOR ALL VICTORIANS.

Our members this year have represented their community members facing eviction, homelessness, and unfair rentals and asserting that "EVERYONE DESERVES A HOME".

### TENANCY WORKING GROUP CONVENOR: NATALIE RUTHERFORD (TENANTS VICTORIA)

The dedication and advocacy of the TWG also saw the passage of the *Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2018* in late September, bringing for the first time in 20 years, sweeping changes ensuring greater rights and avenues for justice to renters.

# TRANSFORMING DEMOCRACY SUMMIT

As the peak body for Victorian Community Legal Centres and Aboriginal Legal Services, we get a unique insight into community needs and effective mechanisms for advocacy and support to build community capabilities and power. There are incredible opportunities to create systemic and structural change through the collaborative action of communities when we come together to build commitment on shared issues and drive change.

We explored these opportunities at our 2018 State Conference, coming together to hear about how we, as a community legal sector, can support our communities to create a world where everyone is treated equally by the law. We asked: *"how can we address critical social and economic justice challenges in Victoria - and what role can our specialist community lawyers play in addressing them?"* 

### DRIVING A POSITIVE AND PRACTICAL AGENDA FOR CHANGE OUTSIDE OF THE COURTROOM

Our ability to work alongside grassroots community organising is a key element in enhancing strategic litigation. At the Summit, participants learned from activists and specialist community lawyers about the possibilities for making change. Examples of this are how the field of poverty law can inform approaches to community lawyering in Victoria, and how community lawyers in other States and overseas are achieving transformative change through innovative uses of campaigning and community partnerships.

The Summit explored campaigns that Community Legal Centres are running in their communities, drawing on case studies from campaigns on tenants' rights, refugees, reducing homelessness, police accountability, and mandatory sentencing.

The event was well attended with Community Legal Centre staff and community allies speaking on a variety of panels, presenting on their areas of expertise and strengthening connections across sectors.



RAQUEL WILLIS, SUMMIT KEYNOTE



'IT'S ALL CONNECTED' SUMMIT PAN





☑ POLITICS AND CRIMINALISATION - SUMMIT PANEL

"IT WAS ACTION FOCUSED - REMINDING OR CHALLENGING US ABOUT PRACTISING THE LAW AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSION"

UMMIT ATTENDEE

"IT WAS GOOD TO BRING TOGETHER ACTORS FROM THE CLC SECTOR TO PROVIDE A POSITIVE AND REINFORCING SPACE FOR PEOPLE WORKING TOWARD A COMMON GOAL"

- SUMMIT ATTENDEE



CONTROM L: KAZ GUERNEY FROM ARC JUSTICE, ANTHONY KELLY FROM FLEMINGTON KENSINGTON CLC AND ARIEL COUCHMAN FROM YOUTH LAW 11

# WORKSHOPS SUPPORTING COMMUNITY POWER

We, through the work of our members and the Smart Justice Coalition, see the lasting negative impacts that adverse political climates can have. Engaging directly with community and building their capacity to take an active stance against injustice remains a priority for the Federation. Alongside the Summit we hosted democracy action workshops to facilitate capacity building.

### FREEDOM SCHOOL

In the midst of divisive and negatively charged political campaigns, communities unjustly treated need a safe environment to support each other, build strategies for change and find healing.

From this, inspired participants ran a Voters Campaign in their local community. Their campaign was well-received covering: how to vote, understanding policy points and how to approach local members of parliament about issues that they find interesting or concerning.

Facilitated by Raquel Willis (TLC & BLM), Betty Belay (Afro-Australian Student Organisation) & Nyadol Nyoun (Lawyer, Arnold Bloch Leibler)

### QUEER AND TRANS PEOPLE OF COLOUR (QTPOC) ROUNDTABLE

We celebrate the strength, leadership and resilience of First Nations Peoples. At this session attendees learnt about practical ways to embed a culture that centres First Nations sovereignty in the fight for racial justice and ways to ensure that intersectionality and decolonisation are practices built into advocacy and community organising.

Facilitated by Raquel Willis and The (in)visible project.

