

LawRight

Access | Justice

2025-2026 Annual Report







Acknowledgement of Country

LawRight has offices in Meanjin and Gimuy. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the unceded 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 support their right to self-determination.

We note for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers that this publication contains names and images of people who have passed away.

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This artwork was created by Warren 'Charlie' Waters. Uncle Charlie is a Kamilaroi man, Aboriginal artist, and cultural educator.

This vibrant, textured artwork illustrates the multifaceted nature of LawRight and its three distinct services. The significance of movement and connection to our work is a repeated motif throughout the design, such as through the inclusion of meeting places, the central image of three people coming together, and the striking visual of the Maiwar-Meanjin river cutting through the scene. Read more on page 16.



LawRight received...

1,533 applications	**3,422** enquiries by phone, email, in person

LawRight supported...

1,190 people to access justice	**548** at Court and Tribunal Services
473 at Community & Health Justice Partnerships	**169** through Pro Bono Connect

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

37 staff

165 members

400 volunteers

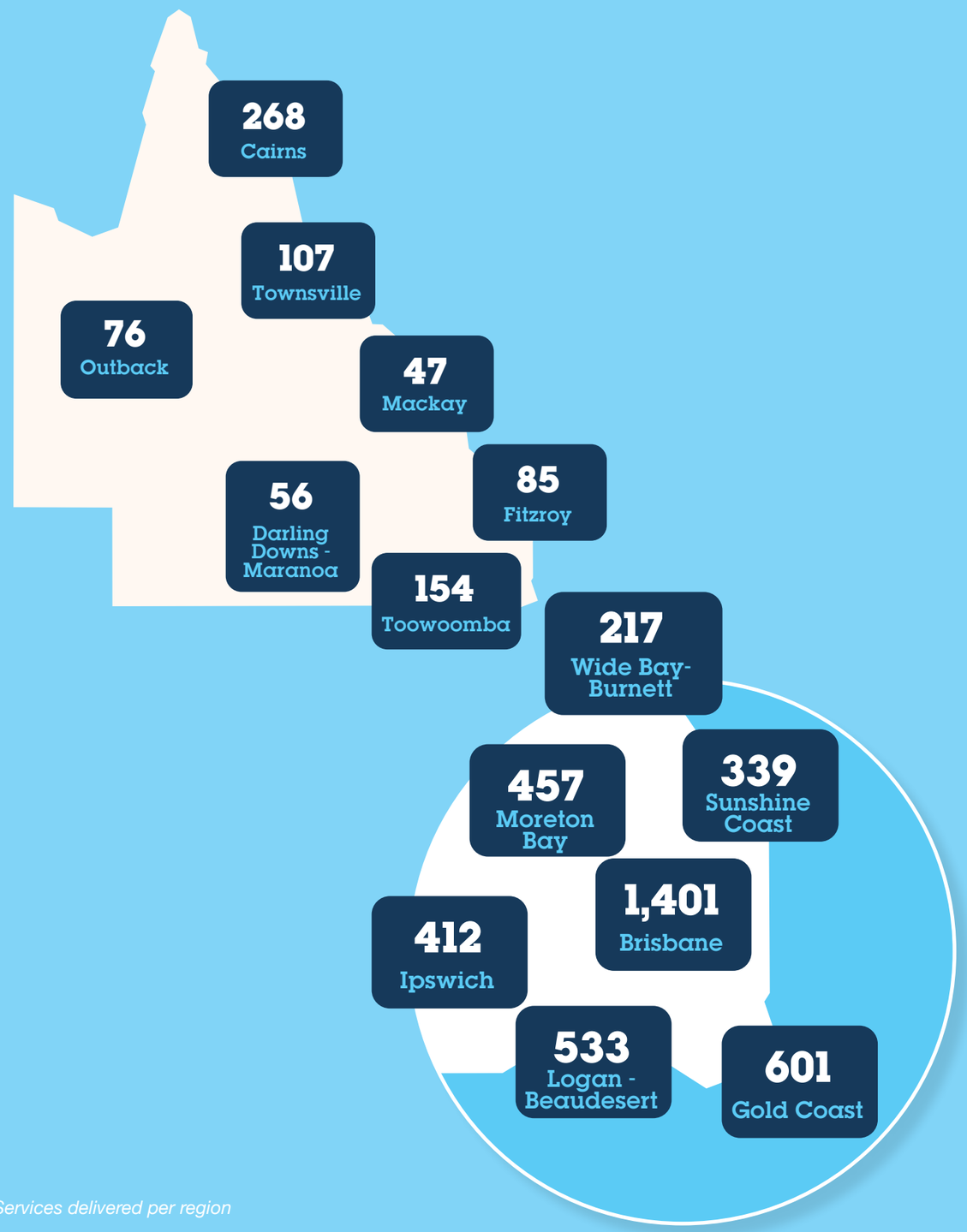
Embedded at **11** partner locations

LawRight clients...

95% of people we give full representation to are experiencing financial disadvantage*	**47%** are experiencing or at risk of homelessness	**46%** representing themselves in court
25% regional, rural or remote	**11%** Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	**22%** culturally & linguistically diverse
33% reported disability or mental illness	**13%** older people	**8%** young people
25% have experienced domestic or family violence	**15%** are affected by disaster	

**relying on Centrelink or earning less than $52,000 per year*

LawRight's statewide reach



Services delivered per region

LawRight delivered

Deliverables	Core		Disaster Response		Federal Court		Total Delivered
	Target	Delivered	Target	Delivered	Target	Delivered	
Intensive casework	400	**409**	25	**60**	-	**-**	**469**
Legal advice	1,100	**1,335**	150	**199**	280	**588**	**2,122**
Legal task	500	**646**	80	**88**	80	**242**	**976**
Information	1,730	**4,368**	50	**92**	280	**299**	**4,759**
Referral	1,640	**3,594**	50	**80**	140	**297**	**3,971**
Duty lawyer	20	**10**	-	**-**	-	**-**	**10**
Resources	5	**38**	5	**-**	1	**-**	**38**
Activities	15	**62**	5	**1**	1	**3**	**66**
Law reform	5	**10**	1	**-**	-	**-**	**10**
Stakeholder engagement	150	**157**	40	**10**	25	**30**	**197**

Notes

"Core" represents Pro Bono Connect, Community & Health Justice Partnerships, and the QCAT and State Courts offices of the Court and Tribunal Services.

"Disaster Response" represents four-year funding provided by the Commonwealth Government to respond to the South East Queensland 2022 floods and other weather events. This was the final year of this program. As the disaster-related work wound up, we delivered fewer CLE resources and activities specific to disasters, but there is a corresponding increase in general CLE resources and activities. This maintains relationships with community providers, who will be important partners in responding to future disasters.

"Intensive casework" represents holistic, ongoing casework matters, delivered through our Community & Health Justice Partnerships team. They are counted by the number of files closed in the financial year.

LawRight Patron

The Honourable Helen Bowskill

Chief Justice of Queensland

I congratulate LawRight on its 25 years of service to the people of Queensland and to the legal profession.

Since its establishment in 2001 as the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House, LawRight has maintained a close association with the courts. Throughout that time, the Chief Justice of Queensland has served as its Patron; a reflection of the important contribution LawRight makes to the administration of justice.

Access to justice is a cornerstone of the rule of law. Rights and obligations have little practical meaning if people are unable to obtain advice, understand legal processes, or effectively present their case. The administration of justice therefore depends not only on the work of the courts, but also on ensuring that those who need the protection or assistance of the law can access it.

For a quarter of a century, LawRight has helped bridge that gap. Through its services, and the commitment of its staff and volunteers, LawRight has assisted thousands of Queenslanders who might otherwise have struggled to navigate the legal system. It has provided practical pathways to legal assistance for people facing disadvantage, vulnerability or complexity in their dealings with the law.

The value of that work extends beyond individual cases. When people are able to obtain timely advice and appropriate support, legal issues can be identified and addressed more effectively, disputes can be resolved more efficiently, and court processes can operate more fairly. In that way, LawRight's work strengthens not only access to justice for individual Queenslanders, but confidence in the justice system as a whole.

LawRight's achievements over the past 25 years have depended upon the generosity of the legal profession and the dedication of many staff, volunteers and supporters. Their collective contribution has been substantial and enduring.

I thank all those who have supported LawRight's mission over the past 25 years and extend my best wishes to the organisation as it continues its important work of improving access to justice for Queenslanders in the years ahead.



President's report

LawRight provides a unique and vital service to the people of Queensland. The role LawRight plays is unique because of how it started its life 25 years ago as the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House. And it is unique because of how it serves not only the people of Queensland – often when help is needed most – but also how it serves the Courts and the legal profession.

Earlier this month, the Australian Pro Bono Centre published its 19th Annual Performance Report of the National Pro Bono Target. In that report, the Centre reported that over 20,000 FTE Lawyers were covered by the target and 887,910 hours of pro bono legal services were undertaken by those lawyers. Each represents an increase on the previous year. As the demand by the profession to contribute to pro bono work continues to grow, LawRight plays a vital role in assisting Queenslanders to find pro bono lawyers, as the numbers on pages 4 to 6 show. That, in turn, helps the Courts to grapple with the increasing number of litigants in person, which has been widely reported in recent months.

Against that background, I am very pleased to be able to help lead LawRight in a time of increased need for pro bono lawyers and increased willingness by the profession to provide pro bono services. This is my first of what I hope to be several reports about the successes LawRight enjoys.

Those successes would not be possible without the tireless work of so many. It is a privilege to be able to thank some of them here.

I first must thank my predecessor, Jacqui Wootton, who has guided the organisation for the previous three years and who has been indefatigable in the face of unexpected challenges.

Thank you to Binari de Saram and Andrew Crowe CBE KC, who have been Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association Queensland representatives on the Committee for many years. We are also grateful for the support of the Society and the Association, who not only contribute strategic and governance input through their representatives, but also provide financial support to LawRight's referral scheme through Pro Bono Connect.

Thank you also to our longtime colleague and friend, Linda Macpherson. Linda has been with LawRight since 2016, and before that was seconded from Clayton Utz to run the first Consumer Law student clinic. Linda has provided a sizeable contribution to LawRight for almost a decade, as Co-CEO from 2016 and later as Director of Governance & Operations. Of course, I must also thank our CEO and executive team, who work tirelessly to ensure LawRight can do the important work that it does, along with all our staff. LawRight would not be the same without their passion and drive.

