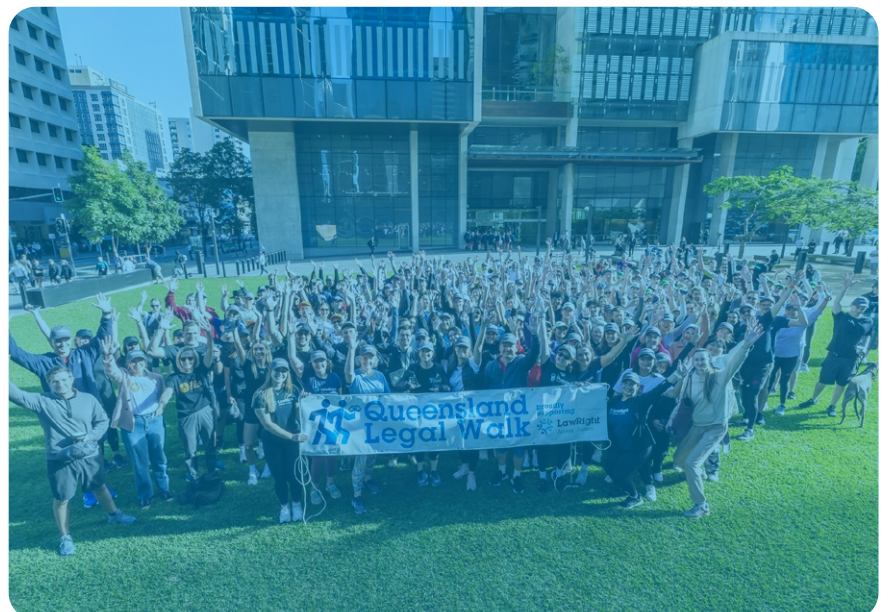




**LawRight**  
Access | Justice

**2024-2025  
Annual Report**





# Acknowledgement of Country

LawRight has offices in Meanjin and Gimuy. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands and waters throughout Australia and offer our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the resilience of First Nations peoples despite historical and ongoing injustices, benefit from their knowledge and generosity, and support their right to self-determination.

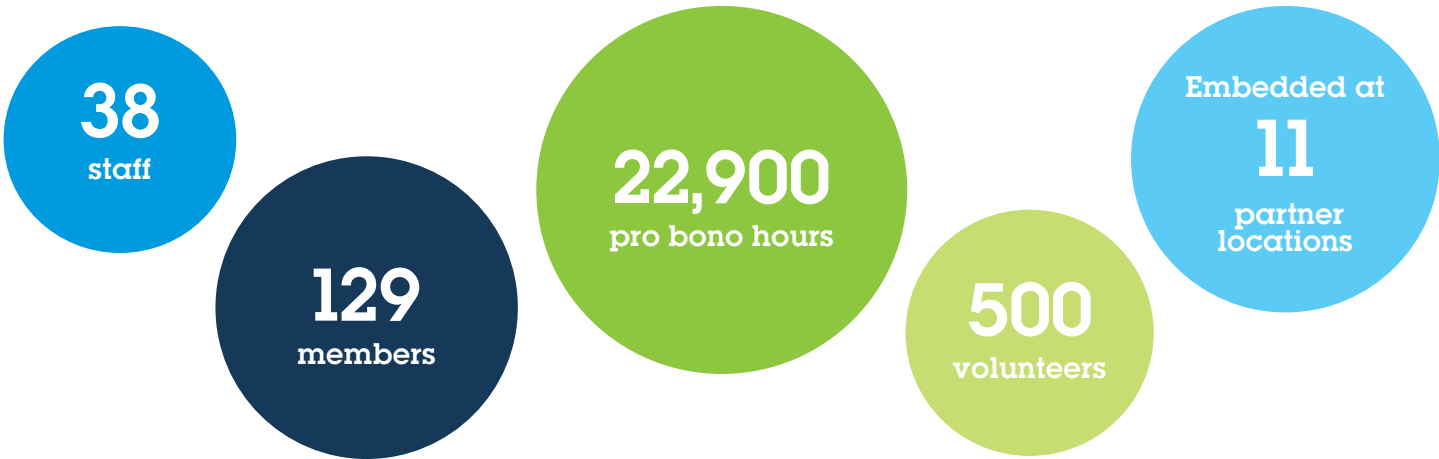
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LawRight received...



LawRight's impact is scaled through strategic partnerships...



LawRight clients...



LawRight supported...



LawRight delivered...



34,811 total services



# CEO's report

**Karen Dyhrberg** LawRight CEO

Thank you to all our members, volunteers and supporters in 2024-25.

LawRight entered the 2024–25 financial year with significant uncertainty. Our major government funding was due to expire on 30 June 2025, the new national legal partnership agreement was still being negotiated, and elections were looming at both State and Federal levels. We did not know whether our funding would continue, or at what level. Government grants comprise 87% of LawRight's revenue.

Fortunately, the National Access to Justice Partnership was settled in late 2024, and five-year funding was secured for our core programs, including our Federal Court work funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.

The community legal sector also received significant funding boosts from State and Federal governments to improve wages and conditions. With CLC wages lagging 22% behind those at Legal Aid, it had become increasingly difficult to recruit and retain senior staff. This support from government has already had a real impact on wellbeing and stability in our workforce.

In fact, LawRight staff average just under five years of service. Working with such dedicated

people is the best part of this role and I am always grateful for colleagues new and long-serving.

However, challenges remain. The increased workforce funding has been rolled into the new funding model, but there is no allowance for growth, even as demand continues to climb. Our Migration Law Service, funded by the Commonwealth to address backlogs in the Temporary Protection Visa scheme, commenced in March 2024 and ended in June 2025, even though demand continues. We enter 2025-26 in good shape and ready to address these challenges.

Many thanks to Jacqui Wootton for her guidance and support throughout this year, and to the Management Committee and members for their continued commitment to access to justice.

# President's report

**Jacqueline Wootton** LawRight President

In my final report as LawRight President, I thank everyone in the LawRight community for their commitment to justice and fairness. It has been a privilege to serve as President of such an outstanding organisation.

LawRight's success relies on collaboration between staff, volunteers, members, and partners. I particularly want to thank our members for contributing more than 22,000 hours of pro bono legal help over the past year. This extraordinary contribution makes a real difference in improving access to justice for Queenslanders and in the effective administration of justice in this state.

We are very grateful to the Queensland and Commonwealth governments for supporting community legal centres with additional funding to address workforce challenges.

I thank my fellow Committee members for their support and commitment throughout the year.

To the LawRight staff — thank you for your dedication and care in what has been another big year. I particularly acknowledge Karen Dyhrberg's leadership as CEO and look forward to seeing the leadership team and staff implement LawRight's refreshed strategic plan in coming years.

As the rising cost of living increases both client need and service delivery costs, fundraising and donations are more important than ever to help LawRight meet demand. LawRight's staff and committee are grateful to our many supporters, donors and Friends of LawRight who help make LawRight's work possible.

We look forward to celebrating LawRight's 25th anniversary with you in 2025-26!



**Karen Dyhrberg**  
LawRight CEO

**Jacqueline Wootton**  
LawRight President



# LawRight Patron

## The Honourable Chief Justice Helen Bowskill

As Patron of LawRight, I am proud of the organisation’s commitment to making access to justice a reality for all Queenslanders. Through LawRight, people who might otherwise face complex legal matters alone receive advice, representation, and support from skilled pro bono lawyers and barristers, alongside LawRight staff.

Although demand continues to increase, it is reassuring to see the continued funding of LawRight’s core programs through the National Access to Justice Partnership, thanks to the State and Commonwealth Governments. Through its close work with the Bar Association of Queensland, Queensland Law Society and their members, LawRight provides the structure and coordination that enables the profession to deliver pro bono assistance. Without a strong community legal sector and LawRight’s

leadership and expertise, this pro bono work could not occur.

LawRight occupies a unique and vital place in our legal landscape for its work supporting litigants in civil matters in our highest courts. It not only supports individuals but strengthens the administration of justice. By ensuring that people have access to timely legal help, LawRight contributes to fairer outcomes, greater efficiency in the courts, and a justice system that better serves the community.

I particularly thank Jacqueline Wootton of Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer for her service as LawRight president. I extend my sincere thanks to the many volunteers, staff, and partners who make LawRight’s work possible, and acknowledge the indispensable role they play in upholding justice in our State.



## Building LawRight’s cultural competency

LawRight acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters throughout Australia, and supports their right to self-determination. We seek to contribute to the work of reconciliation in an ongoing and impactful manner.

10% of LawRight’s clients identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

LawRight embarked on its first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2021-22.

In August 2024, LawRight formed a staff Working Group to develop a plan to ensure our workplace is culturally safe for First Nations staff and

clients. The group reflects LawRight as a whole, with thirteen members from across our various services.

While the plan is still being developed, the Working Group has already taken steps to improve the cultural competency of staff, including sharing practical resources and knowledge, providing opportunities for staff to attend events celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and organising staff training. The Working Group also updated LawRight’s Acknowledgement of Country to better reflect our shared values.

We look forward to sharing our plan next year.



LawRight CEO Karen Dyhrberg, Chief Justice Helen Bowskill, Rob Reed OAM and Joanne Rennick of MurphySchmidt





# Queensland Legal Walk

For over fifteen years, members of the legal profession have woken early on National Pro Bono Day, to participate in the Queensland Legal Walk. This annual event is an opportunity to connect with colleagues and celebrate the valuable pro bono work undertaken by the Australian legal profession.

This year, more than 1,150 participants across Queensland came together in a powerful show of support for access to justice. Legal professionals, law students, community leaders, and supporters came together across seven regional and metropolitan locations, including Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville, Gold Coast, Tamborine Mountain, and the Sunshine Coast. Together we raised over \$130,000 – our most successful year to date!

We are grateful to Songwoman Maroochy for her Welcome to Country and for sharing her knowledge with us.



## Walks in the regions

### A big thank you to our regional organisers

Townsville Community Law  
Suncoast Community Legal Service  
Downs and South West Queensland Law Association (Toowoomba)  
Anglicare & Mission Australia (Cairns)

### Supporting Townsville’s disaster response

The first \$10,000 raised by the Walk went directly to Townsville Community Law to support disaster relief efforts, ensuring essential legal help reaches those affected by crises.

Total Raised  
**\$130,267**



## Thank you to our sponsors

ActionStep  
Bar Association of Queensland  
Queensland Law Society

## Champion fundraisers

**\$14,652**  
Overall Team and Chambers:  
Level Twenty Seven  
Chambers

**\$9,119**  
Individual:  
Dayle Buckley

**\$10,225**  
Law Firm:  
Clayton Utz

**\$3,094**  
Law School:  
QUT Law







# Red Wine for Justice

Our Red Wine for Justice fundraiser broke records this year – raising \$108,182 to directly support our frontline legal services.

This unique wine auction has become an established event for wine lovers in the legal profession. Generously hosted by Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer, this year’s event was a lively, action-packed night. An outstanding selection of wines was once again donated by our sponsors and led to some hotly contested bidding.

Thank you to guest speaker the Honourable Philip Morrison KC, MC Bridget O’Brien, sommelier Andrew Buchanan, and auctioneer Yianni Mooney.

\$100,000+  
Total raised





# Responding to disasters

Climate disasters are becoming increasingly more common. In 2024, Queensland was identified as Australia's most disaster-prone state.

LawRight is committed to delivering targeted and collaborative assistance in response to this changing environment.

**Over the past years we have absorbed key lessons about responding to disasters...**

- People experiencing these events require immediate, urgent assistance, which means we must be prepared.
- These events also regularly lead to other ongoing problems which require specialised help from the legal sector.
- People who are already vulnerable for other reasons are often more adversely impacted by these events. This includes many of our clients.

## Townsville floods, February 2025

In February 2025, Townsville and surrounds experienced severe flooding. A persistent tropical low-pressure system brought record-breaking rainfall, leading to significant impacts on communities, infrastructure and the environment.



**The first \$10,000 raised from the Queensland Legal Walk was given directly to Townsville Community Law, our trusted partners who have experience helping their community respond to disasters.**

## Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred, March 2025

In March 2025, Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred had a major impact over southeastern Queensland, with damaging winds causing significant power outages, structural damage and widespread flooding.

Responding to Cyclone Alfred

## Disaster-related services

- 75 legal advices
- 23 legal tasks
- 66 high-intensity, ongoing casework matters
- 2 resources developed
- 4 community legal education activities
- 41 stakeholder engagements
- 2 law reform projects



## Advocacy for rough sleepers after ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred

This year, local governments throughout south-east Queensland indicated they would take a more compliance-based approach to people sleeping rough in public spaces.

It was less than a week after ex-TC Alfred that Brisbane City Council announced its own crackdown. Many people were still without power, and clients of Homelessness Law were experiencing a squeeze on available accommodation and limited services being open. Queensland's housing crisis was exacerbated by the 2022 floods and again by ex-TC Alfred.

After the announcement, LawRight received numerous enquiries with concerns about how the crackdown would affect people sleeping rough. We engaged in strategic advocacy on behalf of affected communities.

We had multiple conversations with community sector partners, including homelessness services and government departments, around the Councils' approach.

For our community partners that are not legal services, we supported them in the advocacy they do, to call on local governments to do more to protect human rights in their responses. We spoke with other centres including Caxton Legal Centre and Basic Rights Qld about how to coordinate support to clients and advocacy with local government and other agencies.

As LawRight operates Queensland's only specialist free homelessness legal services, we were approached by other CLCs with clients affected by this issue. We informally provided guidance to our colleagues at those centres.

Working collaboratively with Basic Rights Qld and students from The University of Queensland, we produced a factsheet on local laws governing sleeping on public land from the various local governments around south-east Queensland. We shared this with community agencies supporting people sleeping rough and those advocating to local governments for a more compassionate response that considers Councils' human rights obligations.

Feedback from representatives within local governments suggests that our collaborative advocacy has prompted internal consideration and reflection, leading to improved Council responses.

A compliance-based approach, even where formal fines and enforcement orders are not issued, forces people sleeping in public parks to sleep in other locations. For some people, this can lead to sleeping in even less safe situations than public parks.

