



NORTHERN  
COMMUNITY  
LEGAL CENTRE

# annual report

2019/2020



MIND THE GAP

Northern Community Legal Centre would like to acknowledge the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan of the Wurundjeri people, part of the Kulin Nation, the traditional owners of the land on which our Broadmeadows office stands. Our catchment extends from Wallan on Taungurung Country all the way to Brunswick on Wurundjeri Country. We acknowledge the legacy of colonial resistance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



*NCLC aims to integrate our organisational values into all the work we do, in order to deliver the best social justice outcomes for Melbourne's North West*

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# INTRODUCTION

Northern Community Legal Centre's (NCLC) purpose is to ensure equal access to justice for all in Melbourne's North West through the provision of legal services, community legal education, and law reform initiatives. We prioritise the legal needs of people living with multiple forms of disadvantage and marginalisation including people with mental illness and other forms of disability, victims/survivors of family violence, young people, newly arrived and refugee people, people who are experiencing homelessness, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We are continually listening to the community and adapting our service to be responsive and meet their needs in innovative ways.

NCLC formed in 2016. In our short duration, NCLC has been able to respond to both emerging and escalating community needs. Our catchment of Moreland, Hume and Mitchell Shire includes suburbs that are home to communities who experience the most structural and systemic disadvantage in Victoria. The keystone to our success has been working closely with grassroots community groups, service providers and networks to develop community-informed strategies in order to respond effectively and sustainably. Our vision is that the people of Melbourne's North West have access to justice through free legal information, advice, education and casework assistance.





JENNI SMITH

“This year’s report highlights the theme of **Mind the Gap** in recognition that the impact of disasters should not further widen the disadvantage of marginalised groups.”

## CEO REPORT

Sometimes you are thrown a curve ball, and 2020 has been massive for us all including our local communities.

Since March 2020 when we went into the first period of lockdown and moved to phone and online services, Northern Community Legal Centre (NCLC) has worked hard to ensure that those with the greatest legal needs in our community are supported. This year’s report highlights the theme of ‘**Mind the Gap**’ in recognition that the impact of disasters should not further widen the disadvantage of marginalised groups. As the state’s use of emergency powers has increased, we have ensured those powers do not have a disproportionate impact on disadvantaged communities. We have done this by ensuring that information across a range of legal areas impacting on people during COVID-19 pandemic was quickly put out into the community in key languages. Communicating with our partners has also been a priority, we commenced newsletters and through various forums have jointly monitored the impacts of the pandemic on communities and responded with creative solutions. For example, in July with the support of Moreland City Council we confirmed the development of an international student clinic as we observed the toll that the pandemic was having on this group.

We have risen to the many challenges for our staff and clients including the technological barriers that we have had to quickly resolve. Our staff have been amazing; quickly adapting, showing resilience, and remaining utterly client focused. We have however been deeply concerned that during the periods of restrictions that access to our service has reduced; in the last financial year we saw 1611 clients compared to the previous year of 1947. However, through targeting our services over the last year, we have increased the proportion of clients who are likely to have the highest legal needs. This year 40% of our clients identified as having a disability or mental health issue; 52% of clients identified as victims/survivors of family violence; and 42% of clients were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON



Northern Community Legal Centre has had a unique role in supporting its community through this time, as legal needs and the way the Centre can meet these has come under pressure and change. As Chair of the Board of Management, I would like to acknowledge the support and responsiveness of the Board members to provide strong support to the Centre to do this important work - John Rutherford, Daphne Hiew, Brooke McKail, Ajit Singh, Tony Macafee and myself.

*Collectively, we are proud to have supported the Centre to adapt to the COVID-19 world whilst continuing to meet the needs of the community. In the change we have all experienced, the Centre has continued its work to target the groups we have prioritised in our strategic approach, whilst maintaining a strong financial performance.*



But back to what has stood out over the past 365 days – for me, it continues to be the commitment of Jenni Smith as CEO and her dedicated team to provide connection, access to justice and support to the community in the north western part of Melbourne. As we have all seen, crises can reveal new fissures and scope for increased disadvantage – Jenni and the team have tirelessly adapted their approach to meet the new challenges this crisis has delivered. Congratulations.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## Focusing on broadening our intersectional approach beyond the five priority cohorts previously identified