In our *first annual report*, QPILCH's founding President, Andrew Buchanan, wrote:

"I do not doubt that QPILCH has a great future in Queensland."

In 25 years, we have grown to an organisation that employs over 35 staff, engages with some 400 volunteers, and supports over 1,000 clients each year. There is no doubt that Andrew – who continues to support LawRight – was right when he predicted that QPILCH had a great future in Queensland.

As we continue to grow, the same values have informed our decisions from the very beginning – a strong partnership with the legal profession and a focus on responding to community need.

Finally, thank you to all of you who have volunteered, taken a referral, or donated to LawRight over the years. Our relationship with the legal profession sets us apart and is a vital contributor to how LawRight has flourished for 25 years.



Hamish Clift
LawRight President

CEO's report

As Hamish noted, this year we farewelled Linda Macpherson and I thank Linda for her time at LawRight.

This year, we also farewelled Kate Adnams and Clare Carter from our staff team.



Kate Adnams was with LawRight for almost 10 years, and led our Stable Futures for Young Queenslanders Project for many years. Kate started with us as an admin assistant and then as a paralegal. Kate undertook a secondment as Practitioner in Residence at the UQ Pro Bono Centre. UQ partners with us to support our client services through student placements. Kate is a passionate advocate for young people facing homelessness, and this year was named a woman to watch in Australia's legal sector. Kate has taken up the role of Manager at UQ Pro Bono Centre, and we look forward to continuing to work with Kate in her new capacity.



Clare Carter was with us for a shorter time but nevertheless became so valued as she led our Migration work. In a short time, Clare developed strong relationships with the many barristers who supported that service during its operation.



On a sad note, our former colleague **Iain McCowie** passed away this year. Iain was the lawyer in the State Courts team from 2010 to 2016, playing a fundamental role in the development of the Court and Tribunal Services.



Long-time LawRight volunteer and past President **Rob Reed** finished up from his role of many decades coordinating MinterEllison's community programs. We hosted an event to acknowledge Rob and were very happy to see Rob pop up at CLCQ later in the year.



Nikki Hancock, the Assistant Director of our Court and Tribunal Services, was a finalist for a QCOSS Human Rights award. Nikki has dedicated many years to helping clients access their rights through our QCAT service and has advocated for fairer laws along the way. She is a valued colleague and a true champion of human rights in Queensland.

I am deeply grateful for the entire LawRight staff group, our volunteers, members, and the wider profession, who always support LawRight so generously.

With your consistent and high-quality pro bono work, LawRight has continued leading access to justice in Queensland.



Karen Dyhrberg
LawRight CEO

Beyond casework: strengthening our impact

We leverage opportunities to expand our impact beyond casework by collaborating with our pro bono partners, and focusing on non-government fundraising activities.

This year's Strategic Plan practically supported these key goals. Our priorities were projects which utilised the expertise of our highly skilled staff and leveraged the support of our existing relationships. Guided by innovative and collaborative thinking, we continue to increase access to justice for vulnerable Queenslanders.

This year's projects:

- Developing targeted resources to upskill volunteer lawyers and help-seekers (Page 11)
- Improving our intake processes and the functionality of the LawRight website (Page 12)
- Empowering frontline workers to respond to legal problems (Page 14)
- Enlisting our law firm members to provide us with secondments (Page 15)
- Building our organisational Cultural Capability and Safety (Page 16)
- Raising crucial donations and awareness through our annual Queensland Legal Walk fundraiser (Page 18)
- Working with law schools and students to train the next generation of lawyers (Page 50)

Growing our non-government funding

The Queensland Legal Walk, our Friends of LawRight (Page 48) and Membership (Page 49), and small grants brought more than **$550,000** this year.

These fundraising activities assist us to complement government-funded programs and build a solid financial base, as well as be responsive to the ever-changing needs of our community.

Pillars of our Strategic Plan

Clients

Increasing access to justice for people who need it most - people facing disadvantage, people with legal problems. Client-centred - accessible, responsive and culturally safe. Achieving meaningful outcomes.

Partners

Members, firms and barristers, courts, community agencies, universities, government, funding partners. Understanding and responding to their needs. Adding value to our shared clients and service users.

Staff

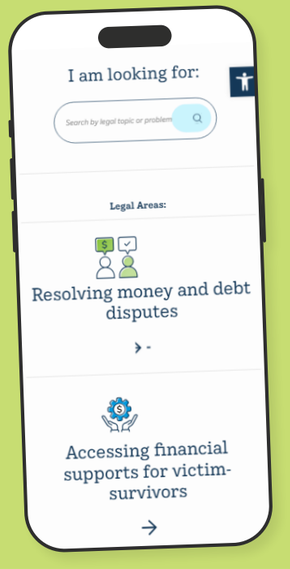
Wellbeing and autonomy. Sustainable workloads. Recognition. Promoted as thought leaders. Empowered to represent LawRight.

Strong & stable organisation

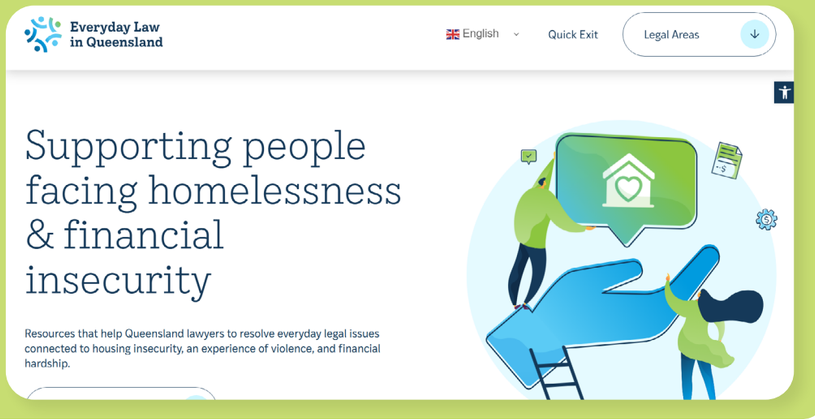
Financial Strategy. Risk Management. Well-resourced operations. Using and innovating with technology. Good communication. Cultural Safety.

Everyday Law in Queensland

Learn more online:
everydaylawinqld.org.au



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



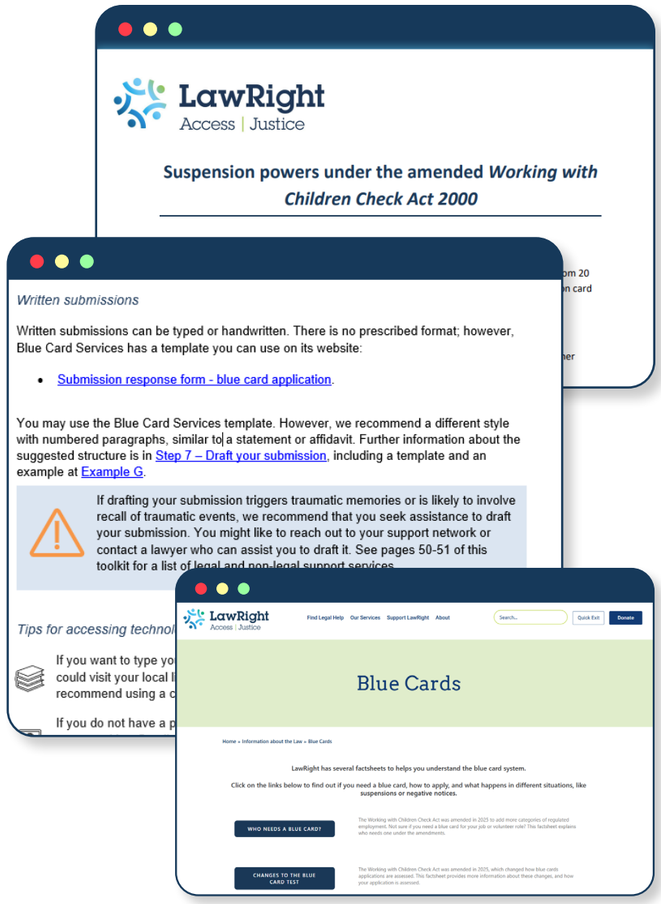
Blue Card resources

LawRight received a grant from the Community Legal Education Collaboration Fund to develop new Blue Card resources and to update existing resources in line with recent changes to the legislation.

New and updated factsheets are available on the LawRight website along with a toolkit for *Responding to a request for submissions from Blue Card Services.*

These resources can help more people, and at an earlier stage in proceedings, than LawRight can reach through our direct legal help.

Learn more online:
lawright.org.au/legal-information/blue-cards/



Beyond casework: strengthening our impact

Improving client navigation and intake

LawRight commenced a review of how people access our services, from first contact through to application assessment. The review recognised that people seeking legal help are often navigating a complex service system, with many applicants unsure which organisation is best placed to assist them.