It was disappointing that this advocacy was required in the weeks immediately following a disaster. This placed a strain on our capacity to respond at a time when many staff still did not have power on at home and when community legal centres had a general increase of clients following the cyclone.

As disasters increase in frequency and severity with climate change, LawRight and the community legal sector are planning how to respond to this demand.





**“Thank you so much to Kate and the entire team at LawRight for helping me move into my new home. I truly do not know where I would be without your generous support. Your assistance gave me the hope, strength and ability to escape further domestic violence. LawRight not only helped me secure and move into a safe new home, but also supported my mental health and wellbeing by allowing me to leave. Thank you.” - Julie**



# Disbursement Fund

The Disbursement Fund offers financial support to clients of pro bono lawyers and community legal centres for expenses associated with their legal cases, such as filing fees, transcripts, witness reports and travel. Through the Disbursement Fund, we assisted 13 individuals and 13 families.

Many of our clients struggle with covering the costs associated with their legal problems. By providing targeted and direct financial aid in specific circumstances, we can better support our clients to endure long, complicated legal processes.

LawRight provides this direct financial support thanks to our fundraising through events such as the Queensland Legal Walk, generous private donations and multiple small grants, including from the Queensland Government.

This year we distributed \$68,500 through our Disbursement Fund and Homelessness Law’s brokerage.



## Direct financial support for clients most in need

We were assisting a client to respond to District Court proceedings, through our Court and Tribunal Services. The client was experiencing homelessness and had no savings or income except for Centrelink payments. The client was being sued, but her matter was complex and we urgently needed to obtain a large number of court documents to understand what was going on.

A small grant from the Disbursement Fund helped the client to obtain various court documents, so that our pro bono volunteers could understand the case and give the client the legal help she needed.

## Strategically using brokerage to sustain safe housing

Homelessness Law’s brokerage fund supports marginalised Queenslanders to access and maintain safe and independent housing. This year, Homelessness Law brokerage was strategically used to support 52 clients to resolve legal issues pushing them into homelessness, to meet their essential needs, and to keep them safely housed.

### Securing a safe home for a victim-survivor of family violence

Homelessness Law had previously supported Julie to resolve various legal issues connected to her housing and a previous experience of

violence. When her new partner became violent, she reconnected.

Empowered by her previous work with LawRight and our tailored advice, Julie self-advocated with her housing provider to end her current agreement. She was offered another tenancy but was unable to pay the relocation fees or upfront costs. Homelessness Law strategically used its brokerage to allow Julie to secure the new tenancy and move into her new home.

With a safe home, Julie was able to continue working with our lawyers to resolve the various civil law issues that arose from her experience of violence, allowing her to build stability moving forward.



# Pro Bono Connect

- **Public Interest Referral Scheme**
- **Queensland Law Society Referral Scheme**
- **Bar Association of Queensland Referral Scheme**

Our Pro Bono Connect team connects vulnerable individuals and not-for-profit organisations with members of Queensland’s legal profession for pro bono assistance. This includes coordinating public interest referrals, as well as administering the pro bono referral schemes of both the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland. By creating a structured and sustainable pathway for pro bono engagement across the legal profession, we can maximise the impact of limited pro bono resources.

Where referral to the private profession is not possible, we deliver direct assistance by providing legal advice, undertaking discrete tasks, or referring applicants to other appropriate services. This ensures continuity of support and helps reduce the number of individuals and organisations who would otherwise remain without legal assistance.

Pro Bono Connect operates as a responsive and adaptive service, adjusting its scope to meet emerging legal needs and shifts in demand for pro bono support. Its coordinated model ensures that the Queensland legal profession’s pro bono contributions are strategically directed to matters of highest public interest and community benefit.

## Pro Bono referrals

### Firms that took referrals this year

Allens  
Baker McKenzie  
Clayton Utz  
Dentons  
DLA Piper  
Dunham Shaw  
DWF Group  
Hall & Wilcox  
Holding Redlich  
King & Wood Mallesons  
Norton Rose Fulbright  
Sparke Helmore

### Mediators who accepted referrals this year

Natalia Wuth

### Barristers who accepted referrals this year

Andrew Crowe CBE KC  
Benjamin Wilson  
Deacon Johnston  
Emma Fitzgerald  
Gabriel Perry  
Mark Steele KC  
Maxwell Walker  
Michael Murray  
Mitchell Downes  
Philip Looney KC  
Rachel Hew  
Renae Kirk  
Robert Quirk  
Shireen Long  
Storm Scarlett

224

clients (163 new)

129

referrals to pro bono representation

907

referrals elsewhere

55

advices

68

tasks

## Main areas of law

Property disputes  
Elder abuse  
Not-for-profit issues  
Government and Administrative law  
Wills/Probate

39%

identified disability or mental illness

24%

older people

15%

experienced family violence

15%

rural, regional or remote

15%

not-for-profit organisations

11%

affected by disaster

6%

First Nations

“Barry Nilsson appreciates our longstanding membership of LawRight, and the specialist referrals we receive from the Pro Bono Connect program. This impactful collaboration enables Barry Nilsson to responsively deliver client-created pro bono legal assistance to Queenslanders facing vulnerability across the state.” - Cameron Lavery, Special Counsel & National Pro Bono Manager



# Finding the right support for applicants

Pro Bono Connect assesses every application we receive on a case-by-case basis, weighing up a variety of factors including the applicant’s financial circumstances, the legal merit of the matter, the potential for broader community impact, whether the area of law is one with which we can assist, and whether alternative legal services are available. For organisations, we also consider whether the organisation has a charitable or community purpose.

## This year we received 1,375 applications. Of these...

- **588** clients were assessed as eligible for pro bono help (either full representation, advice, help with legal tasks, or connection to another LawRight service). Of these:
  - » **427** were connected to LawRight’s direct services – **420** to Court and Tribunal Services and **7** to Homelessness Law.
  - » **161** applicants were given a full assessment by the Pro Bono Connect team:
  - » **125** applicants were referred to our pro bono partners.
  - » **67** picked up by our pro bono partners for full representation.
  - » **4** referred for mediation.
  - » We had to turn away the remaining **787** applicants, who were assessed as ineligible for pro bono assistance. Pro Bono Connect provided them with advice, information and/or referral elsewhere.

### Strategically delivering pro bono assistance

Unmet need is inevitable within our sector. While we continually strive to assist whenever possible, as well as apply for new funding opportunities, we accept that we can’t help everyone.

The intake processes we have established ensure that pro bono resources are allocated transparently, while maintaining fairness for applicants and offering a streamlined system for the legal profession who wish to provide pro bono assistance.

**4,000**  
pro bono hours

**38**  
applicants who we could not refer to our Pro Bono partners received specialised advice from Pro Bono Connect

**780**  
applicants were provided referrals to other community legal centres or support services

# Supporting not-for-profits to navigate legal challenges

Not-for-profit organisations (NFPs) benefit communities by providing support for specific groups of people, usually those who are experiencing disadvantage of some kind. However, such organisations can also struggle to find appropriate pro bono legal support for themselves, as fewer CLCs are funded to help this kind of client. They also frequently lack the resources to seek private legal assistance due to the nature of their organisational structure, largely relying on volunteer support to operate sustainably.

**Our Pro Bono Connect team is able to connect NFPs with our member firms for full representation, or for specialised advice from our member barristers. We have previously assisted NFPs with:**

- Obtaining deductible gift recipient status
- ACNC registration
- Governance and regulation requirements
- Advice and negotiation of contracts, including leases
- Contractual disputes
- Litigation
- Employment law

**By assisting NFPs to navigate legal challenges, we support them to continue to provide services for their communities.**

**15%**  
of Pro Bono Connect clients were not-for-profit organisations

## Helping charities focus on their core purpose

“The Foundation” was a charitable organisation supporting families in need in a regional area. It relied mostly on government grants, with some donations, usually made through bequests in wills.

Recent changes to government policies meant that The Foundation found itself at risk of not being able to continue its services. The Foundation realised that it might be able to save on costs, as well as encourage more donations from the public, if it obtained deductible gift recipient status.

However, as a largely volunteer-based organisation located outside of the metro, it lacked the resources and appropriate knowledge to undertake this task.

We referred The Foundation to one of our member firms. The firm assisted the Foundation to draft the required documents to obtain DGR status, allowing The Foundation to maximise its donations and focus on serving their community.



# Working to end the abuse and mistreatment of older people

Older people are among the most vulnerable members of our community. They may have limited resources to protect themselves against abuse and many seek to avoid conflict or involving lawyers, out of a fear they will damage family relationships, a fear often complicated by their reliance on those relationships for support. Working to prevent such abuse continues to be a key focus of our Pro Bono Connect team through their direct client work and targeted advocacy.

An ageing population, a housing crisis, and the rising costs of living are all contributing to increasing the number of older victims of abuse across Australia. Many clients come to us with highly complex matters that involve either property or large sums of money, and have been exacerbated by relationship breakdowns.

While some matters involve deliberate and sustained abuse, harm can also emerge unexpectedly. The older person is often dependent on an adult child or grandchild, for accommodation, care, support and family

connection. It is not uncommon for the other party to also be experiencing financial stress of some kind. These situations are particularly volatile because neither party can afford for their living arrangements to change, and they usually require costly and time-consuming legal intervention to be resolved.

A recurring issue we see is the expectation of adult children to receive financial support from the older person, which leads to financial abuse, misuse of enduring powers of attorney, or coercive controlling behaviours.

In some cases, older people are harmed through isolation, such as being cut off from friends and family or by having access to services restricted (including internet, telephone, or electricity). They may also experience financial abuse, such as unauthorised withdrawals from bank accounts or demands to 'pay rent' and other property-related expenses despite an earlier significant financial contribution.



## Targeted advocacy to policy makers

Pro Bono Connect made submissions on the Public Consultation Draft of the National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2024-2034 and the Education, Arts and Communities Committee's Inquiry into Elder Abuse in Queensland.

**“Pro Bono Connect plays an incredibly important role in facilitating accessing to justice. Without them firms would not be able to dedicate their time and resources to critical pro bono work. The team at Pro Bono Connect always delivers its work in supporting firms with efficiency, professionalism and significant expertise.”**

**Guy Donovan, National Pro Bono Manager, Holding Redlich**

## Restoring financial security after family breakdown

Sandra’s daughter, Meredith, was having trouble getting money together for a deposit for a house. She asked Sandra if she would be willing to give her \$85,000 towards a deposit, on the basis that Sandra would be able to live in Meredith’s house for the remainder of her life and be close to the family. Sandra agreed and moved into Meredith’s house after settlement.

Sandra and Meredith lived together for a few months before Meredith decided she wanted to travel overseas. Several months later, Meredith

called Sandra from overseas and told her that she did not want to return to Australia and that she would need to sell her house. Sandra told Meredith she would need her \$85,000 back to help her secure alternative accommodation. Meredith refused, insisting that the money had been a gift, and their relationship quickly deteriorated.

Sandra faced the prospect of homelessness. The changes to her relationship with her daughter, and the loss of access to her grandchildren, also caused enormous emotional distress. However, we were able to successfully refer her to a law firm for full representation in the matter. Through their intensive support, Sandra and Meredith were able to reach an agreement.

**“Pro Bono Connect has helped our firm meet our pro bono goals. We receive referrals for meritorious matters that allow us to direct our resources to help clients instead of sorting through pro bono enquiries. The team are professional, knowledgeable and efficient”**



# Community & Health Justice Partnerships

Holistically addressing the everyday legal issues impacting a person’s housing, financial stability, and well-being.

Homelessness Law and Multicultural Law embed staff and pro bono lawyers in frontline community, homelessness, and health agencies. Through these long-standing partnerships, we provide early-intervention and specialist legal support to resolve issues before they escalate. Working collaboratively ensures our services are trauma-informed and strength-based, recognising the skills and capabilities of our clients.

We further scale the impact of our client-centred work by empowering Queensland’s frontline community and health workers to address legal issues early, and by advocating for better laws and policies.

Homelessness Law

Multicultural Law

## Scaling Impact Through Multi-Intensity, Trauma-Informed Legal Services

Demand for high-intensity, ongoing legal supports has never been higher. To manage capacity within current resourcing, Homelessness Law and Multicultural Law partnerships were closed to new clients for between 4 – 7 months in 2024-25.

To ensure our services are available to those most in need, we continued to target our most intensive client services to key cohorts: women and their children, children and young people, and people existing prison. We work closely with our community partners to ensure client connections are timely, targeted and trauma-informed.

In the last 12 months, Homelessness Law and Multicultural Law continued to refine its multi-level service delivery responses to unmet need. We reserved our highest-intensity interventions to the most in need, while empowering the community and legal assistance sector through training, collaboration, and resources.

By adopting a multi-intensity, hybrid approach to legal service delivery, we utilize our limited resources through co-designed digital solutions and training, while continuing to provide high-intensity casework.

## National Recognition of Best-Practice Service Delivery

Stable Futures for Young Queenslanders’ Senior Lawyer, Kate Adnams, was named the Law Council’s 2024 Australian Young Lawyer of the Year. The Law Council commended Kate’s work through Stable Futures for Young Queenslanders.

A sector leader, Kate is a co-Chair of the Queensland Victims of Crime working group and has chaired the Queensland Health Justice Partnership Network.

Further recognising Kate’s leadership and expertise, she has been invited to speak at the Health Justice Australia 2025 National Conference in Sydney.



## Pro Bono Partners

Allens  
Ashurst  
Barry Nilsson  
Clayton Utz  
Corrs Chambers Westgarth  
DLA Piper  
Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer  
Holding Redlich  
King & Wood Mallesons  
McCullough Robertson  
MinterEllison  
MurphySchmidt

9,600 pro bono hours



“Definitely my mental health has improved. I am less stressed. I find when I’m more stressed my mental health declines rapidly. Before LawRight I was on antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication, but since LawRight have come on board I have come off them.”

“If it wasn’t for LawRight and Kate doing what she has done for me, I feel I would be in a very dark space. Kate pulled me out of financial stress and I hold that close to my heart. It means a lot to me.”