### LESSONS FROM BLACK LIVES MATTER

An open, interactive and experiential workshop run by Raquel Willis on lessons from BLM with a focus on digital organising, media, and engaging people with lived experience from marginalised communities.

### Facilitated by Raquel Willis

A special thanks to all the volunteers who worked on the Summit: Christina Graham, Kristine Michaelides, Jayde Biddiss, Alexandra Phillips, Felicia Torcasio, Mike Tran, Shev Armstrong, Elle Kulesza, Xinyin Hew, Annabel Meagher, Ariz Ansari. FAIR AND JUST VICTORIA

### INFRINGEMENTS WORKING GROUP CONVENORS: CAMERON LAVERY (JUSTICE CONNECT HOMELESS L

(JUSTICE CONNECT HOMELESS LAW), SHIFRAH BLUSTEIN (WESTJUSTICE), JOANNE PARKIN (UNITING REGEN)

The Infringements Working Group (IWG) is a jointworking group of the Federation, Victoria Legal Aid and the Financial and Consumer Rights Council. IWG involves 37 member organisations, drawing on the experience of practitioners who work day-to-day with clients who are disproportionately affected by fines.

### Improved implementation of fines reform -

The IWG maintained their leadership in seeking better and fairer implementation of Victoria's fines reforms. They contributed to the Ombudsman's investigation into fines by highlighting the impact of significant structural issues on the most vulnerable.

The IWG continued to advocate for the ongoing operation of the Special Circumstances List at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court. The list provides a vital, therapeutic jurisdiction for Victorians with complex needs to address their fines.

Fairer fines outcomes – The IWG campaigned successfully for a new Myki product announced in October 2018. The new product gives people with special circumstances, at-risk school students and people with no income, access to a substantially discounted public transport product, reducing the risk of fines for fairer fine outcomes.

**Easing the impact of fines on Victorians** – The IWG informed the Federation's comprehensive submission to The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, seeking to ease the heavy burden of fines on people experiencing mental health issues. Through the highly impactful campaign led by Tanya Day's family, and long-term contributions from IWG members, they welcomed the Victorian government's announcement that the offence of public drunkenness will be decriminalised.



### FAMILY VIOLENCE WORKING GROUP FAMILY VIOLENCE IS THE TOP LEGAL ISSUE FOR COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES WITH OVER 22,000 SERVICES PROVIDED TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE LAST YEAR.

The Family Violence Working Group (FVWG) is convened by the Federation and brings together people from across the sector working on family violence matters and facilitate the sector's response to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

With the implementation of the recommendations well underway, the FVWG has been advocating to ensure accessible legal assistance to victimsurvivors of family violence.

# IMPROVING OUR IMPACT

Why does data matter? Identifying systemic issues, elevating the services that are excelling, filling in the gaps and building the case for change is crucial to continuing to support and uplift our communities. Our members deliver over 10,000 legal and non-legal services per month to over 5,000 members of the Victorian community. The Federation is dedicated to supporting our membership in capturing quality, valuable data surrounding these services and clients to inform services and advocacy.

We completed the major phase of the Data Standards Project in April by delivering a Victorian Data Entry Guide - a quick reference guide to entering data that is accurately aligned to our service provision. The guide enables our membership to create a valuable data resource to support evidence-based decision-making and measure the impact we have on our community. The guide, combined with training, has begun to significantly improve the way we capture, interact with and report on our service and client data, building greater confidence in using the information for planning and funding.

The Federation remains dedicated to building further capacity and knowledge with our data to continue providing our members with resources to thrive in this area. We are keeping the community legal sector informed and better equipped to meet the legal needs of communities now and into the future.

# CPD DAY 2019 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bringing together inspiring speakers and attendees from across the community legal sector, our community lawyers were given insights into innovative practice, navigating the NDIS for clients with a disability, and the impact of bail reform and the nuanced approach that can be taken when representing women. We learned about workplace bullying and employment law from the perspective of new graduate lawyers, building an understanding of how we can better support our colleagues.