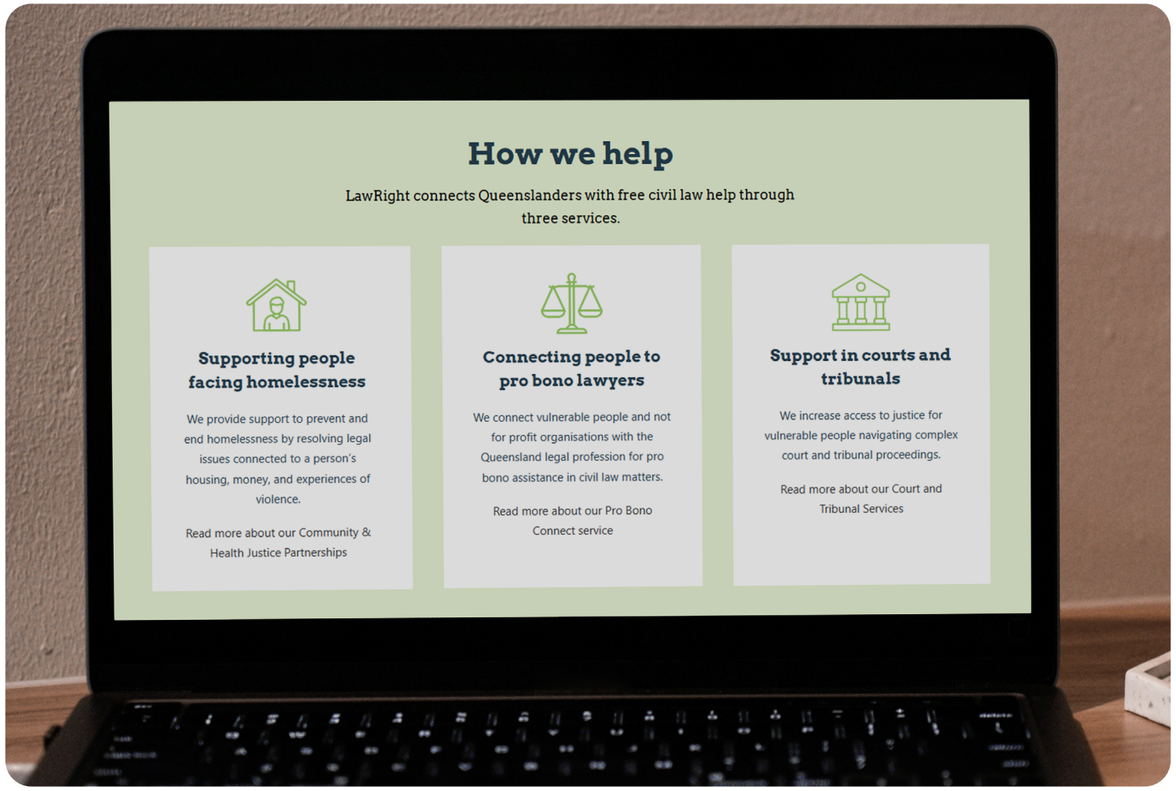
Demand for legal services continues to grow, outstripping capacity. As a result, applicants often approach multiple organisations in search of support, regardless of whether they can offer the right support.

Improving our intake pathway helps connect people with the most appropriate service within LawRight as early as possible, or alternatively helps them recognise early that LawRight is not the appropriate service to assist.

Reviewing our application form

The primary focus of the review in 25-26 was our online intake form. Our online intake form is the primary pathway through which applicants access CTS and PBC services, making it a critical part of the client experience. We reviewed the intake process with a focus on accessibility, user experience, efficiency of internal processes, and security.

Throughout 25-26, we developed a new online application form and launched it in July 2026, with updated intake processes behind the scenes.



Focus on accessibility

We recognise that accessibility is not always achieved through digital solutions alone, so we have expanded our range of intake pathways to enable people to engage with LawRight in the way that best suits their circumstances.

While we have aimed to make our online form as accessible as possible, we also introduced phone appointments to assist people to complete the application form, making the form available in Word format, for accessibility, and PDF application forms for ease of printing.

Through our improved pathways, we aim to help people:

- Better understand whether LawRight may be able to assist
- Find the right help sooner
- Know what information we need from them to assess their matter.

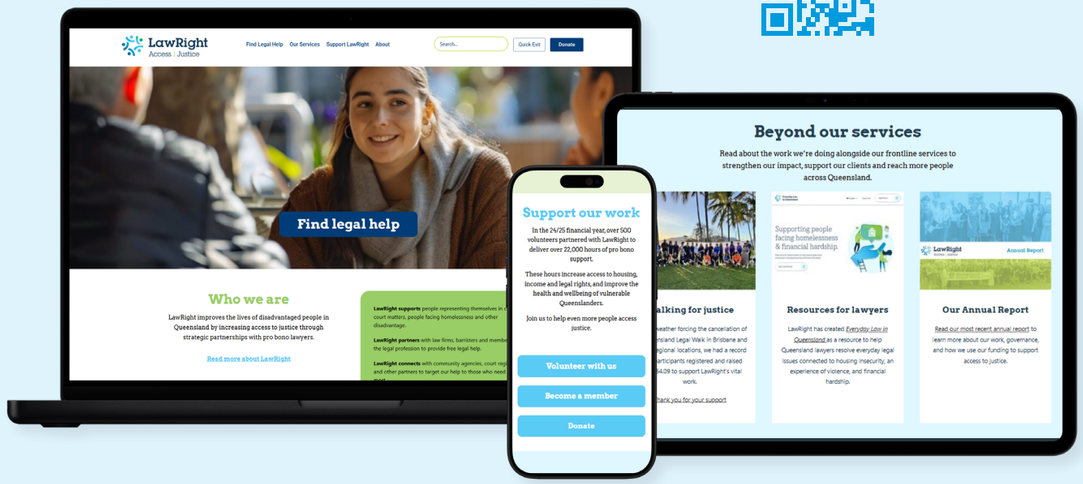
What's next?

We will continue gathering feedback from applicants, frontline workers and referral partners, and monitor the impact of the new intake process to identify further improvements.

Explore our redesigned website.

Website update

lawright.org.au



Gambling Community Benefit Fund Queensland Government

This year we finalised a refresh of our website, improving accessibility, client pathways and making information easier to find.

We thank the **Gambling Community Benefit** Fund for a grant to enable our website upgrade.

Empowering Queensland's frontline community workers

Community, housing and health workers are at the forefront of Queensland's compounding housing and cost-of-living crises. Drawing on over 20 years delivering specialist legal services, Homelessness Law empowers the sector to take early, effective steps to resolve the everyday legal issues that push people into homelessness and housing insecurity.

Homelessness Law's innovative online resources and targeted training programs are co-designed with frontline workers to build capabilities for thousands of multi-disciplinary practitioners annually.

Our *Everyday Legal Training for Frontline Workers* empowers and educates Queensland's frontline workers to navigate complex, intersecting legal issues. Across three co-designed legal training days, Homelessness Law worked collaboratively with legal assistance sector colleagues to deliver 15 workshops, presentations, and masterclasses on accessing Victim Assist payments, resolving money and debt issues, and navigating tenancies impacted by violence.

38
innovative online resources

51
practical legal capability sessions

2,082 frontline workers empowered

100% said they would use the training in their work

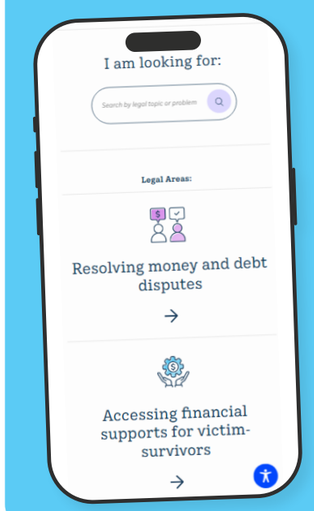
87% rated our training as excellent

Everyday Legal Training is made possible through the generous support of the Department of Justice.

Queensland Government

Everyday Legal Solutions for Frontline Workers

Learn more online: **everydaylegalsolutions.org.au**



Empowering Queensland's community assistance sector with plain-language legal resources on the everyday legal issues connected to housing insecurity, an experience of violence, and financial hardship.



Value of secondments

Secondments from our pro bono partners greatly boost the work that LawRight can do.

Secondees not only increase our capacity, but they bring valuable new insights and skills to the team. Their participation extends beyond casework, allowing us to explore how we can better assist clients, and spend more time with those who are most vulnerable.

We are grateful to our partners who have provided secondees this year:

Barry Nilsson
Colin Biggers & Paisley
Corrs Chambers Westgarth
Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer
McCullough Robertson
Sparke Helmore

A meaningful experience for graduates and early career lawyers

Newly admitted and early career lawyers learn valuable skills while on secondment with LawRight. Many are able to explore areas of the law they have not yet had a chance to become deeply involved in, and they do so in a supported environment with shared values.

We know that firms also see this benefit. In recent years, Corrs Chambers Westgarth continued their highly impactful Graduate secondment program with our State Courts offices while McCullough Robertson again provided us secondees through their early career lawyers program.



"The secondment has been professionally rewarding and personally meaningful, reinforcing the value of pro bono work and the positive impact lawyers can make outside of commercial decision making. My time at LawRight has been beyond valuable and truly positive."

– Emily Robertson, secondee from McCullough Robertson Lawyers

This year's secondees

Barry Nilsson
Avleen Gill
Bill Qiu
Laura Tyler

Colin Biggers & Paisley
Jamie-Lee Davison

Corrs Chambers Westgarth
Lissa Yanik-Woods
Caitlyn Douglas
Catherine Li
Elliot Perkins
Elizabete Sika
Gabrielle Adams
Gemma St Ledger
James Rochester
Julia Cowell
Mahelie Goonaratne
Sebastian Younan
Thao Nguyen
Kevin Arseneau
Joyce Ding
Nicola Eadie
Radhika Peddibhotla
Samuel Loewenthal
Tazmyn Fuller

Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer
Phylicia Lim

McCullough Robertson
Allison Kricker
Emily Robertson
Rebecca Chapman

Sparke Helmore
Uday Panwar

Building cultural capability and safety

Over the past year, LawRight has been developing a roadmap to become a more culturally safe organisation for First Nations clients, staff, and stakeholders.

The Plan will look to improve four key areas: Knowledge, Accessibility, Collaboration and Evaluation. We consider it a first step in a longer journey toward greater cultural capability on our part, and we are conscious of making it actionable and trackable.

Workshop with Uncle Charlie Waters

The group of staff working to develop our Plan met with Warren 'Charlie' Waters. Uncle Charlie is a Kamilaroi man, Aboriginal artist, and cultural educator. Staff contributed to the concept for the artwork and learned about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art-making and culture. It was an engaging, heart-opening experience.

The artwork Uncle Charlie created from our collaborative workshop is featured at the beginning of this report.

Marking significant dates and connecting with communities

Staff participated in the following events to connect with community and mark significant dates:

NAIDOC Week: The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy
5-12 July 2025

Indigenous Literacy Day
3 September 2025

National Indigenous Legal Conference
26-27 November 2025

Invasion Day
26 January 2026

National Reconciliation Week
27 May to 3 June 2026

2026 Mullenjaiwakka Oration
26 June 2026



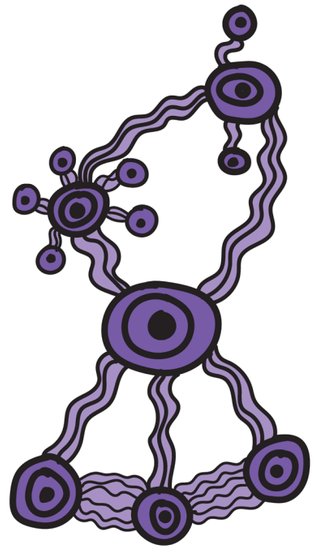
Fostering a culture of curiosity and self-guided learning

As part of our learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and the harmful impact of the legal system, LawRight staff based in Meanjin-Brisbane visited Archie Moore's immersive art installation 'kith and kin'.