“Josephine and her team are excellent. With absolute confidence I can say that if it was not for LawRight and [my pro bono lawyers] I would be in the wilderness. I have used a number of lawyers over the years. I can honestly say the team is highly articulate which inspires confidence. I wish I knew about LawRight a long time ago. However, I will say it’s the team that speaks volumes. I’m forever grateful. Thank you SO much.”





CHJP | Programs

# Homelessness Law

Homelessness Law is Queensland's free specialist legal service for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Homelessness Law provides high-intensity, ongoing representation to resolve legal issues connected to a person's money, housing, health, and experience of violence.

Recognising the benefits of integrated legal assistance, our expert staff and pro bono lawyers are embedded in seven community-based homelessness and health agencies. We work collaboratively with community, health and homelessness services to keep Queenslanders safely housed.

## Empowering vulnerable Queenslanders through representation

Queenslanders experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity frequently face multiple, intersecting everyday legal issues. Left unaddressed, legal issues compound the effects of disadvantage on well-being and housing outcomes, further destabilising the necessary foundations required to thrive.

Homelessness Law's ongoing, holistic legal representation resolves the everyday legal issues pushing people into homelessness. We work closely with social workers, medical professionals, and our clients' existing support networks to build

the stability that allows our shared clients to achieve their identified goals, and live strong and fulfilling lives.

Staff and pro bono lawyers work closely with clients over extended periods to resolve the everyday legal issues impacting their lives. By centring clients in this decision making and representation, they are empowered with knowledge, practice effective advocacy and decision making, and witness how these skills can lead to better outcomes. Empowerment through representation is strengths-based, timely and impactful.

### Our clients

- 48% identify as living with a disability
- 61% reported an experience of family violence
- 21% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 35% children & young people
- 7% affected by disaster

- Homelessness Law's Projects**
- Homelessness Law's Consumer Advocacy Project
  - Your Own Home
  - Stable Futures for Young Queenslanders
  - Help to Heal
- [lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/community-health-justice-partnerships](http://lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/community-health-justice-partnerships)



Read our key project reports

## Compassionate Care, Life-Changing Results

"I am writing to sincerely thank you for the invaluable assistance and support you provided me during a very challenging financial crisis. Your guidance and dedication not only helped me resolve a significant debt matter but also gave me the confidence and clarity I needed to move forward with a fresh start.

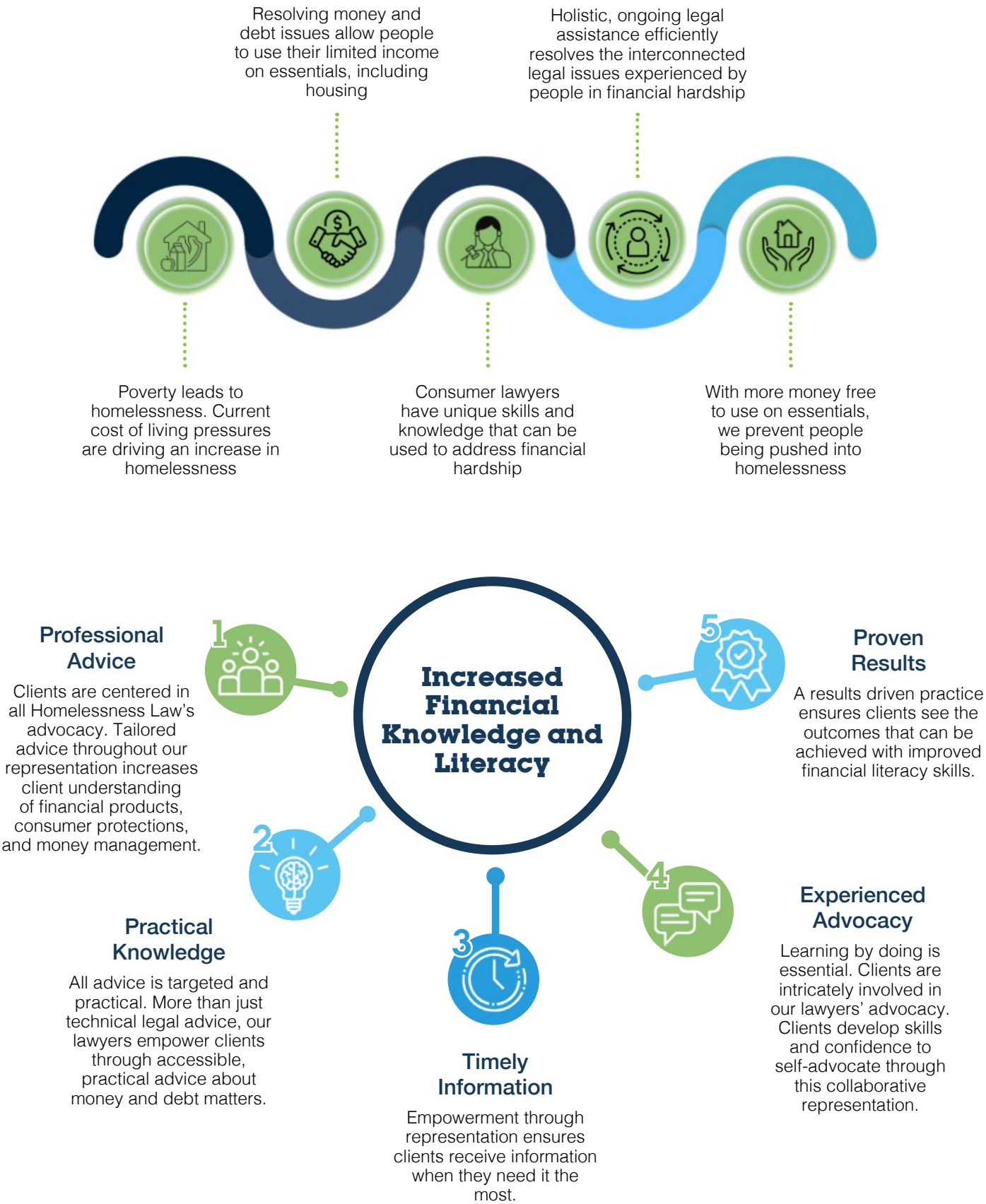
The professionalism, compassion, and commitment shown by your team made a profound difference in my life. I truly appreciate the way you handled my case with respect and understanding, ensuring that I felt supported throughout the process. I would also like to highlight how important your service is, particularly for women who may find themselves facing financial difficulties and uncertainty.

**"LawRight offers not just legal expertise, but also genuine care, which can make all the difference during overwhelming times."**

Thank you again for your incredible work.

I am deeply grateful for the outcome you helped me achieve, and I would not hesitate to recommend LawRight to anyone in need of legal support and advocacy." - Homelessness Law client

# Addressing poverty stops Homelessness





“Working with Josie over the last 2 years, makes it difficult to clearly express in a short statement how important, necessary and life-changing her work is. Without Josie, so many vulnerable people would have had significantly higher difficulties in achieving their goals. I’ve borne witness to so many great outcomes that Josie has facilitated. I have observed Josie to be passionate about what she does, and compassionate in her service delivery. She is also incredibly responsive to information request and referrals, making the partner organisations feel confident in her ability to support the people they are referring”

- Frontline Worker



- 360 clients (341 new)
- 532 high-intensity, ongoing casework matters
- 192 advices
- 283 tasks
- 114 referrals
- 75 secondary consultations

45%  
Money and income

6%  
Housing and  
Tenancy

34%  
Responding  
to violence

11%  
Fines and  
infringements

Resolving legal issues leads  
to better health outcomes

- Unresolved legal issues cause and compound complex medical conditions.
- Queenslanders with chronic health issues and/or mental distress face added barriers to resolving everyday legal issues.
- Legal services that are holistic, timely and ongoing resolve everyday legal issues, leading to better health outcomes.
- Legal services that are client-centered and strength-based empower people to self-advocate, preventing future issues from escalating.

Embedded Community Partnership Locations

- Brisbane Youth Service
- Communitfy’s New Farm Neighbourhood Centre
- Micah Projects
- Anglicare Homelessness Services (Women and Families)
- Mater Young Adult Health Centre
- Cairns Homelessness Services Hub
- Mission Australia’s Douglas House

9,024  
pro bono hours

CHJP | Client Stories



THANKS FROM CLIENTS

“I have nothing but love and appreciation for the staff’s commitment and kindness in helping me. I’ve referred friends in need to them as well, and they’ve been able to help change their lives too. I have a wide range of legal needs, and they refer me to the relevant parties when necessary — just as they have done for my friends. I love working with Kate and her team.

This service has been crucial in changing the direction of not only my life, but also my children’s and their father’s. I believe I will still need their help moving forward. It is an absolute blessing to receive the level and quality of legal support I’ve received from Kate and her team. I’m forever grateful. Thank you.”

“Thank you all so much for the help you have been giving me to repair my life. I just wanted you to know that I’m very grateful and I appreciate everything you have done for me.”

Building Financial  
Stability

Supporting single young mother  
with chronic health issues



Ashley is a single mother with two very young children. She connected to Stable Futures through her support team at the Mater Young Adult Health Centre for support to access financial assistance from Victim Assist after an experience of family violence. Ashley was experiencing significant anxiety and stress because of the violence, which further exacerbated her existing chronic health issue.

Adopting a holistic approach, Ashley’s lawyer asked about her debts and the payments she was making. Ashley was being chased for money and had reached out to a debt consolidation company for help. The payments under the proposed agreement were unaffordable but Ashley felt she had no other option.

Ashley’s lawyers had the proposed agreement cancelled. They worked closely with Ashley over many months to resolve each individual debt, totalling over \$15,000. Taking a client-centred approach, Ashley gained knowledge about her legal rights, including how different types of credit work, while also developing skills that help her navigate these systems (and her money) more effectively.

With her debts resolved, Stable Futures helped Ashley to successfully apply for assistance from Victim Assist. She is now connected to a psychiatrist, who is helping with her recovery. She

remains supported by her Mater social worker and occasionally reaches out to Kate at Stable Futures to provide an update or to seek further guidance as she seeks to achieve her goals. Ashley shared the following comments about her experience with Stable Futures:

“Since talking with Stable Futures about debts, I have cut back on my spending and make sure I budget for a lot of things and to have money for when unexpected things happen. I’m not as stressed anymore and not taking stress out on my two girls. I’m able to take them out on the weekends to do fun things as I’m not as stressed about money.”



CHJP | Programs

# Multicultural Law

Multicultural Law is Queensland's free specialist civil law service for newly arrived Queenslanders from multicultural backgrounds.

LawRight staff and pro bono lawyers work collaboratively with frontline workers from Multicultural Australia to empower newly arrived Queenslanders to understand their legal rights and to remove barriers for new arrivals to engage with the Australian legal system.

## Multicultural Law's Name Change Project

A legal name is more than just a personal identifier. A person's legal name, recorded on their Australian identification documents, impacts how they navigate everyday life.

Refugees from specific regions, including the Karen, Karenni and Chin ethnic groups of Myanmar, have cultural naming practices that differ from Australia's 'first name, family name'. Without identification documents with both a first name and family name, many refugees face significant barriers to integrating into Australia. Difficulties arise when engaging with essential services such as schools, government agencies, utilities companies, banks, medical services and online service providers.

Beyond simply navigating Australia's social and legal systems,

a change of name can have a profound impact on refugees and recent arrivals to Australia. For some, it allows them to anglicise their name as they settle into Australia, while for others it allows them to choose a name that reflects their gender identity.

In recent years, Multicultural Law has responsively evolved to meet the community's needs. We developed a targeted project with streamlined services to assist refugee families to change their names. This year we supported 17 families (55 people) to legally change their name to reflect Australia's naming conventions. Our clients were from Myanmar, Afghanistan, Congo, Ethiopia and Ecuador. Nearly 75% of the families we supported were from Myanmar.



### “ Stakeholders:

**“LawRight and the volunteer lawyers are invaluable for the people that our organisation supports. The air of safety, security, and hope that [lawyer] brings with her work is nothing short of a miracle, and she delivers on her goals that she sets with our clients.”**

**“Josephine at LawRight is such an asset to our clients ... Often clients have legal issues that cause a lot of stress. Josephine treats these clients with such respect and empathy. She makes clients feel welcome and connects with them easily. Her professionalism puts people's minds at ease because they feel supported by someone who has the right skills and knowledge while also understanding their legal issue and showing acceptance and compassion.”**

- Our clients**
- 100% culturally & linguistically diverse
  - 26% children & young people
  - 79 clients
  - 58 high-intensity, ongoing casework matters
  - 30 advices
  - 67 tasks
  - 37 referrals



**“LawRight's support made a big difference for our family. They covered the name change application fees for 4 out of 6 of us, which really helped during a time when we were not financially stable. We're very grateful for their help—it made the process much easier and less stressful.”**

**“To change my name was my biggest dream, I've been struggling many years to change it before, but to be honest without your help I will never be able to do it. Thank you for all the help and advices, and a big thanks to make my wish come true.”**

Multicultural Law's Name Change Project Clients

**Embedded Community Partnership Locations**

- Multicultural Australia

**577**  
**pro bono hours**



# High-intensity, holistic legal services

Community need for expert, holistic legal services continues to rise. The compounding housing and cost of living crises are pushing more Queenslanders into homelessness and housing insecurity. To keep Queenslanders safely housed, the Community & Health Justice Partnerships program delivers impactful, high-intensity legal services for Queenslanders facing homelessness and financial insecurity.

Our 8 Community & Health Justice Partnerships are run collaboratively with pro bono lawyers and are located at services accessible to particularly at-risk communities, including housing and health services. Staff and pro bono lawyers work closely with other frontline community assistance workers to provide holistic, wraparound legal solutions for at-risk Queenslanders.

This trauma-informed, client-centred approach to legal representation ensures the successful resolution of legal issues that simultaneously cause and compound housing insecurity. Through our ongoing, integrated representation, we improve housing and financial outcomes, while providing clients with the stability needed to achieve their personal goals.

Our wraparound, end-to-end legal supports empower at-risk Queenslanders to lead stable and fulfilling lives. It imparts to our clients the knowledge needed to successfully navigate complex social and legal systems, providing them with the tools needed to establish stability and maintain housing. While working closely with us, clients build skills and confidence to self-advocate moving forward.