The 2019 CPD day was a display of sector excellence. Our community lawyers and advocates showcased how they were supporting their clients and communities through innovative practice and service design in the face of new challenges.

"The sessions were delivered so well... What brilliant work going on in our sector." - CPD DAY ATTENDEE

By providing topical and relevant information on emerging areas of practice, we support our members to strive for service excellence.

"These sessions stood out as being very interesting, new, informative and practical." - CPD DAY ATTENDEE



"THE DIVERSITY OF PRESENTATIONS MADE IT INTERESTING AND AS A NEW LAWYER TO THE SECTOR I LEARNT A LOT OF NEW INFORMATION." - CPD DAY ATTENDEE





### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

CO-CONVENORS: BETH KING (FITZROY LEGAL SERVICE) AND REEANNA MALONEY (UMSU LEGAL SERVICE - UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2018)

This working group celebrates and supports the vital work done by Community Legal Centres to promote legal understanding and empower community-based preventative responses to legal issues.

Over the last year they hosted many exciting speakers and benefited from sharing details of innovative projects, such as Murray Mallee Community Legal Service's consent and relationships project for teens with an intellectual disability, and Inner Melbourne Community Legal's free online resources for Victorian international students.

Held in April 2019, our annual Community Legal Education (CLE) Forum again proved to be a highlight. Hosted by VLA and attended by workers from 12 different Community Legal Centres, it included sessions on school-based CLE in partnership with VEOHRC, reimaging self-help through lessons learned from the USA, the Victoria Law Foundation's new role, acting tips and tricks, and much more.

We have continued to participate in development of the national CLE capacity building the 'Doing CLE' Project, which aims to develop a national practice resource for Community Development and CLE workers inspired by this working group's *CLE Made Easy toolkit*.



### NEOPHYTES NETWORK CO-CONVENORS: ZOE CHAN (JUSTICE CONNECT) AND RETH KING (EITZDOV

CONNECT) AND BETH KING (FITZROY LEGAL SERVICE )

Young lawyers are bright, resilient and optimistic and they play a vital role in the community legal sector. As with all new pursuits, there are learning curves that we all face and there is a need to provide appropriate levels of support that will help new lawyers succeed. Dedicated to promoting collaboration and reflection on the challenges that new lawyers in the sector face, the Neophytes Network plays a crucial role in providing that support through information sharing and networking.

The Network has been busy this year, holding training sessions on volunteer management, effective advocacy and therapeutic jurisprudence. The Network has collaborated with a variety of partners including Professor Jeff Giddings of Monash University, Barrister Neil Howard, AMES Australia, Fitzroy Legal Service, the Neighbourhood Justice Centre, Victoria Legal Aid and the Law Institute of Victoria, among others.

# STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE

To ensure a sustainable and thriving sector that drives best practice service delivery, champions staff and fosters positive environments for innovation, we need strong leadership and governance. This year, the Federation delivered governance training to a number of board members and CEOs.

Working collaboratively with our members we identified the areas that would assist in building a strong sector:

- Enhancing skill set and Board relationships;
- Strategy and risk management;
- Delegations, roles and responsibilities;
- Reporting and legislative obligations.

"...an excellent prompt to reflect on my relationships with my organisation and evaluate how I would like to spend my time in comparison to how I actually spend my time."

"...full of practical tips and ways of thinking that can be easily used in day to day governance." - TRAINING PARTICIPANT

### NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SCHEME (NAS)

When we understand what works and where we could do better, we can build a new standard of practice and accountability for our communities. Through the National Accreditation Scheme (NAS), the sector's capacity to develop and implement effective governance and management practices is enriched. This ultimately increases service delivery and positive outcomes for our members, their staff, clients and communities.

CLC board members and

**CEOs from 15 CLCs** participated in training.

The NAS works closely with the Professional Standards and Support Working Group, demonstrating the sector's commitment to quality assurance, ongoing responsiveness to communities, good governance and embedding a culture that is focused on excellence in service delivery.

# POWERING BETTER OUTCOMES

Evaluation is crucial to refining our program and service delivery and remaining accountable and responsive to the needs of our communities.