This momentous work traces Archie Moore's Kamilaroi and Bigambul relations over 65,000+ years and juxtaposes it with the Australian legal system. Staff were able to experience this artwork at QAGOMA, alongside other exhibitions featuring First Nations artists.

Staff in Gimuy-Cairns were also able to engage with the works of First Nations artists who were being displayed at Mulgrave Gallery.

These visits provided the opportunity for reflection about the places we work, live and call home. Many of these artworks hold lessons for us beyond the art world, demonstrating the resilience and ingenuity of Indigenous knowledge, and prompting questions about how we can approach our daily work as a legal practice to create a brighter future.



Artwork donated by Uncle Gerard Bargo

Uncle Gerard Bargo is a Goreng Goreng Kiba man, and for a few years he has met up with LawRight staff at Homeless Connect. A respected local artist, he has been sharing his story and educating people about homelessness for many years.

We were honoured to receive two donated artworks from Uncle Gerard in June to display at our office. These paintings are a powerful reminder of community and our connections to one another. Uncle Gerard was supported to present the paintings by his friend, Chief Inspector Corey Allen, who has worked with QPS over many years to improve their response to homelessness.



Improving staff capability for delivering Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of offering respects to the traditional custodians of the places we gather and conduct our business, as well as an avenue to learn the history and significance of these places to First Nations people.

Several staff undertook training to learn more about the meaning of acknowledging Country, and also reflect on how to respectfully deviate from standard scripts. In addition to updating the organisation-wide Acknowledgement of Country to reflect our values, we developed internal resources with guidance for staff to acknowledge Country in different ways.

Working with First Nations-led organisations to strengthen cultural safety responsiveness, accountability, and implementation

LawRight would like to thank the following people and organisations for their services and for sharing their culture and knowledge with us:

BlackCard

Modern Custodians

ABSTARR Consulting

Uncle Charlie Waters

Uncle Gerard Bargo

Turrbal Dippil

Queensland Legal Walk

The Queensland Legal Walk has brought the legal profession together for nineteen years, having first commenced in 2008. The event provides an opportunity for colleagues across the profession to connect, celebrate the impact of pro bono work, and raise vital funds to support access to justice for vulnerable Queenslanders.

Due to heavy rain across south-east Queensland, we made the difficult decision to cancel the Walk in Brisbane and several regional locations.

Fortunately, events in Cairns and Townsville proceeded as planned. Participants in both locations enjoyed clear blue skies, and plenty of smiles as they walked in support of access to justice.

Despite the cancellations, the generosity of the legal profession continued stronger than ever, resulting in our most successful amount raised of $135,454 and a total of 1,241 participants registered across five locations.

Thank you to our event sponsor, Queensland Law Society, whose contribution helped drive this year's fundraising campaign via our Matched Giving Day.

$13,412
Overall team and chambers:
Level Twenty Seven Chambers

$6,622
Individual:
Jonathan Hohl

$11,854
Law firm:
Clayton Utz

$4,062
Law school:
QUT Law

Total Raised

$135,454

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
Anglicare & Mission Australia (Cairns)

1,241 **people registered to walk**

5 **locations**

◀ Champion fundraisers

Thank you to our sponsor
Queensland Law Society

To every participant, donor, volunteer and supporter, thank you. While we may not have been able to walk together this year, your generosity ensured the Queensland Legal Walk continued to make a meaningful difference to the lives of Queenslanders in need.



Honouring Songwoman Maroochy Barambah

We were honoured to have Songwoman Maroochy Barambah deliver the Welcome to Country at the 2025 Queensland Legal Walk.

Songwoman Maroochy sadly passed away in January 2026. We acknowledge the significance of Maroochy's life and leadership as a traditional Songwoman and Law-woman and advocate for Aboriginal rights and cultural recognition.

Songwoman Maroochy had Turrbal and Gubbi Gubbi ancestry ties with bloodline connections to Wakka Wakka, Gamilaroi and Birri Gubba nations.

We thank Turrbal Dippil and the family of Songwoman Maroochy for permission to use her name and image after her passing.

Direct financial support

We provide targeted, direct financial support to clients through two different avenues: the Disbursement Fund and the Homelessness Law's Brokerage Fund.

Disbursement Fund

Our Disbursement Fund is accessible by community legal centres, law firms and barristers representing indigent clients to pay for disbursements, or out-of-pocket costs associated with legal matters. These can include medical reports, translators, filing fees and travel.

LawRight fundraises to support the Disbursement Fund through events such as the Queensland Legal Walk.





Non-English speaker supported to access our justice system

Jane was an elderly woman who did not speak English and couldn't use a computer much. There was a dispute about the property she was living in, which became quite legally complex. She was at risk of homelessness if the matter was not resolved in her favour.

Jane needed to participate in a mediation, but she couldn't afford a lawyer or an interpreter. LawRight found a barrister member willing to provide pro bono representation for the proceedings, but an interpreter was still needed so that the mediation could proceed.

While the national Translating and Interpreting Service is provided to community legal centres, it does not extend to clients of pro bono practitioners in proceedings.

Thanks to our Disbursement Fund we could make a discrete payment to engage an interpreter privately for the day of the proceedings.

This story raises an important access to justice issue.

Without the fundraising efforts of LawRight's supporters, the mediation could not have gone ahead. The matter would have proceeded to a hearing, which would have been more expensive for the courts system, and Jane still would not have been able to participate.

Clients who require interpreters also face the added challenge that participating online (as many people do) is exponentially harder with an interpreter, and so they travel many hours to attend a hearing or mediation in person, so that they can participate meaningfully.

Brokerage Fund

LawRight's Brokerage Fund provides direct, tailored financial support, so that more people can safely avoid homelessness across Queensland. This includes providing vital funding to cover priority basic needs (including food); cleaning, moving and storage costs; bond and rent arrears payments; and safety changes at rental homes, including new locks.



Direct financial support keeps mother safely housed

When Kathryn fled her previous housing to escape a violent relationship, safety and stability were her only concerns.

After a period of homelessness, Kathryn moved in with a new partner and began rebuilding her life. Pregnant with their first child, Kathryn and her partner approached their real estate agent to have her recognised on their lease. Unfortunately, a tenancy database listing connected to Kathryn's experience of violence meant this wasn't possible.

Despite the circumstances of the listing, legal and personal barriers meant it was impractical to challenge the legality of the listing in the Tribunal. Using a small amount of brokerage, Homelessness Law successfully negotiated with Kathryn's previous real estate to remove the listing on payment of the uncontested portion of the charges. By accessing brokerage, Homelessness Law was able to resolve the matter quickly and fairly.

Without a tenancy database listing, Kathryn was supported to formalise her tenancy arrangements, providing housing security prior to the birth of her child. Adopting its holistic approach, Homelessness Law also supported Kathryn to access victim support payments and resolve multiple small debts connected to her experience of violence.

Reflecting on Homelessness Law's assistance, Kathryn shared:

'[Homelessness Law] helped me so much. Your support took away a huge amount of stress and financial burden from what was already such a difficult situation. I'm more than happy for my experience to be used to show how valuable the brokerage funds can be for others in similar situations.'



This story demonstrates why LawRight's Brokerage Fund is so impactful. It helps break the cycle between homelessness, experiences of violence and financial hardship for Queenslanders, and enables us to keep them safely housed.

Pro Bono Connect

Pro Bono Connect connects vulnerable people and not-for-profit organisations with the Queensland legal profession for pro bono legal assistance. We coordinate public interest referrals to Members, and also administer the pro bono referral schemes of the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland.

Pro Bono Connect coordinates limited pro bono resources effectively by having a flexible and responsive approach, which enables it to adapt to emerging legal need and changes in demand.

The team uses its expertise and networks to help applicants access the legal assistance they need, whether it is a referral to a private lawyer, a connection to a more appropriate service, or advice and assistance directly from the Pro Bono Connect team.

Extra support for NDIS appeals

To increase pro bono assistance for NDIS appeals, we teamed up with Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion to provide training and resources for LawRight member firms and barristers to assist with these matters.



Firms & ILPs that accepted referrals this year

Allens
Baker McKenzie
Barry Nilsson
Clayton Utz
Clyde & Co
Colin Biggers & Paisley
Dentons
Dunham Shaw
DWF
Hall & Wilcox
Holding Redlich
Johnson Winter Slattery
McCullough Robertson
McInnes Wilson
MinterEllison
O'Sullivan Sneddon
RA Law Group
Shine Lawyers
Sparke Helmore

Barristers who accepted referrals this year

Aaron Wilson
Christopher Schaffer
Deacon Johnston
Robert Quirk
Stephen Colditz
Toby Nielsen
Tom Pepper
William Hall

Learn more online:

lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/pro-bono-connect/

169 clients

117 referrals to pro bono representation

1,418 referrals elsewhere

30 not-for-profits assisted

58 tasks

Clients

30% older people

27% rural, regional or remote

18% identified disability or mental illness

15% experienced family violence

10% affected by disaster

5% First Nations

Main areas of law

Property disputes

Not-for-profit issues

Government and Administrative Law

Elder abuse

Credit and debt owed by client



Preventing further harm to victim-survivor of domestic violence

Mary was a victim of significant family and domestic violence. The applicant had tried Legal Aid and all community legal centres that assist with family law, and none were able to assist because her ex-husband had intentionally contacted them all and provided enough information so that each centre was unable to assist Mary due to a conflict.

While LawRight does not generally assist with domestic and family violence matters, Pro Bono Connect referred Mary's matter because the act of conflicting Mary out of specialist pro bono legal assistance was another act of domestic violence and there were no other options for pro bono assistance.

A member barrister assisted Mary to pursue the breach of a Temporary Protection Order by her ex-husband. Her ex-husband agreed to provide a 2.5 year undertaking to the Court in terms identical to the orders sought by Mary. The ex-husband's behaviour towards Mary improved significantly, effectively leaving Mary and their child alone.

Now, if her ex-husband breaches the protection order, Mary can return to the Court and use the undertaking to institute contempt proceedings, obtain a fresh protection order, and also seek intervention from the Police.

"I am, and will forever be, so grateful for the service both LawRight and Hall & Wilcox have provided. I honestly don't know if I'd even still be here if it weren't for you both. My sincerest thanks for your support."