## The impact of high-intensity, multidisciplinary legal supports evidenced by the reflections shared by our clients:

“The team at LawRight literally saved my life! I was suicidal, homeless and in over \$40,000 in debt with no way out. It was a very dark time. They have had my back and words cannot explain how much the unwavering support has helped me become the person I am today with next to no debt and life skills that I would not have gained anywhere if not for them. Thank you for everything. From the bottom of my heart!”

“It felt like LawRight were the only ones who showed up and really tried to help me get support and justice. I wish more people knew about this service and could access it. It was so vital to me feeling a sense of respect and worth again after going through some really horrible experiences with family and partners.”

“She was always there for me when I needed. All the people under Kate are really lovely and friendly. I never had to push her; she was always on the top of it. She always looks after/values clients.”

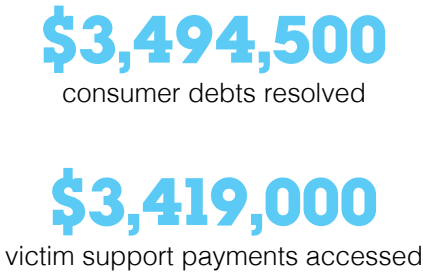


# Community & Health Justice Partnerships Impact

## Impact in 2024-25 FY



## Impact since 2019



## Enforcing legal protections for young mother living with a disability

Dianna is a young woman living with a disability that impacts her ability to work. Her only income is a disability support payment, which only covers her basic, everyday living expenses. Leveraging the trust of our long-standing partnership, Dianna's community support worker connected her to our embedded lawyers for help when her debts put her housing at risk.



Dianna had effectively managed her limited income for multiple years, balancing a tight budget as a single mother. However, after an unexpected cost left her with no money, she took a high-cost, short-term loan to buy groceries. This started a debt spiral that Dianna couldn't stop.

When we first met Dianna, she was in significant debt that put her housing at risk. She couldn't pay her current payday loan and had multiple other small unpaid debts. Investigations from Homelessness Law's pro bono and staff lawyers revealed 19 previous loans from the same provider, that incrementally increased as Dianna's financial position worsened. Staff and

pro bono lawyers reviewed each loan against the lender's legal responsibilities, forming the view that the loans were provided in breach of the lender's responsible lending obligations.

Making strong responsible lending arguments, Homelessness Law negotiated a refund of over \$5,000 and a cancellation of Dianna's current loan agreement. Adopting a holistic approach, our lawyers negotiated waivers of her other debts, allowing Dianna to use her limited income to keep her son safely housed. We worked closely with her other supports to ensure our help was co-ordinated, impactful and tailored to Dianna's longer-term goals.

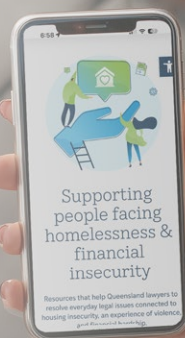
Underpinned by principles of empowerment and strength-based assistance, our lawyers worked with Dianna to help her understand her legal rights and obligations. We workshopped other options she could use to avoid high-cost loans. We also provided tailored legal advice to inform her decisions on how to use the refund money. Dianna commented that she felt empowered to make informed decisions about her money going forward.



## Supporting people facing homelessness & financial insecurity

Resources that help Queensland lawyers to resolve everyday legal issues connected to housing insecurity, an experience of violence, and financial hardship.

Let's Get Started



Everyday Law  
in Queensland



Resolving money  
and debt disputes



Accessing  
financial supports  
for victim-  
survivors



Addressing fines  
and infringements



Negotiating  
housing and  
tenancy concerns



Resolving money and debt disputes



Accessing financial supports for victim-survivors



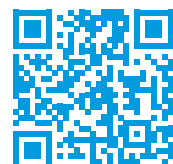
Addressing fines and infringements



Negotiating housing and tenancy concerns



Made possible by the  
generous support of  
**Queensland Gives**



## New online resources

The Everyday Law In Queensland website empowers the pro bono and legal assistance sector with over 35 targeted legal resources on Fines and Infringements, Money and Debt Issues, Housing and Tenancy Concerns, and Accessing Financial Supports for Victims of Crime.

Evidencing Everyday Law in Queensland's reach and scale, within its first month almost 1,000 individual users accessed resources and supports.

[everydaylawinqld.org.au](http://everydaylawinqld.org.au)

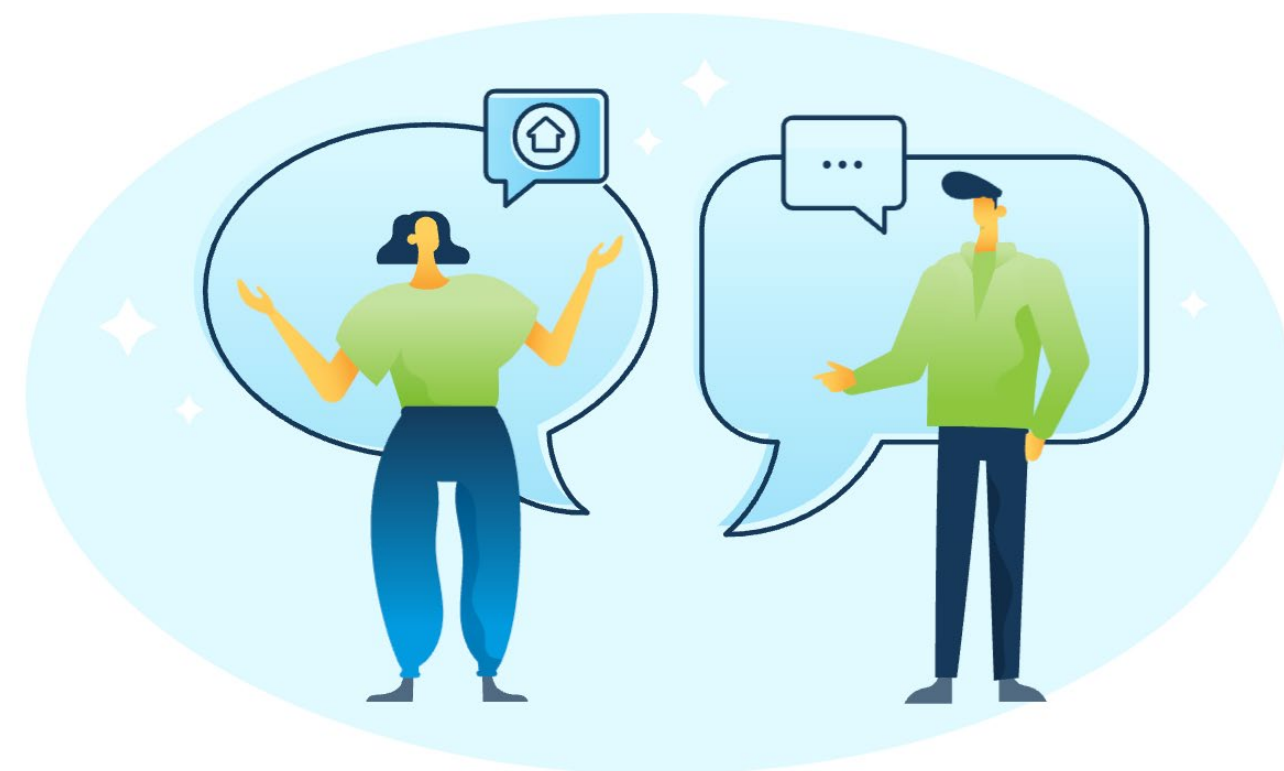
## Resourcing Queensland's Community and Pro Bono Sector

The common, everyday legal issues experienced by at-risk community members are complex, intersecting, and ubiquitous. Legal issues connected to a person's housing, money, and experience of violence cause and compound an experience of vulnerability.

Sharing over 20 years experience delivering high-impact, holistic legal service, Homelessness Law launched Everyday Law in Queensland to empower community and pro bono lawyers to confidently navigate and resolve everyday legal issues impacting marginalised Queenslanders.

Homelessness Law adopted a hybrid, human-centred consultation process to inform the research,

design and development of Everyday Law in Queensland. We partnered with pro bono lawyers and sector experts to create practical, accessible and comprehensive legal resources specifically designed for the legal assistance sector.







## Frontline Worker Training Days

Homelessness Law's Everyday Legal Training for Frontline Workers is a unique, collaborative initiative that brings together experts from 11 community organisations (CLCs, support services, financial counselling services) to provide practical, comprehensive training tailored to the needs of the frontline community workers.

Homelessness Law adopted a hybrid, human-centred consultation process to inform the design and development of Everyday Legal Training for Frontline Workers.

Across two days in Brisbane and Cairns, Homelessness Law and our sector colleagues delivered 17 workshops and presentations, including masterclasses on accessing Victim Assist payments, resolving money and debt issues, Domestic Violence Orders, and navigating tenancies impacted by violence. Both sessions were oversubscribed, with 120 registered attendees and over 90% attendance rate.

**2,102** community and legal assistance sector workers empowered through 42 training sessions

**127** frontline workers from across Queensland were surveyed to better understand the community assistance sectors training and legal need

### Attendees who responded to our post-training survey (36 responses) said:

**100%**

would attend further training offered by Homelessness Law

**100%**

would use some of the information presented in their daily work

**100%**

learnt something new

**97%**

felt the training was useful for someone working in their sector

**95%**

feel more confident to support community members to navigate legal issues

"I just want to say a huge thank you for your presentation today. It was fantastic and I loved hearing every single part of it. You may not realise just how helpful and inspiring you were to your peers and to me!"

FRONTLINE WORKER

### Everyday Legal Training collaborators

ATSILS  
Basic Rights Queensland  
ICAN  
Legal Aid Qld  
MARA  
Mater Young Adult Support Unit  
NQWLS  
The Salvation Army  
Tenants Queensland  
Victims Assist Queensland  
Cairns CLC

## Empowering Frontline Community, Allied-Health and Housing Workers

Queensland's community, allied-health and housing workers provide essential frontline support to people facing homelessness and housing insecurity. Under immense resourcing constraints, community workers regularly navigate the complex, intersecting legal and social systems impacting community member's health, housing and income.

Through co-designed training, Homelessness Law empowers community workers to take early, informed and practical steps to address legal issues compounding their clients' disadvantage.

### Feedback from attendees

"Homelessness Law's training was comprehensive, user friendly and has provided me with an awareness of how different services work together to help those in need. And in turn provided me with valuable information on how I may further assist my participants to navigate services available to them."

"Everyday Legal Training was very relevant, informative, interactive and engaging. I came away both solidifying existing knowledge and learning new things including avenues for support for the vulnerable community members we engage with."

"It was fantastic, everything about the day ticked my boxes. It would be great to have it here yearly."

"The LawRight training session for frontline workers was absolutely fantastic. The content covered from passionate speakers made the whole day easy to absorb, very interactive and always an opportunity to delve further. Highly recommend to anyone working and supporting families in the domestic and family violence sector or child protection."

"Definitely would attend again in the future, all information was interesting, relevant and informative for my current role."



# Court and Tribunal Services

LawRight’s Court and Tribunal Services offers statewide assistance, primarily to self-represented litigants with proceedings in various courts and tribunals.

## Our services

- State Courts office (including the Supreme Court Mediation Scheme)
- Enforcement Hearing Service
- QCAT office
- Federal Courts office
- Migration Law Service



## Who we help

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have a current or potential civil proceeding in one of the following jurisdictions:
  - » QCAT
  - » District Court of Queensland
  - » Supreme Court of Queensland
  - » Queensland Court of Appeal
  - » Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia
  - » Federal Court of Australia
- Have a matter type that is within the scope of the services
- Be unable to afford a lawyer
- Be ineligible for Legal Aid or other form of alternative legal assistance
- Not be declared a vexatious litigant



## Directors

Court and Tribunal Services is managed and coordinated by Director Ben Tuckett and Assistant Director Nikki Hancock. Ben and Nikki have worked at LawRight for a combined period of 18 years and have played an integral role in growing and shaping the Court and Tribunal Services.

## Staff

The Court and Tribunal Services team consists of senior lawyers, lawyers and paralegals experienced in litigation and community legal issues.

## Goals

Through partnerships with the courts and tribunals, firms and barristers, we have the following aims...

### Increase Access to Justice

Courts and tribunals should be accessible to all individuals, regardless of their circumstances or ability to afford private legal assistance; and

### Improve the Administration of Justice

The operation of the rule of law requires that courts and tribunals operate alongside effective legal assistance services. These services are an integral part of any functioning justice framework and our courts and tribunals operate better and more efficiently when litigants have access to advice. It is the responsibility of the legal profession to ensure that litigants have access to legal advice services for the effective administration of justice.

## Court and Tribunal Services in 2024-25



**9,183** pro bono hours

**1,647** advices

**592** tasks

**25** duty lawyer and representation

**257** facilitated referrals



Court and Tribunal Services

# State Courts

Supreme Court of Queensland  
District Court of Queensland  
Queensland Court of Appeal

We see clients on-site at our office on Level 1 of the District and Supreme Court Building in Brisbane, and provide remote services to clients from across the state with current or potential proceedings in the District Court of Queensland, Supreme Court of Queensland, and the Court of Appeal.

Depending on the client’s circumstances, legal problem, and available pro bono resources, we may:

- Provide legal information or self-help resources and toolkits
- Provide legal advice and discrete task assistance, including correspondence between parties and settlement negotiations
- Draft court documents, including applications, affidavits, statements of claim, defences, and outlines of argument
- Assist clients to negotiate or otherwise pursue alternative dispute resolution options
- Refer for discrete representation at hearings or mediations, or full representation in certain circumstances

Since 2022, we also have operated and managed a court-ordered mediation referral scheme for matters involving self-represented litigants in the Supreme Court.