We remain committed to supporting our member centres to build a culture of continuous improvement through:

- Making our practices more sustainable;
- Remaining accountable to our communities; and
- Increasing our capacity to meet legal needs.

### SUPPORTING POSITIVE PRACTICE

2 Evaluation training workshops

**3** Theory of change mapping workshops

Monitoring & evaluation framework building workshops The Impact and Evaluation Community of Practice saw continued engagement with over 19 staff from 16 organisations attending sessions over the year, building skills across key areas.

### **BUILDING SKILLS**

 Measuring collective impact

Evaluation capacity building

Evaluating advocacy

Reporting

CO-CONVENORS OF THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND SUPPORT (PSS): AMANDA STOREY, CONSUMER ACTION LAW CENTRE; BRENDAN LACOTA, JUSTICE CONNECT; JENNIFER BLACK, FITZROY LEGAL SERVICE (UNTIL JUNE 2019); JOANNE CARLTON, MOONEE VALLEY LEGAL SERVICE; KATE ROSS, PENINSULA COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE; MARQUITA NOLAN, NORTHERN COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE; MARTIN HA, BRIMBANK MELTON COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE.

# LEADING SERVICE DESIGN ADDRESSING CONNECTED LIFE ISSUES

People do not experience legal issues in a vacuum; problems can build up and life continues around them. Victorians experiencing hardship and crises in their lives, such as health issues or family breakdown, also face clusters of legal problems that profoundly impact them. This may include debt problems, insecure tenancies, family violence issues or consumer scams.

Community Legal Centres work in partnership with other essential services, such as financial counsellors, hospitals, schools and social supports, to help people with overlapping life and legal challenges at the same time, in the one place. Legal support and representation empowers people to understand the situation they are in, their rights and responsibilities, and can help resolve the stressful situation.

A community lawyer can assist a person under financial stress to have an unfair pay-day loan debt wiped.

With the help of a lawyer, a person facing eviction into homelessness can have an unjust compliance order revoked or an arrears payment scheme negotiated.

A woman experiencing family violence can have legal protections put in place to allow her to escape the violent situation safely and help to clean up the web of financial abuse and debt that the relationship might have caused.

### INTEGRATED SERVICES ARE;

Client Centered---Holistic---Collaborative---Trauma informed---Supportive---

As a community, the best response we can have is to provide wrap around support services, which put the person at the centre of our approach. This is how community and Aboriginal legal services work and make a difference in their communities. D ADAM WILLSON FITZROY LEGAL SERVICE INC. ND INTEGRATED SERVICES PROJECT PARTICIPANT

Through collaboration and partnership, we ensure identification of connected life issues and support people to navigate through all of them.

This past year, the Victorian Government invested \$1.8 million to support ten Community Legal Centres and Aboriginal Legal Services to provide services to the community, because we work best when we work together.

These grants give our members the opportunity to achieve greater outcomes for their communities through innovative programs and partnerships. These integrated and collaborative methods of service delivery meet community members facing disadvantage where they are, building their capacity and impacting positively on their wellbeing. 21

# EDDIE'S STORY



Eddie, a bi-sexual man in his 50s, has significant mental health, drug and alcohol issues relating to traumatic personal history. When his social housing home was destroyed in an act of violence by a stranger he was left homeless.

It was his specialist LGBTIQ drug and alcohol case manager who identified he needed legal assistance and connected him with the in-house LGBTIQ community lawyer. His community lawyer was able to successfully advocate with him to the Department of Health and Human Services to urgently find a new home. His community lawyer then assisted him to make a victims of crime application and make a will (which he had been wanting to do for years but couldn't afford to).

EDDIE WOULD HAVE BEEN UNLIKELY 10 HAVE RECEIVED LEGAL HELP WITHOUT A SPECIALIST LGBTIQ HEALTH SERVICE BEING INTEGRATED WITH THE LEGAL SERVICE.

Eddie now has a new home and financial support from the victims of crime claim, which has reduced the ongoing mental impact of the violent act. By writing his will he has taken back control of his life and his financial affairs.