Holding irresponsible lenders accountable

James was taken advantage of by a lender acting unconscionably. When James couldn't meet excessive loan repayments, high interest and unlawful fees, the lender transferred James's house into the lender's name.

James approached LawRight for help. Our Pro Bono Connect team sought advice from senior counsel about James's options. Then, a LawRight member firm stepped in to represent James to take action against the lender in the Supreme Court.

A settlement was reached, but the lender failed to comply with the terms of the settlement.

The member firm helped James to enforce the terms of the settlement. James recovered his loss, receiving more than $500,000.

"As a dedicated pro bono lawyer, Pro Bono Connect and the broader LawRight team serves such an indispensable role in the legal assistance sector in undertaking the initial work in meeting with prospective pro bono clients, taking instructions, identifying likely legal issues and potential claims, collecting key evidence, and assessing the client's eligibility for pro bono assistance.

Our firm's pro bono work in Queensland would simply not be possible without LawRight and Pro Bono Connect."

Dan Poole, Special Counsel at Hall & Wilcox

Community & Health Justice Partnerships

Left unaddressed, everyday legal issues affect a person's housing, safety, financial stability and wellbeing.

Community & Health Justice Partnership staff and pro bono lawyers collaborate closely with frontline community, homelessness, and health workers to address the interconnected legal, financial and social issues experienced by Queenslanders facing homelessness.

Centering lived experience voices across our multi-channel, multi-intensity work, we provide wraparound, specialist legal supports to resolve priority needs before they escalate.

Impact this year

$318,700
consumer disputes resolved

$731,000
victim support payments accessed

Impact since 2019

$3,812,800
consumer disputes resolved

$4,150,000
victim support payments accessed

Learn more online:
lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/community-health-justice-partnerships/

Community partners

Brisbane Youth Service
Communify'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
Multicultural Australia

Pro bono partners

Allens
Ashurst Perkins Coie
Clayton Utz
Corrs Chambers Westgarth
DLA Piper
Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer
Holding Redlich
K&L Gates
Mallesons
McCullough Robertson
MinterEllison
MurphySchmidt

Programs

Homelessness Law
Multicultural Law

Multicultural Law: Opening Doors Through Identity

People seeking asylum and rebuilding their lives in Australia often face significant barriers to accessing essential services and participating fully in their communities. Multicultural Law helps remove these barriers by providing targeted, culturally responsive legal assistance to newly arrived Queenslanders.

One of these initiatives is the **Name Change Project**, which supports people from refugee backgrounds, including members of the Karen, Karenni and Chin communities from Myanmar, to legally change their names to align with Australia's common "first name, family name" naming convention.

For many clients, differences in naming conventions create practical challenges in everyday life. Without identity documents that clearly identify both a first name and family name, people can experience difficulties enrolling their children in school, accessing government services, opening bank accounts, connecting utilities, obtaining healthcare, and using online platforms.

Through the Name Change Project, Multicultural Law helps clients navigate the legal process of changing their names, ensuring their identity documents are recognised and accepted by key services and institutions. This seemingly simple legal change can have a profound impact, removing administrative barriers and making it easier for individuals and families to establish themselves in their new communities.

This year, Multicultural Law supported **47 people** to legally change their names. For these families, obtaining identity documents that reflect Australia's naming conventions has improved access to essential services and created greater opportunities to participate fully in community life.

By addressing a practical but often overlooked barrier, Multicultural Law helps ensure that refugees and people seeking asylum can move forward with confidence, dignity and a stronger sense of belonging.

88% of our high-intensity casework was delivered to our priority cohorts

90% of legal matters successfully resolved

87% of clients reporting outcome satisfaction

97% no or low income

20% First Nations

19% Children and Young people

61% of women report an experience of family violence

Queensland gives

Thank you to Queensland Gives for their generous capacity-building grant that enabled Homelessness Law to comprehensively on-board our pro bono volunteers onto our new client management software.

Community & Health Justice Partnerships

Homelessness Law

For almost 25 years, Homelessness Law has been Queensland's specialist free legal service for people facing homelessness. In the context of our community's rising needs, we safely prevent and end homelessness by:

- providing multi-channel (in-person and online), statewide support to Queenslanders experiencing or at risk of homelessness;
- empowering the community and pro bono sectors through hybrid education and engagement campaigns, including our trauma-informed, targeted training programs, building capabilities for thousands of multi-disciplinary practitioners annually;
- collaboratively centring lived experience voices in everything that we design and do, including our innovative online resources, such as Everyday Law in Queensland **everydaylawinqld.org.au**

We strategically focus on achieving holistic, lasting impact for the most marginalised Queenslanders, including through evidence-based advocacy for fairer laws and policies.

The risk of homelessness has continued to rise throughout Queensland, exacerbated by record rent increases, an acute lack of social (public and community) housing supply, and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. These compounding crises lock more Queenslanders and their families out of secure, safe and sustainable homes. In this context, Homelessness Law has focused on stopping homelessness before it happens for particularly at-risk Queenslanders by resolving their priority legal needs.

"[My lawyer] and her team have been fantastic at sorting out my legal matters. I have had very good outcomes with debt collectors, and I'm on track to build back my credit score. I cannot thank you enough."

This client-centred, impact-driven approach helped the most vulnerable community members to safely avoid points of crisis and strengthen their future resilience, particularly by improving their long-term housing and financial stability.

People experiencing housing insecurity across Queensland continue to face heightened barriers to connecting with vital legal support. We intentionally enhanced accessibility by further investing in our embedded, multi-disciplinary partnerships with homelessness, housing and health organisations, ensuring that clients' essential housing, financial, safety and wellbeing needs were collaboratively and proactively addressed through our integrated legal services.



Centring the voices of Queenslanders with lived experience of housing insecurity

Delivering statewide, specialist legal supports that are more effective, inclusive and accessible

Over the past financial year, we have further positioned the insights of people with lived experience at the centre of all our service design and delivery, progressively refining our multi-channel legal supports to target where we will have the most sustainable, Queensland-wide impact in preventing and ending housing insecurity.

Through our ongoing, co-chairing role of National Legal Aid's With You Trauma Informed Community of Practice, we further built our Australia-wide credibility in offering a trusted, inclusive forum that raised awareness of the voices of lived experience. In addition to growing practical legal capabilities for over 800 multi-disciplinary professionals last year, our ongoing leadership has also enabled us to refine our direct approaches to providing tailored legal supports, so they better reflect the needs of Homelessness Law's priority cohorts and the frontline workers who help them.

We also undertook client-centred consultations to inform our current and potential tailored legal services, with our expert lawyers carrying out dedicated interviews with 15 women and young people who have previously received our help with key legal needs related to their housing security, financial stability and safety. In drawing on direct insights and learnings from these customised consultations, we have deepened our systemic influence through evidence-based, collective advocacy for better victim assist outcomes, stronger consumer protections, human rights-based public space regulation, and fairer tenancy laws across Queensland.

In taking this more intentional approach to understanding the needs of Queenslanders facing homelessness, we also commenced collaboratively developing strategically refreshed models for our multi-channel, multi-intensity legal work, seeking to ensure that all clients and their frontline workers feel heard, respected, and supported when accessing justice through our model.

Community & Health Justice Partnerships

Single mother and son stay safely housed with wraparound support



Julie is a young, single mother living with complex health needs. When Julie was connected with Homelessness Law by a trusted community partner, she had recently had a relationship breakdown and was experiencing escalating housing and financial insecurity, including an unaffordable car loan.

After advising Julie about her legal rights and options, Homelessness Law acted quickly to address several significant debts that were placing Julie's rental home at risk. This early-intervention legal assistance allowed Julie to reprioritise using her limited income towards essential living expenses for herself and her son, and ensured that they were not pushed into homelessness.

The car loan had become a major source of stress and was worsening Julie's existing health concerns. The fortnightly repayments were unaffordable, leaving her struggling to maintain lasting financial and personal stability. Through intensive, client-centred advocacy, Homelessness Law successfully advocated that the loan had been provided in breach of the lender's responsible lending obligations.

Following a determination by the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), Julie was released from the remaining $37,000 debt, received a refund of $15,900 upon returning the vehicle, and was awarded $3,000 in compensation for non-financial loss.

Through the impactful financial and housing outcomes achieved through Homelessness Law's wraparound legal support, Julie now has a stronger foundation from which to care for and raise her son. Julie has recently used the compensation to purchase a reliable family vehicle and shared the following feedback:

"Thank you and your team for all your help. Your hard work and support's greatly appreciated. I cannot thank you guys enough, I'm so grateful for this new beginning my son and I have all thanks to you."

Mother and four children avoid eviction into homelessness

"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.

I truly appreciate the way you handled my case with respect and understanding, ensuring that I felt supported throughout the process.

Homelessness Law 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."



Jenny is a First Nations woman who lives in community housing with her partner and four children, including one who has significant health needs. When Jenny met with Homelessness Law through an embedded community partner in Far North Queensland, she had recently received a Notice to Leave and faced eviction into homelessness. Her housing provider had started eviction proceedings in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), alleging she had breached an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA) due to noise complaints.

In urgent circumstances, Homelessness Law provided high-intensity, specialist legal advice and representation to defend Jenny's eviction proceedings. Through expert advocacy focussed on the housing provider having not established that the alleged conduct amounted to a serious or persistent breach of the tenancy agreement, Homelessness Law secured a three month adjournment. This kept Jenny and her family safely housed over the Christmas period, and also offered vital time to collaboratively secure their longer-term tenancy sustainment.

Through Homelessness Law's ongoing, client-centred legal assistance, Jenny gained the knowledge and confidence to engage proactively with her housing provider and address concerns earlier before they escalated. At the end of the three-month adjournment, the housing provider agreed to withdraw the eviction proceedings by consent.

Jenny has since shared that her tenancy is going well, expressing relief at her family's transformed circumstances. By safely preventing homelessness for Jenny and her children, Homelessness Law has ensured they can remain connected to their community, and given them essential stability to prioritise their wellbeing.

Court and Tribunal Services

LawRight's Court and Tribunal Services offer a statewide service that assists individuals, primarily self-represented litigants, with proceedings in the District Court, Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the Federal Court and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2), and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

Our Court and Tribunal Services utilise a scalable pro bono partnership model that tailors discrete legal assistance services to individual clients based on their vulnerability, circumstances, and specific legal problem. We give priority to the most vulnerable clients and individuals referred by court or tribunal staff or under a pro bono referral certificate.