## Firms and legal units that assisted this year:

Allens  
Ashurst  
Barry Nilsson  
Bartley Cohen Law  
Clayton Utz  
Cooper Grace Ward  
Corrs Chambers Westgarth  
Crown Law  
DLA Piper  
Hall & Wilcox  
Lander & Rogers  
McCullough Robertson  
McInnes Wilson  
MinterEllison  
The Estate Lawyers

## Barristers who assisted this year:

Benjamin Kidston  
Bob Reed  
George Kalimnios  
Graham Dietz  
James O'Regan  
Kate Boomer  
Katrina Kluss  
Matthew Jones KC  
Reimen Hii  
Robert Lake  
Robert Quirk  
Stephanie Philippou  
Tom Ritchie



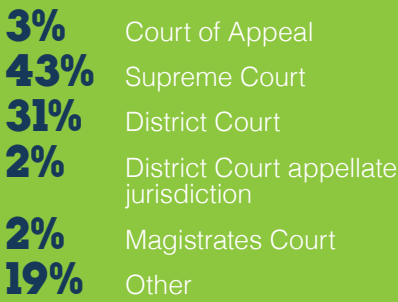
### Who referred clients to us?



### Top 5 areas of law:

Other civil  
Defamation  
Property disputes  
Contracts  
Debt owed by client

### Clients per jurisdiction



### Our clients



# Retiree sued for \$250k for defamation after one email

Tavish was a retiree and active member of a local community group. Membership had been declining and he was worried about the group’s sustainability. Tavish thought the current executive committee were not doing enough, so he emailed some of the members outlining his worries and encouraging them to vote in a new executive at the upcoming AGM.

Unfortunately some executive members took offense to Tavish’s emails, and he soon found himself being sued in defamation for over \$250,000. Tavish simply couldn’t afford to pay for lawyers, so he approached LawRight for help.

Through appointments with volunteer lawyers, we took instructions from Tavish and helped demystify the legal process. The case against Tavish seemed weak as the executive members couldn’t articulate how the emails had caused them serious harm.

We referred the matter to counsel, who recommended Tavish ask the Court to make an early determination on whether serious harm had occurred. We gave the advice to Tavish and helped him write to the other side, explaining the weaknesses in their case and making a settlement offer.

After some negotiation, the parties were able to resolve the dispute.

“Thanks again ... for your unconditional caring, support, and advice. Your involvement brought this matter to an end and to a good end.”



# Magistrates Court

LawRight is not funded to run a Magistrates Court service (outside of our Enforcement Hearing Service) and there is no other community legal service in Queensland dedicated to helping people represent themselves in this Court. However, there is a clear need for self-representation help in the Magistrates Court.



The Magistrates Court can decide civil cases up to \$150,000 and matters often involve the same complex legal issues that are dealt with in the District and Supreme Courts. This means that people who cannot afford a lawyer regularly end up self-representing in the Magistrates Court in complex cases that can incur significant financial consequences.

Although Magistrates Court matters are outside the normal scope of LawRight's Court and Tribunal Services, we make exceptions to help through our State Courts office if we have capacity, the client is particularly vulnerable, and the legal matter would have significant consequences for the client or is a public interest issue.

This year we have only been able to assist clients with civil matters in the Magistrates Court in 6 cases.

## Enforcement Hearing Service

The Magistrates Court Enforcement Hearing Service commenced in 2016 to increase access to justice for debtors involved in enforcement proceedings. We deliver in-person advice and representation services to self-represented debtors at debt enforcement hearings in the Brisbane Magistrates Court, with assistance from volunteer barristers. Hearings take place every first and third Wednesday of the month.

Enforcement hearings can be complex, confusing and stressful for self-represented litigants. Clients are often unaware that a money order has been made against them, do not know why they have been summoned to a court hearing, and do not understand what they need to do next. Most clients cannot afford to repay the debt and have never received legal advice, despite going through multiple court or tribunal processes.

We ensure that every client who attends court is provided with advice and representation from a volunteer barrister. The Service increases procedural efficiency for the Magistrates Court, and ensures debtors are treated fairly and fully understand their legal rights and obligations in the enforcement hearing process.

**60%** of client matters involved debts over \$10,000 (the threshold for bankruptcy proceedings)

**70%** of our clients were able to resolve their matter after their first attendance at the service without the need for further hearings

## Who referred clients to us?

- 20%** referred by the Court Bailiff (when brought in on an arrest warrant)
- 10%** referred by a Creditor Representative
- 70%** approached us directly

## Top 3 types of debts:

- 30%** Business debts
- 30%** Unpaid loans
- 30%** Unpaid bills

"I find that clients typically have little understanding of the process or why their debt has blossomed, and the service is valuable for clients, who are getting real time practical advice on their rights and obligations, and representation that often leads to a resolution of the debt.

Helping someone either get to the next stage of the enforcement process or, better still, exit it with a compromise in a morning's work is very rewarding."

**Robert Lake, volunteer barrister**

**Student volunteer**  
Rita Zhiltsova

**Barristers on the active roster**  
Bianca Kabel  
Bridget O'Brien  
Catherine Chiang  
Duncan Marckwald  
Emma Hoiberg  
Genevieve Feely  
Georgia Kiss  
Heathcliff Berghofer

Hedy Chen  
Jason Mitchenson  
Jason Wang  
Jayleigh Sargent  
Louise Kruger  
Matthew Jones KC  
Matthew McDermott  
Michael Springer  
Nathan Laing  
Reimen Hii  
Robert Gallo  
Robert Lake

Ryan Nattrass  
Samantha Amos  
Samuel Walpole  
San-Joe Tan  
Sarah Spottiswood  
Sean Lamb  
Steven Hogg  
Storm Scarlett  
William Hall  
Zoe Brereton

## Car troubles

Joan had bought a car on finance but the car was written off after an accident, leaving Joan still owing \$3,000. Forced to move house several times over a few months, Joan missed receiving important legal letters about the debt, and the original debt ballooned to more than \$10,000 as additional fees were added on.

The next thing Joan knew, she was visited by a court bailiff who told her that she had missed a court hearing, so an arrest warrant had been issued to bring her to an enforcement hearing.

On the day of the enforcement hearing, the bailiff brought Joan straight to LawRight where one of our volunteer barristers explained the legal process. By negotiating with the creditor's representative on Joan's behalf, they were further able to have the arrest warrant discharged and the enforcement hearing adjourned for six weeks. This delay allowed Joan the necessary time to negotiate a payment plan with the creditor.

Ultimately, LawRight empowered Joan to take charge of her situation and avoid any more costly and inconvenient court proceedings.



# Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) office of Court and Tribunal Services enables clients from across the state to have access to free legal help with matters in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The QCAT office assist clients in-person at the Brisbane registry and remotely statewide.



## The QCAT office advises in the following areas:

- Reviews of decisions by:
  - » Blue Card
  - » Disability Worker Screening
  - » Child Safety
  - » Victims Assist
  - » State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER)
  - » Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
- Guardianship and administration
- Anti-discrimination
- Right to Information and information privacy
- Disciplinary matters for health practitioners
- Appeals and reopenings related to the above matters

Depending on the client's circumstances, legal problem and the available pro bono resources, we may:

- Provide online legal information or resources
- Help the client to self-represent to the best of their abilities
- Provide legal advice and assistance to prepare tribunal documents and legal correspondence
- Suggest other options to resolve court proceedings
- In limited cases, represent a client in proceedings before the Tribunal
- In limited cases, connect clients with a private lawyer or barrister for pro bono representation

## Guardianship and Administration

The Guardianship jurisdiction is one of the Tribunal's largest and considers applications brought under the *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000* and the *Powers of Attorney Act 1998*. The Tribunal reports a significant increase in applications in this jurisdiction over the last 5 years due to the aging population, increase in awareness of elder abuse and exploitation of people with a disability and increase in diagnosis of mental health issues.

Members of the QCAT team are part of the QCAT Guardianship and Administration Stakeholder Group which brings together members of the tribunal, representatives from CLCs and Legal Aid as well as DJAG and the Public Guardian on a quarterly basis to discuss trends and issues in the guardianship

jurisdiction. The meetings are chaired by the Public Advocate, Dr John Chesterman.

This year the service has seen an increase in requests for assistance for guardianship and administration matters. This is the first time in 8 years that the number of applications for assistance with a guardianship matter has exceeded requests for assistance with a Blue Card.

The team has narrowed the scope to provide assistance to interested parties and potential appointees only, as adults are mainly supported by Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion and ADA Law who have expertise in assisting people with a disability or people over 65. This division of work means more parties involved in the QCAT process have access to free legal assistance.

### Firms & legal units that assisted this year

AECOM  
Barry Nilsson  
Clayton Utz  
Colin Biggers & Paisley  
Cooper Grace Ward  
Dentons  
HopgoodGanim  
Johnson Winter  
Lander & Rogers  
McCullough Robertson  
McInnes Wilson  
MinterEllison  
Sparke Helmore

### Barristers who assisted this year

Angela Rae  
Maxwell Walker  
Nathaniel Harris  
Paul Carasco  
Hedy Chen

2,313  
pro bono hours

192  
clients

16  
referrals to  
firms and  
barristers

539  
advices

139  
tasks



**Navigating complex disciplinary proceedings**

Pauline sought our help to respond to a health disciplinary matter. Pauline was accused of engaging in professional misconduct while a registered health practitioner. By the time the matter was referred to QCAT, Pauline had not practised in the health profession for a number of years and had already faced criminal and civil penalties for her conduct.

Aged 65 and couch surfing in a regional area, Pauline faced many barriers in forming a legal argument. She could not afford legal advice and her experience of mental illness also made it difficult for her to navigate the requirements of the Tribunal.

Respondents to disciplinary matters who do not engage in the Tribunal process can end up with harsher sanctions and in some cases, costs orders made against them.

LawRight helped Pauline to gain a clear understanding of her legal issue, including that findings were likely to be made against her. We



also helped her to work with the applicant to find appropriate sanctions. By providing Pauline with new knowledge and compassionate guidance, we avoided creating unnecessary applications or delays that would have hindered the administration of justice.

The team assisted Pauline to obtain a non-publication order protecting her identity from being published in the Tribunal decision.

**Ensuring protections for the vulnerable**

Nina’s brother entered Australia on a Temporary Humanitarian Visa to live with Nina and her family. Nina’s brother has an intellectual disability and couldn’t read or speak English. As such, Nina sought to be appointed as his Guardian and Administrator to make decisions on his behalf.

Through an appointment with our volunteer solicitors and further discussions with staff members, we assisted Nina to prepare her QCAT application and advised her on preparing for the Tribunal hearing, where she would be self-represented. At the hearing, the Tribunal Member made a decision in Nina’s favour and appointed her as her brother’s Guardian and Administrator.

Nina wrote “I really appreciate your help in making this process smooth and without any problems. I would never do it by myself without your help. I appreciate it very much!!!”



“Thank you so much for your time today - you truly are a gem in my world and I feel so very thankful for your support and kindness. To listen to your encouraging words this afternoon was really very helpful after such a huge week. Thank you so much”

“To the LawRight team, I thank you sincerely for your guidance, knowledge and assistance. My experience with the volunteer lawyers on both of my appointments was second to none. The final correspondence helping me draft my submission correctly is just more than I could have ever asked for. Thank you to everybody involved in helping me. My entire experience with LawRight has been life changing.”

“Thank you so much! I honestly could not have done it without LawRight. The whole process was overwhelming but your assistance allowed me to get my head around the how & what was required.”

“Thank you again for all the assistance that was freely given to me from LawRight. It’s a wonderful service you provide.”

### Main areas of law

- Guardianship & Administration
- Administrative Review (Blue Card)
- Anti-discrimination
- Administrative Review (Child Safety)
- Appeals
- Disciplinary (Health)

### Our clients

15%	experienced family violence
40%	identified disability or mental illness
23%	rural, regional or remote
16%	culturally & linguistically diverse
13%	First Nations
13%	older people



# Court and Tribunal Services

## Federal Courts

The Federal Courts office of LawRight’s Court and Tribunal Services assists with current and potential proceedings in:

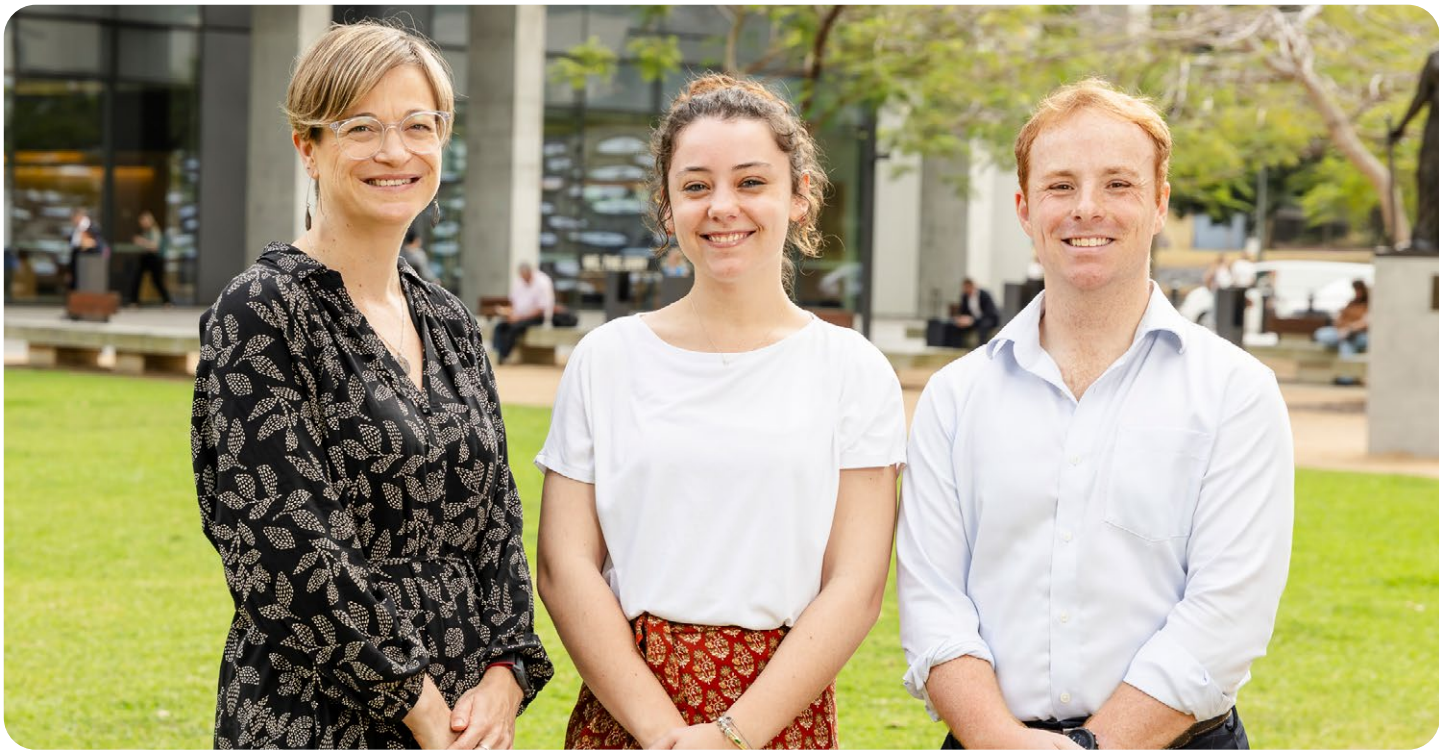
- Federal Court of Australia
- General Federal Law Divisions of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