*NCLC is proud to launch our new strategic plan this year. The strategic plan was developed in consultation with NCLC staff and board members, ensuring that the plan was informed by our on-the-ground experiences while incorporating the broad knowledge and expertise of our board. Within this process we tested our assumptions, drilled down into our core values, and refined our organisational goals.*

While the strategic plan presents a high-level pictorial of our strategic planning outcomes, following our consultation we identified that additional work was required at an operational level to determine the extent to which we were meeting emerging community need. Building upon the work commenced within the strategic planning process, staff were assigned research tasks that included environmental scans of data and research among cohorts within our communities, as well as interrogating our own data to identify trends relating to client profiles and the types of legal issues they experience.

This process highlighted the need for NCLC to broaden our intersectional approach beyond the five priority cohorts previously identified: newly arrived and refugee people; victims/survivors of family violence; abused older people; young people; and people with mental health issues, recognising that this structure screens out potential legally at-risk people who do not fit into the priority cohorts (for example; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people experiencing homelessness, people experiencing disability, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people with drug and alcohol issues).





**STRATEGY STATEMENT**

By 2024 we will improve legal outcomes for those experiencing systemic injustice through purposeful and responsive legal assistance, collaborative advocacy and targeted community engagement.



As we celebrate and implement our new strategic plan, our theme for this year is **'Mind the Gap'**, in recognition of our commitment to ensuring that we continue to prioritise our services to those most in need, and those who are often rendered invisible through systematic marginalisation.

## RESPONDING TO OUR COMMUNITY'S EVOLVING LEGAL NEED

In 2019/2020, NCLC's priorities remained focused on reaching and assisting our community, despite a significant change to service delivery due to COVID-19 restrictions that required our staff to transition from face-to-face appointments to providing legal services remotely by telephone. Most importantly, our community has been able to access a lawyer and be provided with assistance without disruption during a time when access to justice is critical.

Over this financial year we provided 2182 legal services comprising of 421 duty lawyer services, 1459 legal advice services, and 302 cases were opened. We noticed a substantial decrease in demand during COVID-19 lockdown periods, with demand increasing for a brief period while restrictions were eased. We have however seen a substantial increase in the complexity of our casework assistance and in the number of clients who have been assisted with multiple legal issues. This is a direct result of NCLC lawyers adopting and incorporating enhanced legal triage tools into practice, ensuring that we identify secondary or otherwise unknown legal issues during client consults, and enhancing our capacity to address both legal and non-legal needs.

We have had to adapt our family violence duty lawyer service by providing a remote telephone advice service to applicants seeking family violence intervention orders. This area of legal support has been most impacted by the remote service delivery model, with referrals from the court dropping from approximately 50 people per month pre-COVID-19, to approximately 5 people per month following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, NCLC has identified that legal advice and advocacy prior to the hearing itself remains crucial to ensure that family violence applicants are able to obtain orders that are appropriate and keep them safe.



## CLIENT STORY:

*Sarah\* is a victim-survivor of serious family violence perpetrated by her husband over many years. Sarah was born overseas and has no close family in Australia.*

During COVID-19 lockdown, the violence escalated and also began to be directed towards their young child. Sarah sought the assistance of a family violence support service for her and her child to leave the home and move into crisis accommodation.

When Sarah attended the Magistrates' Court to seek an intervention order, Sarah was not given the opportunity to speak to a duty lawyer, and the Court was not made aware of the seriousness of the risk faced by Sarah and her child. The Magistrate made an interim order that still allowed the perpetrator to remain in the family home. Because it was not safe for them to return home, this made Sarah and her child effectively homeless and facing the prospect of living in crisis accommodation for at least the next two months until her matter returned to Court. Living in crisis accommodation was particularly

disruptive for her child, who was also not attending primary school at that time due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The family violence service then referred Sarah to NCLC for assistance with applying to vary the interim order. We prepared an application to urgently vary the interim order and the Court agreed to list the application on an urgent basis. When Sarah attended Court, the Magistrate varied the order so that the perpetrator would be excluded from the family home. We then advocated with Victoria Police to have the order served on the perpetrator on an urgent basis. The police served the order and removed him from the home, and we referred Sarah back to the family violence support service for assistance with changing the locks and moving back home.