Partnered with 20 private law firms and legal units, offering three dedicated timeslots each week in each office for client appointments

Assisted 548 clients through 1,878 legal advices and 602 legal tasks such as drafting court documents and legal correspondence

82 matters were successfully referred for full or discrete pro bono assistance from our firms and barristers

Goals

Increase Access to Justice

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

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

How we help

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

- Provide legal information or self-help resources and toolkits
- Provide legal advice and discrete task assistance, including drafting correspondence between parties and helping clients with settlement negotiations
- Draft court documents, including applications, affidavits, statements of claim, defences, and outlines of arguments
- Suggest other options to resolve court proceedings, including assisting clients to negotiate or otherwise pursue alternative dispute resolution options
- Offer coaching and specialist advice to help the client self-represent to the best of their abilities
- Refer for one-off representation at hearings or mediations, or full representation
- In limited cases, represent a client in proceedings before a court or tribunal

"Thank you to the staff at LawRight for all their assistance help and understanding. In the mind frame I was, I was made to feel visible and of purpose. Thank you again."



Learn more online:
lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/court-tribunal-services/

"The process has made me feel like I'm not alone and allowed me to understand clearly what I'm dealing with."

Our pro bono partners



Thanks to our pro bono partners

17 clients received pro bono representation by our member firms

25 clients received pro bono representation by our member barristers, which included full representation instructed by LawRight or our member firms, and discrete representation at a mediation under our referral schemes

26 clients received discrete task assistance by our member barristers which included assistance to draft pleadings, strategic advice and detailed advice on prospects

Member firms staffed **225 appointments** through our appointment model

AECOM
Allens
Ashurst Perkins Coie
Barry Nilsson
Bartley Cohen
Clayton Utz
Colin Biggers & Paisley
Cooper Grace Ward
Corrs Chambers Westgarth
Crown Law
DLA Piper
DWF
Hall & Wilcox
Johnson Winter Slattery
Lander & Rogers
McCullough Robertson
McInnes Wilson
MinterEllison
Sparke Helmore
Wotton & Kearney

Many also gave intensive assistance outside appointments or accepted a referral to provide representation.

Member firms also continue to support our work by providing our services with secondees

- Barry Nilsson provided a secondee to each Court and Tribunal Service office, continuing the support they've provided for several years.
- Corrs Chambers Westgarth continued their Graduate Secondment Program with the State Court office, with 18 different graduates rotating through the office over the financial year.
- McCullough Robertson again provided four secondees to the Federal Courts and Migration Law Service as part of their early career lawyers program.
- Sparke Helmore continued their support of our QCAT office, seconding two lawyers during the busiest part of the year.

Although not on our appointment roster, the following firms provided discrete assistance to some of our clients or accepted a referral from us to provide full representation.

Accident Legal
Carey Litigation Lawyers
Clyde & Co
Dentons
Dunham Shaw
Fisher Dore
Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer
HopgoodGanim
Kindra Migration Lawyers
MurphySchmidt
Travis Schultz & Partners

Barristers who accepted referrals this year

State Courts office
Anastasia Nicholas
Anna Crawford
Anthony Morris KC
Benjamin Wilson
Christopher George
Christopher Schaffer
Genevieve Moore
Hamish Clift
James Phillips
Matthew Jones KC
Ming Gu
Michael Kehoe
Nicholas Miranda
Susan Anderson
Susan McLeod
Thomas Ritchie
Yusuf Furgan

Supreme Court Mediation Scheme
Benjamin Kidston
Graham Dietz
Lauren Gamble
Matthew Jones KC
Peter Travers
Stephanie Philippou
Thomas Ritchie
Thomas Pincus

Federal Courts office
Duncan Marckwald
Hannah James
Matt Black
Peta Willoughby
Sally Robb KC
Shay-Lee Laing
Steven Hogg
Stephen Lee

Migration Law Service
Angela Julian-Armitage
Arron Hartnett
Benjamin Wilson
Gavin Rebetzke
Harrison Smith
Hedy Chen
Laura Dawson
Matthew Jones KC
Maxwell Walker
Nicholas Miranda
Peta Willoughby
Sarah Spottiswood
Stephen Colditz
Tom Pepper
Veronika Drago

QCAT office
Angela Rae
Genevieve Moore
Kimberley Hutchinson
Nathaniel Harris
Nicholas Miranda

Court and Tribunal Services

State Courts Office

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

The State Courts office assists clients on-site at our office on Level 1 of the District and Supreme Court Building in Brisbane, and provides remote services to clients from across the state with current or potential civil proceedings in the District Court of Queensland, Supreme Court of Queensland, and the Court of Appeal.

60%	Supreme Court
33%	District Court
3%	District Court (Appellate Jurisdiction)
2%	Court of Appeal
2%	Other

160 clients

532 advices

160 tasks

Main areas of law

- Contracts (breach of contract, misleading and deceptive conduct, misrepresentation)
- Property disputes (including claims in equity)
- Tort (negligence, nuisance, trespass)

Learn more online:
lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/court-tribunal-services/queensland-district-and-supreme-courts-and-court-of-appeal/

Our clients

53%	**living with a disability or mental illness**
37%	**residing outside of South East Queensland**
6%	**indicated difficulties with their written and/or spoken English**
5%	**Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**

This is the percentage of our overall services that we provided to clients within the listed demographic (and not the percentage of our total clients that met this demographic). This data is important in recognising that clients experiencing disadvantage often needed, and were provided with, a higher number of services.

AI opened the door, but legal representation secured the outcome and protected a family home



Donovan was a 60-year-old-man who relied on Centrelink benefits and had previously worked as a truck driver. Donovan obtained a loan through a credit loan company to purchase a truck, but he fell into financial hardship and was forced to surrender the truck. Several years later, a different creditor commenced proceedings against Donovan in the Supreme Court, seeking a charge over Donovan's only asset, his family home, for payments that were allegedly outstanding. If the lawsuit was successful, Donovan would lose his house.

Donovan used AI to help him respond to the proceeding. AI helped him engage in the court process, but it had given him some incorrect advice and the court referred Donovan to LawRight for help to amend his pleadings and progress the case.

Given the upcoming deadlines, one of our staff lawyers helped Donovan draft an amended defence and gave him advice about how to progress the matter. Over several appointments with staff and volunteer lawyers, we advised Donovan about progressing the matter, various interlocutory steps and assisted him with various tasks, including drafting notices of non-party disclosure, general correspondence and other court documents.

Staff lawyers assisted Donovan to request that the matter be referred to mediation through the Supreme Court Mediation Scheme, and we arranged for one of our member barristers to represent Donovan at mediation.

The matter resolved at mediation, with Donovan agreeing to pay a small fraction of the amount originally claimed. Most importantly, Donovan was able to keep his home and avoid the significant personal and financial hardship that would have occurred if he lost it.

"LawRight provided me with clarity, support, and guidance during a very difficult time. Their assistance helped me stay focussed and reach a fair outcome, and I am genuinely grateful for the help I received."

Supreme Court Mediation Referral Scheme



The State Courts office also operates and manages the Scheme for Pro Bono Mediation in proceedings involving self-represented litigants. Operated through collaboration between the Supreme Court, LawRight, the Queensland Law Society and the Bar Association of Queensland, suitable matters are referred to mediation before a panel of two solicitor-mediators with self-represented litigants represented by barristers, all acting pro bono. The Queensland Law Society manages the appointment of mediators and LawRight manages referrals to barristers. LawRight also provides support to the litigant before and after the mediation, including support to barristers to assist them to navigate the difficulties associated with direct brief engagements.

Since the scheme was established in 2022, 49 referrals have been made to LawRight, with a 56% resolution rate either at mediation, or shortly after. Referrals under the scheme have increased every year it has been in operation. The work involved for both solicitors and barristers participating in the scheme is substantial and we are grateful for the support of both branches of the profession to help us meet this demand.

Many matters referred to the scheme are longstanding disputes, many involving complex factual and legal claims and typically also with significant emotional elements. The ability for a self-represented litigant to access dedicated, independent legal advice and representation during the mediation is a significant factor in the success of the scheme.

"Members of the Bar Association of Queensland are enthusiastic participants in this scheme, which functions as well as it does because of the careful cooperation of the Court in providing facilities, the Queensland Law Society and its members providing skilled mediators and LawRight in referring the litigants to appropriate counsel.

The scheme is a genuine success story which allows lawyers to materially assist the court in resolving litigation involving self-represented litigants. It should serve as an example for similar initiatives in other courts."

Matthew Jones KC

Chair of the Bar Association of Queensland's Access to Justice & Pro Bono Committee

Closure of our Enforcement Hearing Service

The Magistrates Court Enforcement Hearing Service commenced in April 2016, following a request from the Brisbane Magistrates Court for LawRight to assist debtors appearing at enforcement hearings. There was a clear need for legal assistance, with the lack of representation contributing to significant delays, lengthy hearings, and negative outcomes that may have been avoided through informed negotiation or advocacy.

The service was established with significant support from Matthew Jones KC and former Chief Magistrate and District Court Judge Marshall Irwin. Over the 10-year operation of the service, LawRight staff attended the Brisbane Magistrates Court each Wednesday morning to instruct volunteer barristers who provided advice and representation to debtors, assisted with negotiations, and helped clients understand and comply with court processes and orders. The program was highly cost effective, supported by a small commitment of staff time and the substantial contribution of volunteer students and barristers.

During its first six years, the service assisted with 70 to 100 matters annually, with around 85% of matters resolved at the initial hearing, often through negotiated outcomes that were acceptable to both parties and avoided the need for ongoing enforcement proceedings. In some cases, clients were unaware of the debt or there were issues with the underlying judgment, and they were connected with LawRight's State Courts office for ongoing assistance.

From 2021, enforcement matters steadily declined. While a number of factors contributed, LawRight observed an increased willingness by creditors to resolve matters without court involvement, together with a broader shift towards earlier engagement and resolution between parties.

By 2024, the service appeared in only 10 to 15 matters each year. Despite the strong support from volunteers and the Brisbane Magistrates Court, we made the decision to close the program.

A key factor in the success of the service was the exceptional and ongoing support of the Queensland Bar. Following a seminar presented by Ben Tuckett, Matthew Jones KC and Damien O'Brien KC in 2019, volunteer recruitment became entirely self-sustaining, without any advertising or recruitment drives from LawRight. Volunteer numbers continued to grow through word of mouth alone, never dropping below 20 barristers at any given time. When the service closed, 30 barristers remained on the active roster, including several that had volunteered since the service began.