We provide on-site services at the Commonwealth Law Courts building in Brisbane and remotely across the state in the following areas of law which were chosen in consultation with the court:

- Anti-discrimination
- Bankruptcy
- Competition and consumer
- Employment
- Information privacy
- Judicial review
- Appeals from Federal Tribunals
- Appeals within the Courts in the areas listed above

**The assistance we offer is scaled and tailored to the client’s circumstances, legal problem and the available pro bono resources, and can include:**

- Providing legal information or self-help resources and toolkits
- Providing legal advice and discrete task assistance including correspondence between parties and settlement negotiations
- Providing advice and coaching to assist parties to represent themselves to the best of their abilities
- Drafting court documents, especially in the case of initiating documents and other court ordered pleadings including statements of claim and outline of argument
- Assisting clients to negotiate or otherwise pursue alternative dispute resolution options
- Facilitating referrals for representation under the court ordered referral schemes
- Refer for discrete representation at hearings or mediation and full representation



### Main areas of law

- 71%** Employment law
- 10%** Bankruptcy
- 7%** Judicial review
- 2.5%** Discrimination

### Services

- 119** clients
- 17** facilitated referrals (for discrete and full representation to our firms and barristers)
- 327** advices
- 89** tasks
- 6** duty lawyer services

### Clients

- 31%** identified disability or mental illness
- 27%** culturally & linguistically diverse
- 33%** rural, regional or remote
- 15%** experienced family violence
- 16%** experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- 6%** First Nations

**1,202**  
Pro Bono hours

### Who referred clients to us?

- 22%** Federal Courts
- 20%** CLCs and Legal Aid Queensland
- 16%** Fair Work Ombudsman

### Jurisdiction

- 54%** Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia
- 43%** Federal Court
- 3%** Other

### Barristers who assisted

Matthew Paterson  
Michael Murray  
Philip O’Higgins KC  
Rachel Liang

### Firms and legal units that assisted this year

AECOM  
Ashurst  
Barry Nilsson  
Clayton Utz  
Colin Biggers Paisley  
Corrs Chambers Westgarth  
Hall & Wilcox  
Lander & Rogers  
McCullough Robertson  
McInnes Wilson  
MinterEllison  
Sparke Helmore  
Wotton + Kearney



# Federal Courts



## Employment law makes up 71% of our work, comprising:

- 59%** Unpaid Entitlements
- 17%** Unfair Dismissal
- 20%** General Protections
- 4%** Other



## The stress of navigating an employment dispute in court

As a self-represented litigant, Francis was struggling to navigate the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia. His employment matter was complicated and he felt overwhelmed by the many technical steps, occasionally becoming impulsive and reactive during court proceedings.

By providing straightforward explanations of the court processes, as well as advice and in-person support, we helped Francis to manage his expectations and immediate reactions. Over many months, Francis was guided to successfully reach a settlement agreement.



## Bankruptcy

During the 2024-25 financial year, LawRight's Federal Court team assisted several self-represented litigants in bankruptcy proceedings. The general trend for bankruptcy clients is that they approach LawRight on the day of their creditors' petition hearing, so often lawyers in the team provide a duty lawyer service.

The Federal Court team also provided ongoing assistance for bankruptcy clients in more complex situations, offering both in-house and firm appointments. The team assisted bankruptcy clients in understanding their proceedings and provided them with practical advice on litigation strategies in bankruptcy, such as negotiating settlements, adjournments, and appeals.



## Working collaboratively

Where the client is challenging the underlying debt, the Federal Court team works closely with the State Court team to provide advice and assistance to clients where appropriate.

Paul was facing bankruptcy because he was unable to pay his previous employer for a course which he took as part of his employment. Paul denied that the money was owed to the employer and was contesting the debt in the Magistrates Court. LawRight's Federal Court team worked closely with our State Court team to help Paul work through these two legal processes.

With our help Paul was able to have the bankruptcy proceedings dismissed.

## A little advice goes a long way

After hiring private lawyers in a family law matter, Max was unable to pay his legal bill and was facing bankruptcy. Max was in a better position than many of our clients, as he would potentially be able to pay off the debt if he could secure an appropriate extension. However, his matter was complicated by other ongoing debt negotiations and his limited knowledge of court processes.

We provided advice and guidance to Max at crucial junctures, enabling Max to confidently negotiate a payment plan and avoid bankruptcy.





# Migration Law Service

In March 2024, LawRight received short-term funding from the Federal Government in an attempt to address the significant backlog of applications for judicial review of Protection Visa decisions at the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA) and the Federal Court of Australia (FCA).

With this grant, LawRight established the Migration Law Service as an independent program within the broader Court and Tribunal Services program. The Service separated out the migration work being done by the Federal Courts office. The Service provides assistance to individuals and family groups with potential or current applications in the FCFCOA and FCA seeking judicial review of their protection visa decisions.

LawRight recognises that self-represented applicants seeking judicial review often require additional support due to the complexity of the legal process and a range of complex needs, including language barriers, disabilities and homelessness. The significant number of self-represented applicants in this jurisdiction places considerable pressure on court processes and the administration of justice. In response to this, when we established the Service, we placed an emphasis on further developing our existing collaborative service model to provide a higher level of support to clients and increase our ability to leverage pro bono support from the Bar Association of Queensland and private practitioners.

**Limited funding**

Although the grant ended in June 2025, the demand has continued, so LawRight has used self-funding to continue to assist existing and new clients through our Federal Courts office.

## The Migration Referral Panel

In October 2024 we launched a dedicated Migration Referral Panel for barristers with a specific interest in migration matters. There was considerable interest from barristers in assisting with these matters and the Panel currently has 75 members.

**Barristers who took briefs this year**

Alexander North  
Angela Julian-Armitage  
Arron Hartnett  
Bridget O'Brien  
David D Keane KC  
Dylan Kerr  
Emma Hoiberg  
Evan Donaldson  
Gabriel Perry  
Gillian Shepherd  
Jason Dudley  
Justin Carter  
Kara Thomson  
Laura Dawson  
Mark Steele KC  
Matt Black  
Matthew Jones KC  
Maxwell Walker  
Michael Murray  
Morgan Clarke  
Nathaniel Harris  
Nicholas Pratt  
Peta Willoughby  
Philip Nolan  
Rachel Hew  
Renae Kirk  
Robert Quirk  
Sarah Spottiswood  
Tabitha Vockler  
Tom Pepper  
Veronika Drago  
William Hall

**Firms & ILPs who assisted**

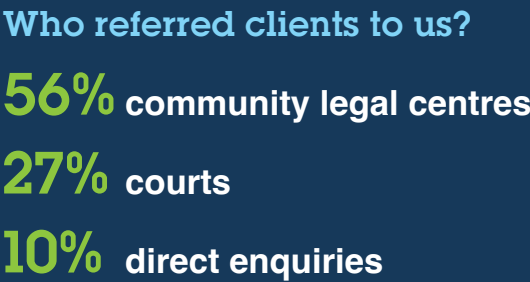
Allens  
Barry Nilsson  
Dentons  
DWF Australia  
Holding Redlich  
McCullough Robertson  
Wotton + Kearney

**Thank you to the barristers who took multiple briefs and to the firms and ILPs that accepted multiple referrals.**

During the grant period March 2024 to June 2025, we assisted:



3,298  
Pro Bono Hours



**“It has been a privilege to work alongside LawRight on pro bono matters this year. Clare Carter and the Migration Law Service demonstrated deep legal expertise, exceptional professionalism and an unwavering commitment to assisting and supporting applicants. The work they do is invaluable to our community.”**

**Sarah Spottiswood, volunteer barrister**





# Partnership with RAILS

The Migration Law Service works in partnership with the Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS). RAILS provides a broad range of legal services to refugees including assistance to review Protection Visa decisions in the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART). RAILS warm refers clients who are unsuccessful in the ART to LawRight for assistance with potential judicial review proceedings.

## Clients' countries of origin 32 Countries

- 23% Sri Lanka
- 15% Papua New Guinea
- 9% Malaysia
- 7% Iran
- 6% Bangladesh

- 40% identified disability or mental illness
- 14% regional, rural, remote
- 50% experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- 19% in detention centres

All protection visa applicants are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, with 46% of clients requiring an interpreter to receive legal advice and assistance.

# From lengthy delays to a second chance

Abdul sought assistance from our Migration Law Service as the applicant in a judicial review matter. He arrived in Australia by boat over ten years ago and had waited many years for his matter to be heard by the courts. The lengthy delays in processing his visa application had taken their toll on Abdul. He did not have sufficient resources to seek professional legal advice. Additionally, language barriers and the stress caused by the significant processing delays made it difficult for him to navigate the complex court processes. We were able to assist Abdul in gaining a clear

understanding of his legal issue, including the decision made by the Immigration Assessment Authority, the scope of judicial review and the possible court outcomes. We connected Abdul with a barrister who agreed to represent him pro bono and found a firm to act as instructing solicitors. With this assistance Abdul was able to successfully argue that the original decision was affected by a legal error. The court remitted his application to the Administrative Review Tribunal where he will have another opportunity to present his protection claims.



“I want to thank LawRight ... before I found you, I couldn’t sleep, I was so worried, and now I feel like I can breathe again”.





# Growing our capacity through secondments

This year, Court and Tribunal Services benefitted greatly from the secondment of lawyers and graduates from our pro bono partners.

Having a secondee brings valuable external perspectives and fresh insights to the team. Their support also increases the team’s capacity to take on additional matters, helping to manage workload more effectively and deliver timely outcomes.



**Colin Biggers & Paisley** seconded **Jamie-Lee Davison** to the Federal Courts Office for one day a week for three months. Jamie-Lee assisted the team while recruiting for a new Senior Lawyer. Jamie-Lee allowed the team to maintain operations during the transition period and provided valuable employment law experience.

**McCullough Robertson** seconded **Lauren Wood** full-time for six weeks to the Migration Law Service. Lauren assisted the team while service lawyer Harrison Pie was internally seconded to the QCAT office.

**Barry Nilsson** seconded **David Bambling** to the State Courts one day a week for four

months. In addition to providing casework support, David assisted the team to restructure and redraft their public factsheets on the litigation process to make them more accessible and useful for self-represented litigants.

**Corrs Chambers Westgarth** continues their Graduate secondment program with the State Courts office. The secondment program sees all new graduates at the firm attending the State Courts office for 3-day blocks on a rotating basis.

15 different secondees attended the office over 12 months:

- Alissa Yanik-Woods
- Ayeisha Mugabi
- Brandon Burkitt
- Caden Atzeni
- Chelsea Clark
- Chloe Bourne
- Lauren Ockendon
- Louise Patterson
- Midah Palethorpe
- Natalie Ross
- Sarah McDonald
- Sian Wright
- Sonia Clements
- Tashmi Lakshman
- Zahra Ali



**Thanks to the assistance of Corrs secondees, the team was able to:**

- Provide more in-depth assistance to some of our most vulnerable clients.
- Assist more clients with significant Magistrates Court matters, which would normally be out of scope.
- More efficiently deliver existing programs such as the Supreme Court pro bono mediation scheme for self-represented litigants.

**Sparke Helmore** seconded **Ava Pearson** to the QCAT Office one day a week for six months.

The QCAT Office welcomed back Ava Pearson from Sparke Helmore during the financial year. This was Ava’s second time being seconded to the service.

During Ava’s time with the team, we were able to explore expanding specific service areas, including broadening the scope of administrative review support. Additionally, the team was able to take on two matters under full representation, both of which are currently ongoing.

“Working one day a week in the QCAT office was a fantastic opportunity to step outside my usual practice and gain exposure to areas of law I wouldn’t typically encounter in my day-to-day role.

The team was incredibly welcoming and supportive, and the experience really helped me develop my client-focused skills.

It also gave me the chance to work more flexibly and navigate a jurisdiction that was entirely new to me—overall, it was a valuable and rewarding experience.”

**Ava Pearson, secondee from Sparke Helmore Lawyers**



## Seasonal Clerk project with Corrs Chambers Westgarth

Seasonal clerks at Corrs Chambers Westgarth further contributed to the work of CTS by drafting a series of factsheets and research memorandums to be used by the State Courts, QCAT and Migration services. The goal of the project is for the clerks to understand the importance of pro bono work.





# Administrative Law: Reviewing Government Decisions

Administrative law is concerned with the decision-making powers of government and the effect of those decisions on its citizens.

Administrative matters make up a large portion of the work undertaken by LawRight's Court and Tribunal Services. This year we helped with 83 new administrative law matters through the Migration Law Service and 88 more across the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), State Courts and Federal Courts offices.

## Merits review through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) plays a vital role in accountability of government decision-making.

In conducting a review, QCAT takes a fresh look at the relevant evidence and makes its own independent decision. QCAT is required to reach the legally correct outcome based

**The QCAT office of Court and Tribunal Services assists with administrative reviews of decisions about:**

- Blue Cards
- Child Safety
- Victims Assist Applications
- Disability Working Screening clearances
- SPER fines
- Health Practitioner Registrations

**Our QCAT office helps clients to:**

- Understand the original decision including the reasons for the decision
- Understand the law that applies to making the decision
- Understand QCAT procedures for review of a decision
- Understand what further evidence may assist their case
- Collate and present evidence
- Prepare for the final hearing

on the merits of the case and the proper application of the law.