# IDENTIFYING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE



## Advocating for Law & Policy Reform

One of the most important ways in which NCLC can promote access to justice is to advocate to change unfair laws, policies and practices based upon the experiences of our clients, and as identified in our casework practice. In the 2019 – 2020 financial year, NCLC provided two submissions for the purpose of law reform.



## Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria

NCLC made a Formal Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria. We see significant crossover between our priority clients and their homelessness experiences, namely that homelessness has contributed to or has exacerbated their legal matter, or that they have become homeless as a result of one or more legal issues that has impacted upon capacity to maintain employment and housing.



## Inquiry into Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence



actively making a difference

NCLC provided a written submission to the Parliament of Australia: House Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence. The findings of this inquiry will inform the next National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

Our submission highlighted key findings from our project 'Abused and Abandoned: Family Violence in the Australian Indian Community' (the Indian Women's Family Violence Project) funded by the Victorian Legal Services Board. Drawing on our findings from casework to date, our submission highlighted the need for urgent systemic reform based upon our research into the experiences of Indian women in Australia, and the adequacy of our legal system to provide appropriate protections.



## **INDIAN WOMEN'S FAMILY VIOLENCE PROJECT**

*Commencing in early 2019, NCLC's Indian Women's Family Violence Project, demonstrates a unique model of service delivery incorporating enhanced service provision, including immigration law combined with a family violence legal support.*

The project was developed to address concerns raised by NCLC lawyers regarding the complex issues, lack of supports and isolation experienced by Indian women presenting at our service. In particular it was noted that Indian women were often recently married and separated; newly arrived in Australia; experiencing multiple forms of abuse related to their immigration status; and were often unable to access services.

The project's Immigration Lawyer works alongside our team of Family Violence Lawyers to provide a wrap-around model of service provision across a range of legal problems including visa issues, family violence intervention orders, separation, divorce, child contact orders and victims of crime assistance. The project incorporates the implementation of legal health checks to identify all legal issues affecting the client

and ensures streamlined referrals to other services for non-legal supports, such as financial, housing, counselling, and family violence case management. The project has achieved a wide reach. For example, the number of Indian clients accessing NCLC legal services increased from 43 in 2018, to 113 in 2019, and an additional 71 clients in the first 6 months of 2020.

Along with service delivery, the project includes development of resources, sector engagement, development and training, community legal education for Indian community members, and research and advocacy for sustained systemic long-term change. Our goal in this project is to ensure that Indian women who are victims/survivors of family violence can leave their abusive relationships, whilst also safely remaining in Australia with their children.

# IDENTIFYING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

## Monitoring COVID impacts

*While the COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone's life in many ways, NCLC is particularly concerned about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon fundamental human rights and the broad range of legal concerns that it may generate.*

We are also aware that our catchment has been put under the spotlight by government and police due to high rates of infection and spread.

It has been the experience of NCLC and other local services that service demand decreased during periods of strict lockdown, and then increased as restrictions ease and people have more freedom. One of our key concerns has been ensuring that during these periods people are aware of their rights, and the legal and financial remedies that are available to

them. Accordingly, NCLC developed a range of Factsheets, made available on our website, and distributed over the months of April, May and June 2020. The factsheets covered a range of legal rights including renting, employment, family violence, parent and child contact arrangements, accessing financial assistance, and police powers. Our bi-lingual staff were able to provide translations in Arabic, Hindi, Nepali, and Punjabi. The factsheets are available at <https://www.northernclc.org.au/covid-19-facts-and-info>.

We have also focused upon using our data to effectively monitor the types of issues for which our community are seeking advice and have scoped broader community information to assess emerging legal need across our community. We are identifying cases where rights have been infringed upon, ensuring that all legal remedies are sought, and collecting evidence that will support our advocacy for systemic reform. We are also strengthening our organisational processes to ensure that systemic barriers identified within casework are collated, and we are developing an enhanced process for prioritising and planning advocacy initiatives.