The Enforcement Hearing Service stands as one of LawRight's great success stories, demonstrating the impact of an efficient and cost-effective pro bono partnership. Beyond assisting hundreds of vulnerable Queenslanders, the service helped improve the operation of enforcement hearings by promoting informed decision-making, meaningful negotiation and the fair resolution of matters. Its success was made possible by the dedication of staff, student volunteers and barristers who contributed to the program throughout its decade of operation.

While demand has declined in Brisbane, the need for assistance remains in other locations, including Beenleigh, Ipswich and the Gold Coast. Although funding is not currently available to operate the service in those locations, we will continue exploring opportunities to restart the program and collaborate again with our student volunteers and member barristers.

Court and Tribunal Services

Federal Courts office

The Federal Courts office provides on-site services at the Commonwealth Law Courts building in Brisbane and remote assistance across the state. We assist with current and potential proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia and the General Federal Law Divisions of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia in the following areas:

- **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 Federal Courts office also manages the pro bono referral schemes of the Federal Court and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia in specific areas of law.

183 clients

588 advices

242 tasks

76% of matters were in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)

24% of matters were in the Federal Court

Learn more online:

lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/court-tribunal-services/federal-court-and-the-federal-circuit-court-of-australia/

Main areas of the law

Employment (general protections, unpaid entitlements)

Anti-discrimination

Judicial review (migration, general)

Bankruptcy

Our clients

42% from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds

40% indicated difficulties with their written and/or spoken English (15% indicated significant difficulties, or no written or spoken English)

32% living with a disability or mental illness

13% residing in outer regional or remote areas, including 8% in Qld

3% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

This is the percentage of our overall services that we provided to clients within the listed demographic (and not the percentage of our total clients that met this demographic). This data is important in recognising that clients experiencing disadvantage often needed, and were provided with, a higher number of services.

Timely, targeted help for woman experiencing workplace sexual harassment

Miriam experienced sexual harassment in her workplace. She also had to navigate the challenges of living in Australia on a visa and having limited English skills.

Miriam received assistance from another community legal centre to commence proceedings in the Fair Work Commission. When the matter did not resolve, she was referred to LawRight through our warm referral process, which helps ensure we can intake vulnerable clients quickly and efficiently.

LawRight staff provided Miriam with initial advice about her options and time limits. She then met with volunteer lawyers from one of our partner firms, who took detailed instructions and assisted her to prepare the court documents required to start her claim.

Given the sensitive and complex nature of the matter, LawRight also sought assistance from one of our panel barristers for specialist advice on Miriam's prospects of success and guidance on litigation strategy. After providing this advice, the barrister agreed to assist on an ongoing basis, and LawRight worked closely with counsel to prepare the necessary court documents within the timeframes.

It was clear that Miriam would struggle to represent herself at trial and gather her evidence. Our barrister agreed to represent Miriam at trial, so we referred the matter to one of our panel firms, who agreed to act as instructing solicitors for the duration of the proceedings.

Through a collaborative effort involving LawRight staff, volunteer lawyers, counsel and our pro bono partners, Miriam was able to access the legal assistance she needed to pursue her matter and ensure her case could be properly heard by the Court.

Migration Law Service

LawRight's Migration Law Service was funded from short-term funding from the Federal Government and closed in June 2025. When this service commenced, we launched a dedicated Migration Referral Panel for barristers with a specific interest in migration matters and created dedicated appointments with specialist firms for clients with migration matters.

Although the Migration Law Service closed, the Federal Court office has continued the program that was established, in a reduced way, targeting the most vulnerable clients and those that are referred by the Courts. Our member barristers have continued their strong contribution, and the Migration Referral Panel currently has 76 members.

Member barristers are assisted by LawRight staff lawyers to do this work. We work closely with the Bar Association's Migration Committee and Access to Justice & Pro Bono Committee to provide training and support to barristers helping with migration matters.

Court and Tribunal Services

Coordinated pro bono support helps detainee access expert advice and representation



Stephen was referred to LawRight by the Federal Court of Australia, because he had commenced judicial review proceedings while in immigration detention. LawRight staff lawyers assisted Stephen to understand the nature of his proceedings and obtain documents from the Administrative Review Tribunal.

Through a series of appointments, LawRight staff lawyers (assisted by student volunteers) obtained instructions from Stephen so that we could brief Counsel. LawRight approached the members of our Migration Referral Panel to provide Stephen with advice on his matter.

Counsel and LawRight staff lawyers worked closely on this matter to determine whether it was viable to continue. Counsel confirmed they would be prepared to represent Stephen at the final hearing, but only if instructing solicitors could be obtained.

LawRight contacted several of our partner firms to see if someone would be able to represent Stephen. In the meantime, one of our staff lawyers worked with Counsel to draft amended court documents and help Stephen file them to meet his upcoming deadlines. After Stephen's documents were filed, one of our firms confirmed they would represent Stephen at the trial, and instruct Counsel. Stephen now has full representation for his final hearing.

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal office

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) office of LawRight's Court and Tribunal Services assists clients in-person at our office co-located next to the QCAT Brisbane registry and remotely statewide. The QCAT office assists 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**

203 clients

758 advices

200 tasks

Learn more online:

lawright.org.au/find-legal-help/court-tribunal-services/queensland-district-and-supreme-courts-and-court-of-appeal/

Main areas of law

Administrative Review (Blue Card, Victims Assist, Child Safety)

Guardianship and Administration (interested parties)

Anti-discrimination

Our clients

44% living with a disability or mental illness

26% residing outside South East Queensland

17% indicated difficulties with their written and/or spoken English

11% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

This is the percentage of our overall services that we provided to clients within the listed demographic (and not the percentage of our total clients that met this demographic). This data is important in recognising that clients experiencing disadvantage often needed, and were provided with, a higher number of services.

Court and Tribunal Services

Picture this...

You are a 49-year-old woman.

You have two adult children and one primary-school-aged child who depends on you every single day. You have a loving partner who is a step parent to your children.

You've built a meaningful career as a counsellor and started your own business supporting children, many of whom rely on you for safety, stability, and guidance.

To do this work, you must hold a Blue Card, which you have done for 15 years, without issue.

On the surface, life looks good. But underneath the surface…

You are still navigating the long-term impacts of a previous relationship marked by coercive control, a relationship you believed would stop hurting you once you left. Despite being now free to work as you please, wear and eat what you please, and engage in activities of your choosing, he is still in your life as he is the father of your children.

You're exhausted. You're stretched. You're trying to protect your child, maintain your work, and hold your life together while you navigate complex family court proceedings to protect your youngest child.

Despite this, you are feeling empowered and hopeful. You escaped. You are supported by friends and family. There are interim orders in place, ensuring your child stays in your care full time.

And then…

You receive a phone call from Blue Card Services. An anonymous complaint has been made about you. Accusations that you can't keep children safe. Details about your children, and things they experienced when they were younger.

No evidence. No context. Just an accusation that you should have done more.

You think, surely this won't be taken seriously… right?

You respond to the accusation and explain that it isn't true. Then more questions come.

They ask about the domestic violence you experienced. How you protect your child. How you support your child's mental health. How are you keeping your children safe.

> **When I held my actual bluecard in my hands there was immediate relief and joy, my heart felt so very happy, my family and I actually did a happy dance in our lounge room. I knew in my heart I could finally follow my dreams of helping children once again. This was only possible through the incredible support and guidance of LawRight and the amazing staff that assisted in my matter.**
>
> – JOANNE

You do your best to respond. You share personal details about your life and what you've experienced.

You are ashamed, embarrassed and deeply worried. It feels like being interrogated.

You provide everything they request. Government and health records. References from friends, colleagues, and clients, all attesting to your character, your professionalism, and your contribution to the community. You have no criminal history. You have no disciplinary history.

You do everything right. You are transparent. All you can do is wait.

18 months later … 18 months of defending your character against an anonymous complaint…



You receive a negative notice. Just like that, you are labelled as a risk to children.

You are legally barred from working with children. And your business… your livelihood… collapses overnight.

This was Joanne's story when she contacted us in May last year after she filed her application to review in QCAT.

At her first appointment, our volunteer lawyers gave Joanne advice about what she would need to prove, the evidence she would need to gather, and started taking instructions to prepare her statement of evidence.

When Joanne received the bundle of assessable information that Blue Card Services had relied on when making the decision, our staff lawyers talked her through the documents and took her instructions on documents she hadn't seen before. Documents from child safety and the police that discussed her history. This was hard for Joanne, but we explained that anything we could put in writing now might reduce what had to be discussed at the hearing.

Over the next few months, across multiple in-person and telephone appointments, our staff lawyers helped Joanne gather her evidence and progress the matter. We helped Joanne draft responses to Notices to Produce, prepare for various interlocutory hearings, correspond with Blue Card Services, hospitals, doctors, the QPS, and write letters to her friends and families explaining what was happening and asking if they could provide a reference for her.

In July, Joanne met again with one of our volunteer firms to finalise her statement of evidence. It was clear that Joanne was struggling to gather some of the material. The allegations were so broad and vague that Joanne was struggling to work out what was relevant. Joanne was also concerned about appearing unrepresented at the hearing and having to give legal submissions while also giving evidence about her life, her children, and her experience with domestic violence.

We asked one of our member barristers for assistance to settle Joanne's submissions. We also shared our concerns about the hearing with the barrister and asked if they would be prepared to appear for Joanne at the hearing. Our member barrister said they would, provided LawRight could instruct them. A few days later we filed an application for leave to be represented, which was approved.

In September, a directions hearing was held and further deadlines were set for the filing of affidavit material and submissions from both parties.

Our staff lawyer worked closely with Joanne and our barrister to finalise Joanne's affidavit material and her submissions. We told Joanne that there was a good chance the matter would be reconsidered before the hearing, but if it didn't, we would be there to represent her.

In early January, a few weeks before the hearing date, we received the letter that Joanne had been waiting for – *Having regard to the material which you filed with QCAT, I advise the decision has been reconsidered. The negative notice previously issued to your client has been cancelled.* We called Joanne to give her the good news.

What happens next?

Joanne helped us write this story and some details have been changed to protect her. This wasn't difficult to do as Joanne's story unfortunately isn't unique.