### INTEGRATED LEGAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK

### CONVENORS: RACHELLE DRIVER AND RACHEL TEAL (JUSTICE CONNECT HOMELESS LAW)

The Integrated Legal and Social Support Network (ILSSN) supports collaborative service delivery in legal practice settings. The ILSSN work towards defining and refining integrated practice, including through the development of new collective resources and focusing on providing clear and practical information to clients about the different roles and obligations in multi-disciplinary community legal services.

This year the ILSSN launched their Integrated Practice Toolkit. The Toolkit is a practical guide that supports lawyers, along with social work, health and other community-service professionals, to understand and navigate the risks related to legal professional privilege and mandatory reporting in the context of integrated service models.

Access the toolkit here: fclc.org.au/integrated\_practice\_toolkit The legal issue is only part of the story. If we do not address other issues, we are basically communicating this message to them, 'We are here today to address your legal need. I know you are worried about not having a place to stay, and your partner bashes you on a regular basis. I know it must be difficult too that your children have been removed, and that you have no way of supporting yourself, but don't worry about all that. We are here to work on your legal issue. Let's just sort this out and then you can get on with your life.' It's ridiculous and we know that they [the client] will be back if we do not support them with their other issues. - COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE LAWYER **11** 

FEDERATION MEMBERS EVENT

CLC clients participated in our survey

# LISTENING TO COMMUNITY VOICES

Remaining adaptive and accountable to our communities is a key way in which our members improve their positive impact. With the support of the Department of Justice and Community Safety, we carried out the client survey with the expertise of the Social Research Centre. Through this we delivered the FIRST Victorian state-wide client survey in the community legal sector, gaining valuable insight into the clients we assist.

### We're listening to the voices of those who access our services and using their experiences to improve our practice.

Our members assist hundreds of people every day, striving to provide holistic, client-centered advice, programs and services to best meet the needs of their communities.

### KEY FINDINGS

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80% "I would recommend a Community Legal Centre to others"

86<sup>%</sup> "I felt listened to"

80% "My understanding of the issue and my options was improved"

88% "I felt safe and secure"



### **A CARING APPROACH**

"The Community Legal Centre personalised the interaction and the level of support they offered clients, particularly in relation to the empathy and understanding they showed, their friendliness and engagement, and the emotional support they provided."

"...most people in other agencies don't ask about your support needs, which are equally as valid as the legal issues are, and sometimes more so."

- SURVEY RESPONDENT

"Before I contacted the Centre I was very anxious. When I got advice and help from the Centre I felt at ease. Which was very good at that time, I needed help and was very desperate."

"The care in which was taken to listen to my concerns and put me at ease. I was able to believe I was where I needed to be for the best help possible."

- SURVEY RESPONDENT

"They were always very straightforward and didn't ever complicate it, very direct to make it easy to understand, very understanding and willing to listen and explain."

### "THEY TREATED ME LIKE A PERSON, AN EQUAL, A FRIEND NOT A 'CLIENT'." - SURVEY RESPONDENT

### **EMPOWERED TO ASSERT RIGHTS**

"I learnt my rights ... which I had no idea about and gained so much knowledge and strength from using this service. I am extremely grateful that this service is available to help people such as myself who couldn't possibly afford legal help."

"Sometimes you don't really know whether the problem is a real issue and you don't really know where to go if you are facing a problem like this. And you basically don't have any resource for legal advice except from like a lawyer. And going to a lawyer costs money as well. Having these services provide you with like... advice on the spot and advise you on if this is something that has to do with the law or whether that's not. It clears your mind a bit."