*Following publication of our COVID-19 Factsheets on the NCLC website during April - June, traffic to the website increased by 43% and unique visitors increased by 37%.*





## **CLIENT STORY:**

*Amita\* sought assistance from our Family Violence Duty Lawyer Service at the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court after applying for an Intervention Order against her abusive Australian citizen husband.*

Whilst assisting Amita to successfully obtain an Intervention Order, our Family Violence Lawyer identified that Amita also required urgent family law and immigration law assistance and casework support. Our Family Violence Lawyer developed a safety plan with Amita and linked her with a family violence support service as well as our Immigration Lawyer. She also organised a warm referral to a private family lawyer so that Amita could obtain urgent advice regarding placing a caveat on the family home.

Our Immigration Lawyer assisted Amita to successfully engage the family violence provisions which allowed her to continue with her Partner Visa even though she was no longer in a relationship with her Australian citizen sponsor. Whilst waiting for the Department to determine her application, Amita became extremely overwhelmed as she was facing increasing pressure from her family

in India to withdraw her Intervention Order and reconcile with her husband, even though she did not feel safe doing so. Our Family Violence Lawyer, Immigration Lawyer, and Amita's family violence support worker were able to work together to ensure that Amita was aware of how withdrawing the Intervention Order could impact upon both her safety as well her immigration matter, and put in place additional appropriate supports to support her independence. Providing a holistic wrap-around service ensured that Amita was empowered to remain safely living in Australia, despite the family pressures she was facing.

Within one month of lodging the application, the Department accepted Amita's application to engage the family violence provisions and allowed her to continue with her Partner Visa even though she was no longer in a relationship with her Australian citizen sponsor.

\*Name changed

# EDUCATING AND RESOURCING OUR COMMUNITY TO PREVENT & RESOLVE LEGAL ISSUES

## Community Development and Education Program

Our community development and education program is an essential component of the suite of legal services provided by NCLC, providing our community with the tools to both prevent legal issues from occurring in the first instance, and to self-assist before legal problems escalate into bigger issues with broad ranging consequences on housing, employment, and mental health.

During the 2019 – 2020 financial year we continued to work across our priority target groups. We conducted 10 educational workshops with young people at schools, and conducted legal health checks with year 10, 11 and 12 students at Glenroy College. We conducted 40 sessions targeting newly arrived

I really liked the interactive Q and A part and the use of case studies. I also liked the fact there were three different presenters with different expertise. All presenters were articulate, professional and friendly

communities on topics including understanding the Australian legal system, driving offences and fines, family violence, and renting rights. We also conducted 20 family violence legal information sessions, working with our partners to provide this important information to their client cohort.

We developed two new training packages targeted at practitioners that work with women experiencing family violence. Our Indian Community Development Worker developed a cultural awareness training workshop that was delivered to police and sector representatives as part of our Indian Women's family violence project. An additional training package was developed and delivered to enhance the capacity of family violence practitioners to identify and collaboratively work with legal services to enhance safety when working with women experiencing family violence who are also on temporary visas.

We continued to host the monthly Hume Domestic and Family Violence Network which grew considerably in size and engagement over the course of the year. A survey was undertaken with all network participants to review and evaluate the program. The survey results demonstrated that all participants found the network both relevant and informative. The network has implemented the survey outcomes by having a greater focus on sector advocacy and reform, as well as providing a platform for information and knowledge sharing.





## TOWARDS EQUALITY, 2020 AND BEYOND

*In July 2019 we commenced our community development project: Towards Equality, 2020 and beyond, funded by the Communities for Children program.*

In partnership with grassroots organisations - **Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria** and **Oorja Foundation**, this program works with women across three local communities through facilitated women's groups:

- **El Amal women's group: For Arabic speaking women from the Iraq/Syria region (26 participants)**
- **Oorja women's group: For Indian women (43 participants)**
- **DBSV Sisters group: For Nepali women (50 participants).**

The purpose of this program is to proactively prevent violence against women and children through enhancing awareness of the factors that contribute to family violence, participation in a

range of activities that enhance resilience and promote leadership, and to influence broader community attitudes using cultural expression through poetry, music, theatre, art, and dance. Bi-lingual group facilitators were employed to establish and facilitate three groups of women, which meet at least once a week in a community setting. To date 119 women have participated in this program, and 87 individual group activities were conducted over the 2019 - 2020 year.