Most of our matters are impacted in some way by domestic violence. It is more than the physical, financial and emotional impacts. It is the explanation for agreements entered into, decisions that have been made, and clients not having access to their evidence after fleeing a dangerous environment. We have seen it impact the availability of witnesses or create credibility issues for evidence that can only be understood through the lens of domestic violence and the impact it has. This doesn't always fit into legal systems and can make it difficult for people like Joanne to navigate these systems without independent advice and support.

Joanne is educated, connected to her community, has supportive friends and family, and made the choice years ago to leave an abusive relationship to protect herself and her children. Joanne did everything right. However, perpetrators find ways to manipulate and continue to control. It is impossible to avoid the impact this has on every part of your life and any legal processes you're involved in.

2 years and 6 months since that first phone call, Joanne can finally move forward and get her life back. Meanwhile, our lawyers will keep helping clients like Joanne get the help they need.

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Lawyer: Stephen McClure
Paralegal: Lauren Petrohilos

Community & Health Justice Partnerships
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Senior Lawyer: Kate Adnams
Senior Lawyer: Josephine Allan
Senior Lawyer: Bonnie Djordjevic
Senior Lawyer: Aaron Harris (Parental leave replacement)
Lawyer: Ayla Fetahagic
Paralegal: Laura Peters
Paralegal: Alice Robinson
Paralegal: Sasha Karatyubina (from Sep 2025)

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: Clare Carter
Lawyer: Harrison Pie (to Oct 2025)
Lawyer: Caitlin Holmes (from Dec 2025)
Paralegal: Ghazal Mohammadi (to Sep 2025)
Paralegal: Caitlyn Larkin (to Sep 2025)
Paralegal: Veronique Cobbold (from Sep 2025)

State Courts Office
Senior Lawyer: Melinda Willis
Senior Lawyer: Natalie Morris
Senior Lawyer: Hazel Vickers (Parental leave replacement)
Paralegal: Abigail Pirie (to Aug 2025)
Paralegal: Caitlyn Larkin (from Sep 2025)
Paralegal: Edward Griffin (to Dec 2025)
Paralegal: Alice Wallace (from Jan 2026)

QCAT Office
Senior Lawyer: Lexie Graham
Lawyer: Caitlin Josey
Paralegal: Talia Jeuda

Friends of LawRight

Friends of LawRight support LawRight by pledging to donate $1,000 a year for three years. This structured giving allows us the independence to develop new services that address the legal needs of disadvantaged communities.

Adam Connolly
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Tamara McCombe
The Hon. Justice Shane Doyle KC
The Hon. Justice Thomas Bradley KC
The Hon. Margaret McMurdo AC
The Hon. Marshall Irwin
The Hon. Robert W. Gotterson AO KC
Tony Denholder
...and five anonymous Friends

Thank you





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Firms & ILPs
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LawRight partners with Queensland's major law schools to deliver student clinics.

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Jake Cloudsley
Parampreet Kaur

Court and Tribunal Services
Bond University
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Homelessness Law
The University of Queensland
Homelessness and Community Services
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Dayle McDonald
Ha Eun Chloe Cho
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Jessica McLeod
Kate McDonnell
Lubna Chenia
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Joseph Callos
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Lara Asomah



Students and volunteers

Community & Health Justice Partnership – Brisbane office
Shristi Semwal

Community & Health Justice Partnership – Cairns office
Amherstia (Shine) Jasmin

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Federal Courts Office
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Irene Elza Soji
Jada Black
Melinka Nelson
Veronique Cobbold

QCAT Office
Liam Cleary
Marissa Truong
Stephanie Ho
Song Zhou
Yusha Khanal



"...a valuable and rewarding experience..."

Finances

Treasurer's report

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for LawRight for 2025–26.

Financially, it was a strong year. After several years of operating in a challenging funding environment, LawRight finished the year with an operating surplus of $297,368, a significant turnaround from the prior year's deficit.

Total income for the year was $4.787 million. Government continued to provide the core funding for LawRight's work, with recurrent State funding of $2.276 million and recurrent Commonwealth funding of $1.707 million.

Total expenditure for the year was $4.489 million. Staff costs remained LawRight's largest investment at $4.066 million, reflecting the people-intensive nature of our services and the importance of retaining a skilled and experienced team.

At year end, LawRight's balance sheet had $448,300 in total equity, with cash and cash equivalents of $1.579 million. These cash reserves include grant funding received this financial year but to be spent in 2026–27 and cover LawRight's employee leave provisions, lease liabilities, creditor balances, and other commitments.

Government

We remain deeply grateful for the support of the Queensland and Commonwealth governments, including their ongoing commitment through the National Access to Justice Partnership, as well as funding by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department for our Federal Courts service. This funding certainty is essential to LawRight's ability to plan, retain staff, partner effectively with the profession, and deliver high-quality legal help to people who would otherwise be unable to access justice.

Philanthropic supporters

LawRight also continued to benefit from a diversified income base. Membership income was $241,410. I thank LawRight's members, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and supporters for their generosity and confidence in the value of our work. Their contributions allow LawRight to extend its reach beyond what government funding alone can allow.

Despite weather forcing the cancellation of the Queensland Legal Walk in Brisbane and several regional locations, we had a record 1,241 participants registered and raised $135,454 to support LawRight's vital work. This included a terrific turnout in Cairns and Townsville.

We are grateful to:

- Queensland Law Society and Bar Association of Queensland for their contributions to our referral services through Pro Bono Connect
- The law schools of The University of Queensland, Griffith University and Bond University for their financial contribution as we supervise their clinic students
- Queensland Gives for their capacity-building grant in 2025-26
- Mater Foundation for their support of our service at the Mater Young Adult Health Centre.

Challenges

The improved operating result is very welcome, but it does not remove the need for continued financial discipline. The Finance and Audit Subcommittee will continue to support management in overseeing and providing strategic guidance on these matters.

While it has been pleasing to see further investment in staff resourcing from both levels of government – allowing us to improve retention rates – higher salaries (reflecting market pressures) necessitate careful monitoring of staff liabilities.

Each year will become more challenging in this regard, as indexation in our government funding agreements average 3% per annum whereas award and salary increases are closer to 5%.

Thanks

I thank CEO Karen Dyhrberg and bookkeeper Rebecca Slade for their careful stewardship of the organisation's resources. Thank you also to our auditor, Independent Audit Services, for their work in strengthening LawRight's financial integrity.

Finally, I acknowledge and thank my fellow Management Committee members, and particularly the Finance and Audit Subcommittee, for their diligence and sound judgement throughout the year. LawRight enters 2026–27 in a stronger financial position, with the stability and momentum needed to continue delivering its mission.

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.

This Centre is accredited by

Community Legal Centres Australia

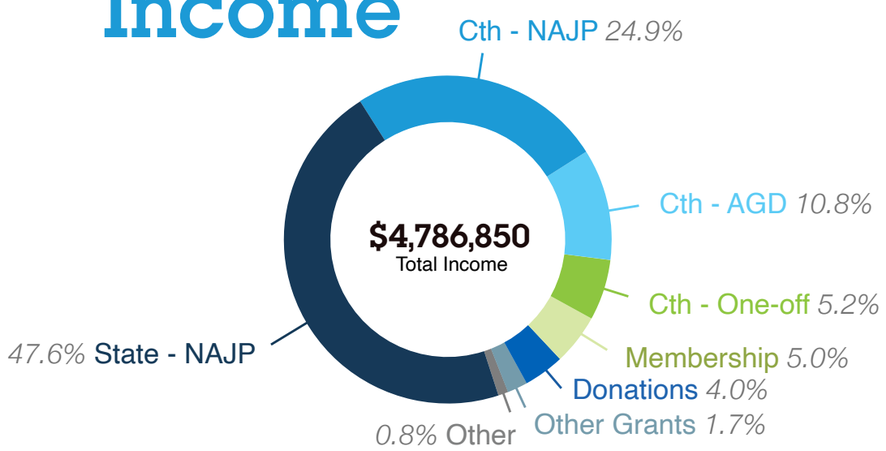
REGISTERED CHARITY acnc.gov.au/charityregister

Queensland Government

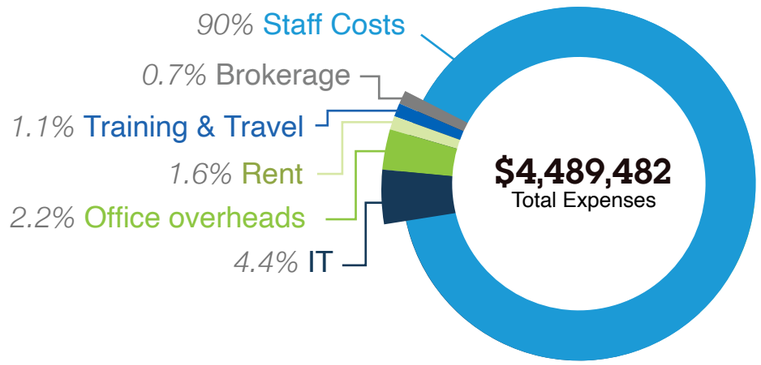
An Australian Government Initiative

Gambling Community Benefit Fund Queensland Government

Income



Expenses



"I am truly grateful to the legal staff at LawRight for helping me navigate the complex issues relating to my QCAT Tribunal hearing. Without the assistance of LawRight, I would not have been able to complete the process effectively.

The legal officer provided expert, detailed advice that was tailored specifically to my circumstances, and their guidance gave me confidence throughout the matter. The legal issues involved were complex, and I genuinely believe that without their support I would not have been able to present my case or deal with the process in a procedurally fair manner.

I cannot thank the team at LawRight enough for their professionalism, expertise, and support during a very challenging time."

Thank you for your printing support:

timg®

Graphic Design: Martin Howard

Note: Client names have been changed to protect privacy.

Contacting LawRight

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

Main Office
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admin@lawright.org.au

Pro Bono Connect
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probonoconnect@lawright.org.au

Community and Health Justice Partnerships | Meanjin-Brisbane & Gimuy-Cairns
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State Courts Office | Court and Tribunal Services | Meanjin-Brisbane
Level 1, Queensland Elizabeth II Courts of Law Building, 415 George Street, Brisbane
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QCAT Office | Court and Tribunal Services | Meanjin-Brisbane
Level 8, NAB Building, 259 Queen Street, Brisbane
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