- DEPTH INTERVIEW RESPONDENT

### OUR TEAM

Belinda Lo and Serina McDuff
Deborah Wilson
Natalie Hallam
Michelle Reynolds
David Mejia-Canales
Jeanette Nkrumah
Kieran Prendergast
Tarneen Onus-Williams
Arabella Close
Charlotte Ward
Timothy Graham

### TEMPORARY AND DEPARTING STAFF

Smart Justice Officer	Tyrone Connell
Director of Engagement	Melanie Poole
Office Coordinator	Joady Bye
Impact & Evaluation Coordinator	Tory Norris
Senior Policy Adviser	Leeanne Torpey
Engagement Coordinator	Tracey Martinovich
Project Manager - Specialist-Generalist Project	Michael Tamblyn
Project Manager - Client Surveys	Keirin McCormack
Advocacy Adviser	Wāni Le Frerè

### OUR BOARD

Chairparaan	Kristen Wallwork (Springvale Monash Legal Service)
Chairperson	
Treasurer	James Ferguson (KPMG)
Secretary	Jackie Galloway (Peninsula Community Legal Centre)
General members	Zana Bytheway (JobWatch)
	Claudia Fatone (Fitzroy Legal Service)
	Chris Povey (Justice Connect)
	Hayley Mansfield (ARC Justice)

### WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPPORT FROM OUR FUNDERS, SPONSORS, PRO BONO AND COMMUNITY SECTOR PARTNERS. THEIR GENEROUS HELP MAKES OUR WORK POSSIBLE.

# FUNDING AND SUPPORT

# CohealthDepartment of Justice and Community SafetyLegal Services BoardMyer FoundationReichstein FoundationVictoria Law FoundationVictoria Legal Aid Community Legal Centre Innovation and Transformation FundVictoria Legal Aid Community Legal Services Program

### SPONSORSHIP, IN KIND AND PRO BONO

City of Melbourne	Holding Redlich		
Clayton Utz	Innovative Knowledge Development and Jill Toovey		
Cohealth	Jesuit Social Services		
Collins Biggers & Paisley	King & Wood Mallesons		
DLA Piper	Maddocks		
Gadens	Minter Ellison		
Gilbert and Tobin	Victorian Council of Social Services		
Herbert Smith Freehills			

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ANNUAL REPORT 2018 – 2019

### FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES (VICTORIA) INC. ABN 30 036 539 902

## FINANCIAL REPORTS YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

### STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019 THE ACCOMPANYING NOTES FORM PART OF THIS FINANCIAL REPORT.

	Note	2019 (\$)	2018 (\$)
INCOME			
Victoria Legal Aid - Recurrent	6(a)	696,497	704,447
VLA - ERO State	6(a)	210,408	145,061
VLA - ERO Extra	6(a)	-	-
Victoria Legal Aid - Other Income	6(b)	63,089	474,044
Grant Income - Other Projects		2,519,566	262,486
Other Income		102,645	137,298
Interest		36,517	26,597
		3,628,722	1,749,933
EXPENDITURE			
Employee benefit expenses		1,213,536	874,041
Occupancy expenses		22,680	22,080
Operating expenses		103,132	99,241
Project related expenses		2,217,540	584,737
		3,556,888	1,580,099
Surplus before income tax		71,834	169,834
Income tax expense		-	
Surplus after income tax		71,834	169,834
Other comprehensive income net of income tax			-
Total comprehensive income attributable to the entity		71,834	169,834

### Note 2019 (\$) 2018 (\$) CURRENT ASSETS Cash and cash equivalents 2 3,912,658 3,698,495 Trade and other receivables 17,443 210,711 TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS 3,930,101 3,909,206 NON-CURRENT ASSETS Property, plant and equipment TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS TOTAL ASSETS 3,930,101 3,909,206 CURRENT LIABILITIES Trade and other payables 276,441 309,234 Amounts received in advance 3,005,086 3,048,339 Provisions 70,092 47,808 TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES 3,351,619 3,405,381 NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES Provisions 12,111 9,288 TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES 12,111 9,288 TOTAL LIABILITIES 3.363.730 3.414.669 NET ASSETS 566.371 494.537 MEMBERS' FUNDS Retained profits 566.371 494,537 TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS 566.371 494,537 STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019 THE ACCOMPANYING NOTES FORM PART OF THIS FINANCIAL REPORT. CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES Receipts from Gov't Grants 704,447 recurrent 718.536 Receipts from Gov't Grants 172,426 non-recurrent 210.408 Receipts from Other Sources 2,813,745 2,758,965 Interest received 35,454 27,024 Payments to Suppliers and Employees (3,563,980) (1,333,245) Net Cash provided by 214,163 2,329,617 operating activities CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES Payments for purchase of property and equipment Net Cash provided by (used in) investing activities Net increase (decrease) 214,163 2,329,617 in cash held Cash at the beginning of the year 3,698,495 1,368,878 Cash at the end of the year 3,912,658 3,698,495

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2019

THE ACCOMPANYING NOTES FORM PART OF THIS FINANCIAL REPORT.