Since QCAT has jurisdiction to review decisions under more than 100 different legislative instruments, we prioritise specific areas of law to ensure the service is effective but manageable. Where we have capacity, other areas of law are considered on a case-by-case basis.

In the QCAT Office, the majority of the matters are related to decisions under the *Working with children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*. People whose application for a Blue Card has been refused may apply to QCAT for a merits review of the decision. In a merits review, the applicant can provide all new evidence that was not before the original decision-maker.

A Blue Card is needed to work in many industries, even where contact with children is minimal. Not being able to obtain a Blue Card is a barrier to employment and tertiary education opportunities.

## Legislative change derails grandmother's journey to become a nurse

Violet is a mother of 6 and victim-survivor of domestic and family violence. At 50 years of age, Violet began working as an assistant in nursing, she loved it and enrolled to study a diploma in nursing. Violet held a Blue Card but did not need it for her role as an AIN.

Violet excelled in her studies, and all she had to do to graduate was complete a placement. Violet's adult daughter was also enrolled in the diploma and they were looking forward to graduating together.

Violet had to renew her Blue Card, but this time received a negative notice. Since Violet's last Blue Card was issued, the law had changed to allow the Department to gather and consider more information about a person.

Violet had a minor historical criminal record, which was known to the Department. But the Department also found information about domestic violence and child safety matters from 15 years earlier. The Department raised concerns that Violet was unable to respond to domestic situations appropriately or act protectively of children in her care.

Violet had to put her studies on hold while she applied to QCAT to review the Department's decision. With no way to expedite the QCAT process, Violet experienced almost 18 months of uncertainty with her studies on hold. Violet said she suffered extreme anxiety over this period and described it as 'torture'.

Over several appointments with LawRight staff and volunteers, the QCAT team assisted Violet to progress her matter in QCAT.

This included preparing her evidence and responding to Blue Card Services' material. Given the time that had passed and the trauma of the original events, Violet found it hard to recall details and at times became overwhelmed trying to remember. Despite



this, Violet represented herself at the hearing and provided evidence that at the time of the incidents, she was experiencing significant effects of domestic violence and relationship breakdowns, which had an impact on her mental health. Her actions were isolated, out of character, well in the past and have not been repeated since.

The Tribunal found that Violet had identified and addressed the triggers to her behaviour, had made significant life changes and presented as a role model to her family, demonstrated insight and remorse for her actions and now has a strong network of personal, familial, community and professional supportive individuals that were not available to her at the time of the incidents. It was clear that there was no risk that Violet would engage in similar behaviour in the future.

The Tribunal found that this was not an 'exceptional case', in which it would not be in the best interests of the child to issue a positive notice, and the decision of Blue Card Services was set aside.

While Violet now has her Blue Card and can complete her studies, there is no way for her to be compensated for the work opportunities she lost while waiting more than 18 months for a decision.

**"Thank you all for your valued help."**



Court and Tribunal Services

# Administrative Law

## Judicial reviews through the Federal Courts

The Migration Law Service assisted with judicial review applications in the Federal Court of Australia and the migration division of the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia.

This is often a person’s last hope at securing a visa and staying in Australia. The decisions subject to judicial review include:

- Decisions to refuse protection visa application
- Decisions to cancel a visa on character grounds

Judicial review is complex and may involve technical legal arguments. We seek an opinion from Counsel on each matter, and help clients to:

- Understand the original decision and reasons
- Identify grounds for judicial review
- Understand court procedures
- Prepare court documents

If Counsel identifies grounds for judicial review and considers the matter has prospects, they may offer pro bono representation. We will then attempt to find a firm to instruct.



## Visas cancelled on character grounds

The Minister for Immigration may cancel a person’s visa on “character grounds” where a person has committed a crime or does not otherwise meet the “character test”. This can have significant effects on people and families when the person has lived in Australia for a number of years or has strong family connections here.

## Refugee status means single criminal offence as a teen can lead to lifelong separation from family

John’s mother fled her country after experiencing domestic violence. As is often the case, she had to make the difficult decision to leave her children behind to seek safety. She was recognised as a refugee in Australia and granted a permanent visa, meaning she could be reunited with her children in Australia.

Shortly after turning eighteen John attended a party with friends and became intoxicated. John explained that this was the first time he had attended this type of event and consumed alcohol in this way. His behaviour was out of character and contrasted with his religious upbringing.

While intoxicated at the party John committed a serious assault. He was sentenced to prison and later granted parole. His visa was cancelled.

John applied for a merits review of the decision at the Administrative Review Tribunal. After weighing the evidence, the Tribunal found that the cancellation decision should be revoked, placing emphasis on the uncharacteristic nature of the single offence, his age, and his connection to Australia. John thought he would be reunited with his family and could begin to rebuild his life. However, the Minister exercised their discretion to override the Tribunal’s decision and cancel the visa again, leaving John at risk of being returned to a country his mother fled, with no family support structures in place to support him.

After John’s application for judicial review in the Federal Court was dismissed, his last chance is an appeal to the full court of the Federal Court of Australia. LawRight assisted John to find a barrister who provided advice and agreed to represent him at this final hearing. We also found a firm to act as instructing solicitors on a pro bono basis.







**"Rob is, of course, a legend of the sector."**

- Barrister Simon Cleary

**"The legal profession owes [Rob] a lot. He was one of the pioneers at a private law firm to instigate undertaking work pro bono. He has always been and remains a genuine and generous man who has given so much assistance to so many people."**

- The Hon. Justice Sue Brown

**"Having worked with Rob for [many] years, I saw firsthand his commitment and passion for pro bono legal services and his dedication to his chosen charities - especially his Darkness to Daylight initiative that has grown into something magical and inspiring."**

- Coroner Megan Fairweather

**Thank to the following firms for supporting this event**

McCullough Robertson  
MinterEllison  
MurphySchmidt  
Barry Nilsson



# Celebrating a Pro Bono legend

Rob Reed OAM is a past President and Life Member of LawRight. After many years of service to the legal sector and a deep commitment to social justice, he recently stepped away from his role as Special Counsel at MinterEllison.

We were delighted to acknowledge his remarkable contribution by hosting a private screening of *The Sacred Run, the lotus and the feather* – a film that reflects many of the values Rob has championed through his career. Thank you to everyone who attended. It was a fantastic night with many people sharing stories of their time working with Rob.

Rob has built a lasting legacy, inspiring many colleagues to follow his lead and support the growth of pro bono work within the legal profession.



# Management Committee

**President**

Jacqueline Wootton, Partner of Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer

**Secretary**

Tania Boal, Principal of MurphySchmidt

**Treasurer**

Tony Denholder, Partner of Ashurst

**Queensland Law Society Nominee**

Binari De Saram, Director Advocacy and Legal Policy, Queensland Law Society

**Bar Assoc. of Queensland Nominee**

Andrew Crowe CBE KC

**Legal Practice Members**

Stephen Knight, Partner of MinterEllison  
Tim Longwill, Partner of McCullough Robertson

**Barrister Members**

Salwa Marsh  
Hamish Clift



# LawRight Staff

CEO: Karen Dyhrberg

**Operations Team**

Director, Governance & Operations: Linda Macpherson  
Operations Manager: Nikki Gatbonton  
Bookkeeper: Rebecca Slade  
Data Management & Projects Officer: Zoe Rienecker  
Projects & Operations Officer: Bronte Coates  
Events & Operations Officer: Tracey Press (from Jan 2025)  
Intake & Operations Officer: Christie Abraham (from Jan 2025)  
Intake & Operations Officer: Georgia Temple (from Jan 2025)  
Intake & Operations Officer: Nazif Safdari (from Jan 2025)

**Pro Bono Connect**

Director: Rose Mackay

Senior Lawyer: Jessica Massa  
Senior Lawyer: Aaron Harris (parental leave replacement Nov 2024 to Jun 2025)

Lawyer: Stephen McClure  
Admin Officer: Bronte Coates (to Apr 2025)  
Paralegal: Lauren Petrohilos (from Apr 2025)

**Community & Health Justice Partnerships**

Director: Stephen Grace  
Senior Lawyer: Kate Adnams  
Senior Lawyer: Josephine Allan  
Senior Lawyer: Bonnie Djordjevic  
Senior Lawyer: Aaron Harris (parental leave replacement from Jun 2025)  
Lawyer: Ayla Fetahagic (and Paralegal to Aug 2024)  
Paralegal: Elise Dorsa (to Dec 2024)

Paralegal: Laura Peters (from Aug 2024)  
Paralegal: Alice Robinson (from Nov 2024)

**Cairns Office**

Senior Lawyer: Tracey White  
Paralegal: Constance Whiteside

**Court and Tribunal Services**

Director: Ben Tuckett  
Assistant Director: Nikki Hancock

**Federal Courts Office**

Senior Lawyer: Melanie O'Sullivan (From Dec 2024)  
Lawyer: Lexie Graham (to Feb 2025)  
Lawyer: Harrison Pie (from Feb 2025)  
Paralegal: Caitlyn Larkin

**State Courts Office**

Senior Lawyer: Natalie Morris  
Senior Lawyer: Melinda Willis  
Paralegal: Edward Griffin  
Paralegal: Shona Jackson (to Dec 2024)  
Paralegal: Abigail Pirie (from Nov 2024)

**Enforcement Hearing Service**

Senior Lawyer: Melinda Willis  
Paralegal: Shona Jackson (to Dec 2024)  
Paralegal: Abigail Pirie (from Feb 2025)

**QCAT Office**

Senior Lawyer: Lexie Graham (from Feb 2025)  
Lawyer: Caitlin Josey  
Paralegal: Ruby Chiswell (to Aug 2024)  
Paralegal: Talia Jeuda (from Aug 2024)

**Migration Law Service**

Senior Lawyer: Clare Carter  
Lawyer: Ruby Chiswell (from Aug 2024 to May 2025)  
Lawyer: Harrison Pie (to Feb 2025)  
Paralegal: Ghazal Mohammadi (from Mar 2024)

# Secondments

**Barry Nilsson**

David Bambling  
Tadaya Mujdrica  
Zoe Nicholson

**Colin Biggers & Paisley**

Jamie-Lee Davison

**Corrs Chambers Westgarth**

Alissa Yanik-Woods  
Ayeisha Mugabi  
Brandon Burkitt  
Caden Atzeni  
Chelsea Clark  
Chloe Bourne  
Lauren Ockendon  
Louise Patterson  
Midah Palethorpe

**Natalie Ross**

Sian Wright  
Sonia Clements  
Sarah McDonald  
Tashmi Lakshman  
Zahra Ali

**Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer**

Natasha Bopaiah

**McCullough Robertson**

Lauren Wood

**Sparke Helmore**

Ava Pearson



# Friends of LawRight

Friends of LawRight pledge \$1,000 a year for 3 years, and many have made additional donations. The support from these Friends enables LawRight to build services that are responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities.



- Adam Connolly**  
**Andrew Buchanan**  
**Andrew Crowe CBE KC**  
**Angela Rae**  
**Claire Schneider**  
**Damian Clothier KC**  
**Hamish Cliff**  
**Hon Justice Shane Doyle KC**  
**Hon Justice Thomas Bradley KC**  
**Hon Margaret McMurdo AC**  
**Hon Marshall Irwin**  
**Hon Robert W. Gotterson AO KC**  
**Jacqueline Wootton**  
**Joanne Rennick**
- Lucy Bretherton**  
**Majella Pollard**  
**Matthew Jones KC**  
**Mei Yin Barnes**  
**Michael Hodge KC**  
**Michael Trim**  
**Nitra Kidson KC**  
**Olga Buchanan**  
**Paul Newman**  
**Randal and Susan Dennings**  
**Salwa Marsh**  
**Tamara McCombe**  
**Tony Denholder**  
**...and eight anonymous friends**

Since 2019, Friends of LawRight have donated over \$180,000 to sustain frontline LawRight services.

# Members

### Firms & ILPs

- Allens
- Ashurst
- Baker McKenzie
- Barry Nilsson
- Bartley Cohen Law
- Clayton Utz
- Clyde & Co
- Colin Biggers & Paisley
- Cooper Grace Ward
- Corrs Chambers Westgarth
- Dentons
- DLA Piper
- Dunham Shaw
- DWF Law
- Hall & Wilcox
- Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer
- Holding Redlich
- Hopgood Ganim
- Genuine Legal
- Johnson Winter Slattery
- K&L Gates
- King & Wood Mallesons
- Lander & Rogers
- McCullough Robertson
- McInnes Wilson
- MinterEllison
- MurphySchmidt
- Shand Taylor
- Sparke Helmore
- Wotton & Kearney

### Associate members

- Bond University, Faculty of Law
- Griffith University Law School
- Queensland University of Technology Law School
- TC Beirne School of Law,
- The University of Queensland
- James Cook University School of Law

### Government Legal Unit members

- Crown Law, Department of Justice

### Corporate members

- AECOM Australia Pty Ltd

### Specified members

- Bar Association of Queensland
- Queensland Law Society

### King's Counsel

- Andrew Crowe CBE KC
- Andrew Stumer KC
- Ben Gardiner KC
- David Keane KC
- Gavin Handran KC
- Matthew Jones KC
- Michael Hodge KC
- Nitra Kidson KC
- Patrick Cullinane KC
- Peter Hastie KC
- Stewart Webster KC

### Counsel

- Aaron Clark
- Aaron Wilson
- Angela Rae
- Anna Crawford
- Benedict Coyne
- Benjamin Kidston
- Benjamin Wilson
- Bianca Mendelson
- Bridget O'Brien
- Carla Klease
- Charles Wilson
- Christopher George
- Chris Curtis
- Claire Bruggemann
- Danielle Tay
- Deacon Johnston
- Duncan Marckwald
- Emma Holberg
- Felicity Wood
- Fiona Lubett
- Gabriel Perry
- Grace Devereaux
- Graham Dietz
- Hamish Cliff
- Hannah Lilley
- Helena Meyers-Nicolas
- Jade Marr
- Jayleigh Sargent
- Jozef Borja-Erece
- Justin Carter
- Kara Thomson
- Karen Gaston
- Kate Boomer
- Kate Fuller
- Lauren Gamble
- Louise Kruger
- Matthew Paterson

- Michael Maynard
- Michael Murray
- Mei Ying Barnes
- Mitchell Duncan
- Morgan Clark
- Nathaniel Harris
- Nicholas Pratt
- Nola Pearce
- Rachel De Luchi
- Rachel Hew
- Rachel Liang
- Rebekah Bassano
- Reimen Hii
- Renae Kirk
- Robert Quirk
- Robert (Bob) Reed
- Rowan Pack
- Ryan Nattrass
- Salwa Marsh
- Samuel Walpole
- Sarah Spottiswood
- Scott Carter
- Shane Ogden
- Stephanie Philippou
- Stephen Colditz
- Steven Hogg
- Storm Scarlett
- Toby Nielsen
- Tom Pepper
- Thomas Pincus
- Stephanie Forward-Smith
- Tristan Smith
- William Hall
- Yusuf Furgan

### Life members

- Andrew Buchanan
- Hugh Scott-Mackenzie RFD
- Joanne Rennick
- Lucy Bretherton
- Peter Rosengren
- Robert Reed OAM
- Simon Cleary
- Tony Woodyatt

LawRight members remain members of the association until they resign or are formally removed. This list is of active and financial members in 24-25.