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

### NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity. The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuation of noncurrent assets. The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in preparation of this financial report.

- a. Cash and Cash Equivalents Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.
- **b. Income Tax** The Association is exempt from paying income tax by virtue of Section 50-45 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, 1997. Accordingly, tax effect accounting has not been adopted.
- c. Property, Plant and Equipment Furniture and equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all furniture and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.
- d. Employee Entitlements Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Provision is made for the Association's liability for long service leave from commencement of employment.
- e. Provisions Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.
- f. Impairment of Assets At the end of each reporting period, the entity reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is an indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is recognised in the income and expenditure statement.
- g. Revenue Revenue is brought to account when received and to the extent that it relates to the subsequent period it is disclosed as a liability. <u>Grant Income</u> - Grant income received, other than for specific purposes, is brought to account over the period to which the grant relates. <u>Deferred Income</u> - Unspent grant income received in relation to specific projects and events is not brought to account as revenue in the current year but deferred as a liability in the financial statements until spent for the purpose received. <u>Interest Revenue</u> - Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument. <u>Donations</u> - Donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).
- h. Goods and Services Tax (GST) Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.
- i. Economic Dependence The entity receives a significant portion of its revenue from Victoria Legal Aid. At the date of this report the Committee has no reason to believe Victoria Legal Aid will not continue to fund the entity.

		Note	2019 (\$)	2018 (\$)
NOTE 2: CASH AND C	ASH EQUIVALE	NTS		
Cash on hand			388	349
Cash at bank			2,512,811	2,671,834
Term Deposit			1,399,459	1,026,312
			3,912,658	3,698,495
NOTE 3: TRADE AND 0	THER RECEIV	ABLES		
Accounts Receivab	le	_	13,603	207,340
Prepayments and S	Sundry Receiv	ables	1,540	2,134
Accrued Bank Inter	est		2,300	1,237
		_	17,443	210,711
NOTE 4: PROPERTY, P		IPMENT		
Furniture and fitting	-		129,908	129,908
Less accumulated	depreciation		(129,908)	(129,908)
		_	-	-
NOTE 5: TRADE AND	OTHER PAYABI	.ES		
Creditors and accru	als		234,563	275,015
Salary and wage ac	cruals		41,878	34,219
			276,441	309,234
NOTE 6: AMOUNTS R Victoria Legal Aid (		VANCE		
- Extra - Future Y	· ·		115,342	115,342
Victoria Legal Aid (	ERO)			
- State (unused)		_	206,465	206,465
Victoria Legal Aid ( Total Generalist Fu			29,090	7,051
carried forward	100	6 (a)	350,897	328,858
Viotoria Logal Aid (	Outcomos			
Victoria Legal Aid ( Measurement Pi			-	-
Victoria Legal Aid	.)			
(S&G CLC projec Total VLA Project F		_	-	63,089
carried forward	ullus	6 (b)	-	63,089
Non-VI A Droject F	unde operiod			
Non-VLA Project Fu forward	inds carried		2,654,189	2,656,392
			3,005,086	3,048,339
		_		
NOTE 6(A) RECONCIL	IATION OF VLA	GENERALIST	FUNDS	
	VLA (\$)	VLA SACS ERO State (\$)	VLA SACS ERO Extra (\$)	Total (\$)
Funds Brought				(4)
Forward - 1 July 2018	7051	206 465	115 242	370 050
Funds received	7,051	206,465		328,858
Funds received Funds utilised (net	718,536	210,408	-	928,944
of interest)	(696,497)	(210,408)	-	(906,905)
Funde Carried				

VLA (ER0) - Extra includes funds carried forward from 2016: \$44,703, 2015: \$38,215, 2014: \$25,927 and 2013: \$6,493.

29,090 206,465 115,342 350,897

**Funds** Carried

Forward -

30 June 2019

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2010 (\$)

2018 (\$)

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

	S&G CLC (\$)	Total (\$)
Funds Brought		
Forward - 1 July 2018	63,089	63,089
Funds received	-	
Funds utilised	(63,089)	(63,089
Funds Carried		(***
Forward - 30 June 2019		
50 Julie 2019		
	2019 (Š)	2018 (\$
NOTE 7: PROVISIONS		
Current		
Provision for annual leave	70,092	47,808
	70,092	47,808
	70,072	47,000
Non-Current		
Provision for Long Service Leave	12,111	9,288
	12,111	9,288
NOTE 8: RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOW FROM OPERATIONS WITH PROFIT		
FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES AFTE	R INCOME TAX	
Profit after income tax	71,834	169,834
CASH FLOWS EXCLUDED FROM OPE ATTRIBUTABLE TO OPERATING AC		
Non-cash flows in profit:		
- Depreciation	-	
Changes in assets and liabilities;		
- (Increase)/decrease in trade		
and other debtors	193,268	(198,091
<ul> <li>Increase/(decrease) in trade</li> </ul>		
and other payables	(32,793)	217,98

### INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES (VICTORIA) INC. ABN 30 036 539 902

### ΩΡΙΝΙΩΝ

2,119,332

2,329,617

20,554

(43,253)

25,107

214,163

I have audited the accompanying financial report, of Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc., which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2019, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and the certification by members of the committee

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report of Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc. has been prepared in accordance with Div 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act) including:

a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and

b) complies with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) and Div 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Sean Denham Suite 1, 707 Mt Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds VIC 3039

### STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

The Committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements. In the opinion of the committee of Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc.:

- a) the financial statements and notes of Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc. are in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, includina:
- i. giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date: and
- ii. complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013; and

b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Kristen Wallwork, Chairperson Dated: 01/11/2019

James Ferguson, Secretary

Dated: 06/11/2019

# OUR MEMBERS

AED Legal Centre; Animal Law Institute Inc; ARC Justice: Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre & Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre; Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Ballarat Grampians Community Legal Service; Barwon Community Legal Service; Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre; Consumer Action Law Centre; Disability Discrimination Legal Service; Djirra; Eastern Community Legal Centre; Emma House Domestic Violence Services; Environmental Justice Australia; First Step Legal Service; Fitzroy Legal Service; Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre; Gippsland Community Legal Service; Human Rights Law Centre; Hume Riverina Community Legal Service; Inner Melbourne Community Legal; Intouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence; JobWatch; Justice Connect; Law And Advocacy Centre For Women; Melbourne University Student Union Legal Service; Mental Health Legal Centre; Monash Law Clinic; Moonee Valley Legal Service; Murray Mallee Community Legal Service; Northern Community Legal Centre; Peninsula Community Legal Centre; Refugee Legal; Seniors Rights Victoria; Social Security Rights Victoria; Southport Community Legal Service; Springvale Monash Legal Service; St Kilda Legal Service; Tenants Victoria; Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service; Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service; West Heidelberg Community Legal Service; WEstjustice; Whittlesea Community Legal Service; Women's Legal Service Victoria; Youthlaw; and Young Workers Centre.





WE APPRECIATE AND CELEBRATE DIVERSITY IN ALL ITS FORMS. WE BELIEVE DIVERSITY OF ALL KINDS MAKES OUR TEAMS, SERVICES AND ORGANISATIONS STRONGER AND MORE EFFECTIVE.



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received in advance

Activities

- Increase/(decrease) in provisions

Net cash provided by Operating

Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria

Location: Level 3, 225 Bourke St, Melbourne Victoria 3000

Phone: 03 9652 1500 Email: administration@fclc.org.au Social: @CommunityLawVic

ABN 30 036 539 902 REGISTRATION A0013713H

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