# Law Schools

LawRight partners with Queensland's major law schools to deliver student clinics, where law students spend a semester supporting LawRight services, and learning first-hand about access to justice.

**Homelessness Law  
The University of Queensland  
Homelessness and Community  
Services**

Alice Whitaker  
Annaka Tong-Law  
Grace-Emily McKenna  
Jacob Weeks  
Joseph Lewis  
Nickolas Sofios

**Homelessness Law  
The University of Queensland  
Mater Young Adult Health Centre**

Georgia Ferguson  
Kate Crawford  
Lara Corry  
Meng Zhang  
Monique Rossitto  
Paris Welch  
Pei-shan (Jenny) Hsiao  
Trisha Das  
Xing Rui (Celina) Zhu

**Court and Tribunal Services  
Australian Catholic University**

Alyssa Clarkson  
Amelia Condon

**Court and Tribunal Services  
Bond University**

Eireann Rochefort  
Charles Johnson  
Hsui-Chun (Christina) Chiang  
Jane Fenton  
Kiara Petterson

**Pro Bono Connect  
Griffith University**

Ashlen Toledo  
Jessica Betzel  
Madaline Bell  
Rhea Prasad  
Robert Ready  
Tiare Nasake Temu

# Students and volunteers

**Community & Health  
Justice Partnership**

Alice Whitaker  
Imogen Whiteside

**Enforcement Hearing Service**

Rita Zhiltsova

**Migration Law Service**

Anuraag  
Carla Sophia Meiggs Cortez  
Cooper Jones  
Irene Elza Soji  
Matilda Stinson  
Rachel Kang  
Veronique Cobbold

**QCAT Office**

Adele Pickering  
Jacob Betts  
Liam Cleary  
Olivia Chan  
Stephanie Ho  
Yusha Khanal  
Zita Li

**State Courts Office**

Harry Sharples  
Stephanie Ho

**Federal Courts Office**

Benson Teljega  
Harry Sharples

**Qld Legal Walk**

Adam Connolly  
Annaka Tong-Law  
Ashlen Toledo  
Benson Taljega  
Emma Beckinsale  
Grace McKenna  
Jacob Weeks  
Jessica Betzel  
Kate Crawford  
Monique Rossitto  
Paris Welch  
Rita Zhiltsova  
Robert Ready  
Veronique Bold  
Zita Li

“Once again thank you for your time and support throughout the placement experience. Your insights were invaluable!”

“I would like to thank you for making my time at LawRight enjoyable, I very much enjoyed the work and I feel that my experience during the trimester has given me some sense of direction in terms of what I hope to do with my career.”

“I wanted to say thank you for being such a lovely and inspirational supervisor. I couldn't have asked for a better group of people and teacher.”





# Resources

LawRight provides factsheets on a variety of areas of law, helping people to navigate their legal proceedings. We particularly focus on going to Court and QCAT, drafting court documents and understand proceedings. These factsheets also help our pro bono volunteers and other community legal centres.

Our factsheets cover many topics in the following categories:

- ADR & mediation
  - Bankruptcy
  - Blue Cards
  - Child safety
  - Consumer law
  - Defamation
  - Discrimination
  - Employment
- Enduring power of attorney
  - Environment and planning
  - Going to Court – Commencing court proceedings, drafting court documents, preparing for court, during the trial, and enforcement proceedings
  - Appeals in the Queensland Court of Appeal
  - Default and summary judgements
  - Standing and involvement in legal proceedings
  - Going to QCAT
  - Guardianship
  - Health Care Planning
  - Malicious prosecution
  - Mental health
  - Not-for-profits
  - Personal injuries
  - Prisoners
  - Time Limits



New online resources to help lawyers support their clients



Homelessness Law launched Everyday Law in Queensland to empower community and pro bono lawyers to confidently navigate and resolve everyday legal issues impacting marginalised Queenslanders.

To develop Everyday Law in Queensland, we partnered with pro bono lawyers and sector experts to create practical, accessible and comprehensive legal resources specifically designed for the legal assistance sector.

Everyday Law in Queensland empowers the pro bono and legal assistance sector with over 35 targeted legal resources on Fines and Infringements, Money and Debt Issues, and Housing and Tenancy Concerns, and Accessing Financial Supports for Victims of Crime.



# Forums

LawRight staff are members of the following forums or boards:

- ASIC Consumer Regulator Forum
  - Cairns Regional Legal Assistance Forum (RLAF)
  - Community Legal Education Legal Assistance Forum
  - Court User Stakeholder Group
  - Disaster Legal Response Working Group
  - Economic Abuse Reference Group
  - Employment Law Network
  - Litigation Guardianship Roundtable
  - Maintaining and Sustaining Tenancies Forum
  - Make Renting Fair Alliance
  - Mental Health and Disability Legal Assistance Forum
  - National Legal Aid's Legal Assistance Sector Trauma-Informed Community of Practice
- National Lemon Cars Working Group
  - NQ Consumer Taskforce
  - Regional Legal Assistance Forum
  - RTA Consumer Regulator Forum
  - QCAT Guardianship and Administration Stakeholder Group
  - QHRC Human Rights Advocates Group
  - Queensland Health Justice Partnerships Network
  - Queensland Law Society, Access to Justice and Pro Bono Law Committee
  - Queensland Legal Assistance Forum
  - The University of Queensland Pro Bono Centre, Advisory Board
  - Victim Assist Working Group

**257 stakeholder engagements**  
**13 law reform project engagements**

LawRight engages with colleagues across the legal profession and community sectors, to ensure we are providing the best services and referral pathways for our clients.



# Finances

## Treasurer's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for the 2024–25 financial year.

Financially, it was a dynamic but successful year.

We navigated some uncertainty regarding the end of our 5-year service agreement with the Queensland Government, but were delighted to receive funding certainty for the next 5 years through the National Access to Justice Partnership.

The other big financial influence this year was receipt of Workforce Uplift funding, which allowed community legal centres such as LawRight to provide more secure employment arrangements for our team. This had previously been a challenge to do given our funding model.

LawRight is extremely grateful to the Queensland and Commonwealth governments and Attorneys-General for committing to this ongoing funding and valuing our workforce, giving us the stability to plan for the next 5 years.

Overall, government grants increased 30% on initial expectations held in July 2024 and overall revenue grew 60% on the previous year.

This year, LawRight recorded an operating deficit of \$146,128, effectively halving the previous year's deficit. While we had hoped to return to surplus, the Workforce Uplift funding created a significant increase in nominal employment liabilities. Rest assured, to have dedicated and talented long-term staff is something for which we are very grateful. Our 35 staff (30 FTE) average around 5 years of service at LawRight.

We also saw a significant increase in IT expenses, as we invested in technology and self-funded our client management software after the nationally funded system was discontinued. Our equity sits at \$129,492.

LawRight's income has diversified, with projects supported by Queensland Gives, Victims Assist Queensland, Mater Foundation, Queensland Law

Society, Bar Association of Queensland, Bond University, Griffith University, and The University of Queensland.

Despite the 60% increase in revenue, donations and membership support still made up 10% of income. This means your support has continued to grow, along with LawRight. LawRight received over \$284,000 in donations through events such as the Queensland Legal Walk and Red Wine for Justice. Thank you to LawRight's members, donors, supporters, and philanthropic partners who make our work possible.

Thank you also to bookkeeper Rebecca Slade for her support to CEO Karen Dyhrberg, and to auditor Jeremiah Thum from Independent Audit Services for ensuring LawRight's financial integrity.

I also thank my fellow Management Committee members, particularly the Finance & Audit Subcommittee, and acknowledge outgoing President Jacqui Wootton for her leadership of our organisation over the past three years. Jacqui's tireless contribution to LawRight has been exceptional.



**Tony Denholder**  
LawRight Treasurer

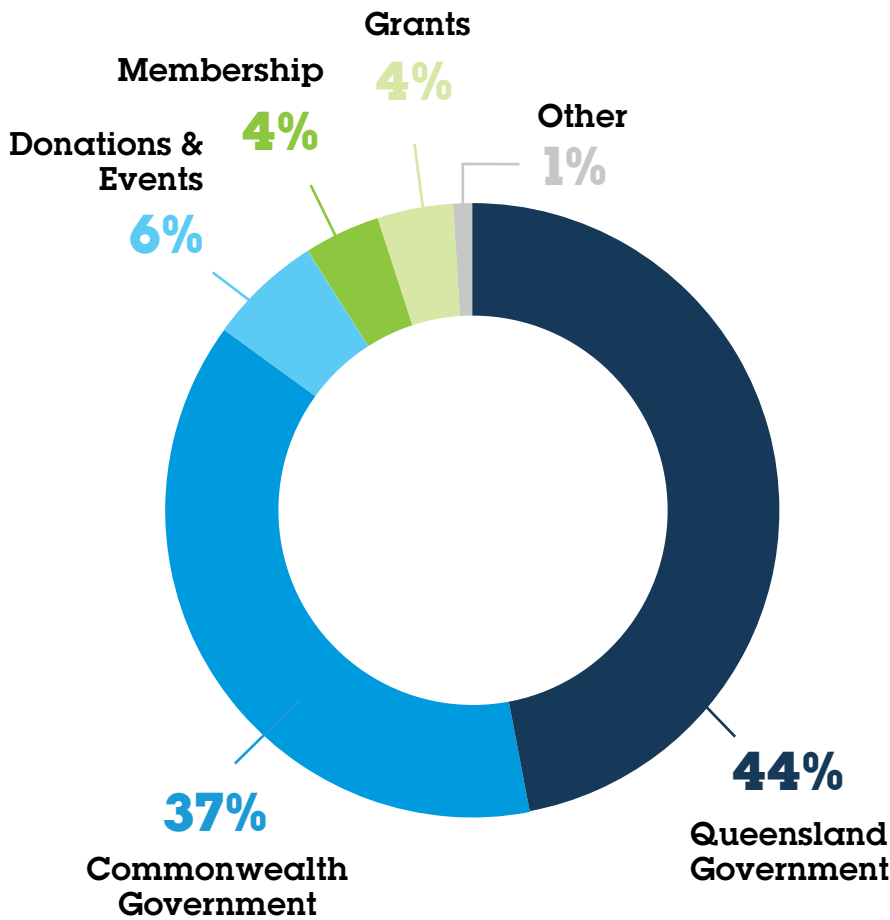
# Financial Statements

LawRight is an association incorporated in Queensland. We are a public benevolent institution, endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as a deductible gift recipient organisation. Our accounts are independently audited.

Our audited annual financial report is available on our website.



## LawRight Income





**Thank you for your printing support:**



**Photographs: Jared Vethaak Photography**

**Graphic Design: Martin Howard**

Note: Client names have been changed to protect privacy.



**"It's the amount of patience the staff have shown me, that they are here to help me and support. This has made me less stressed and not alone and feels like I'm being seen and not ignored, cause this was a big issue and for them to help me is amazing."**

**"10/10. You guys were absolutely amazing, and helped me so much at a time when I really needed it. If anything comes up again in the future, I'd come straight to you guys."**

**"They've been really nice and very respectful and helpful and really good listeners."**



# Contacting LawRight

LawRight offices generally operate from 9am to 5pm on business days. The main office phones are available 10am to 4pm.

## **Main Office**

(07) 3846 6317

[admin@lawright.org.au](mailto:admin@lawright.org.au)

## **Pro Bono Connect**

(07) 3187 4379

[probonoconnect@lawright.org.au](mailto:probonoconnect@lawright.org.au)

## **Community and Health Justice Partnerships | Meanjin-Brisbane & Gimuy-Cairns**

(07) 3518 8125

[chjpadmin@lawright.org.au](mailto:chjpadmin@lawright.org.au)

## **State Courts Office | Court and Tribunal Services | Meanjin-Brisbane**

(including Enforcement Hearing Service)

Level 1, Queensland Elizabeth II Courts of Law Building

415 George Street, Brisbane

(07) 3738 7800

[state.cts@lawright.org.au](mailto:state.cts@lawright.org.au)

## **QCAT Office | Court and Tribunal Services | Meanjin-Brisbane**

Level 10, National Australia Bank (NAB) Building

259 Queen Street, Brisbane

(07) 3564 7561

[tribunal.cts@lawright.org.au](mailto:tribunal.cts@lawright.org.au)

## **Federal Courts Office | Court and Tribunal Services | Meanjin-Brisbane**

Level 6, Harry Gibbs Commonwealth Law Courts

119 North Quay, Brisbane

(07) 3052 4309

[fed.cts@lawright.org.au](mailto:fed.cts@lawright.org.au)



[www.lawright.org.au](http://www.lawright.org.au)