Since lockdown restrictions commenced in March 2020, all groups have continued using social media platforms to engage and conduct activities. The program has been funded to continue into the 2020-2021 year.

# EDUCATING AND RESOURCING OUR COMMUNITY TO PREVENT & RESOLVE LEGAL ISSUES



## International Women's Day Event

On the 10th March all three groups came together in a celebration of sisterhood for International Women's Day where group participants performed poetry, song, and dance, and watched a play written by members of the DBSV Sisters Group which aimed to educate the community about violence against women. As part of the event, the Oorja women's group also launched a recipe book written by group participants, and El Amal women's group performed a song 'No to Violence' that they had written themselves.

Over 100 people attended this joyous event, including group participants, their families and friends, special guests, and NCLC staff.





## WEEK WITHOUT VIOLENCE 2019

In October 2019 NCLC led a range of prevention of violence against women and children initiatives during the Week without Violence 2019 including star making and t-shirt painting activities at Broadmeadows Magistrates Court, the Broadmeadows Shopping Centre, and at a range of other locations across our catchments. NCLC would like to acknowledge and thank the Men's Shed for contributing to the project by building a tree for our star display.



# MAINTAINING STRONG, COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

## Extending our Mental Health Justice Partnerships

Continuing to recognise the interdependencies between experiences of mental ill-health and legal concerns, during the 2019-2020 financial year we increased our focus and resources on clients with complex mental ill health. As well as providing additional lawyer support, we have recruited a Mental Health Support Coordinator to improve the linkages between our service and other support services in our community, and to strengthen and extend our health justice partnership with Mind Australia.

These additional resources have allowed us to broaden our reach by implementing a new legal 'in-reach' clinic at Mind Australia's NDIS-funded Supported Independent Living sites in Brunswick and Brunswick West. This service is in addition to our existing co-located mental health outreach clinics at the Broadmeadows Community Care Units, the Broadmeadows Adult Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC), and Coburg's Merri Health Community Health Centre.

Our Mental Health Support Coordinator has significantly enhanced our capacity to address the legal and non-legal needs of our clients, providing direct mental health support and referral. This has also enhanced the capacity of our legal team and community development team to respond to the mental health needs of clients, by providing training and support on how best to work with clients with complex needs.

**Cameron Bloye**



Community Lawyer  
& Complex Case Coordinator

**Dr Alex Cockram**



A Commissioner for the Royal  
Commission into Victoria's mental  
health system speaking at 2019 AGM

**Morgan Wright**



Mental Health Coordinator

“Integration of legal services in an existing model of recovery-oriented care has significant flow-on effects including preventing indebtedness and homelessness”



## **CLIENT STORY:**

*Tim\* lives at an NDIS-funded Support Independent Living residential service for people with significant mental health issues. Tim was referred to our service for assistance with approximately \$7,500 worth of infringements...*

Tim's fines were mostly for failing to pay for using toll roads on time. Tim was finding the constant letters about these matters stressful and overwhelming, and the unpaid tolls were referred to Victoria Police, who issued infringements.

We were able to work alongside Tim's support workers to successfully have these infringements reviewed, and to help Tim develop strategies to avoid incurring new infringements.

Following the review, Victoria Police referred some of the fines to court. We appeared at Court for Tim, and we were successful in having the fines completely dismissed.

Following this review, Tim still had approximately

\$2,000 worth of infringements outstanding. Because of the long delays in toll matters being referred to police and in Fines Victoria processing applications, these matters had not been included in the previous application.

To avoid another lengthy review application and the prospect of a future court date, we were able to work with Tim's Supported Independent Living facility to support them in becoming a sponsor for Fines Victoria's Work and Development Permit. This will allow Tim to work off his remaining fines by engaging in his existing treatment plan.

Tim was also supported in completing NCLC's Legal Health Check, which identified other legal issues that we were able to offer advice and support on.

# MAINTAINING STRONG, COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

## Enhancing Community Capacity to Respond to the Needs of Indian Women

On the 5th December 2019, NCLC conducted a sector wide forum for the purpose of enhancing the capacity of service providers to identify and respond to Indian women at risk of, or experiencing family violence. Over 60 people from 34 organisations attended the forum including police officers, family violence workers, team leaders, case managers, program managers, family support workers, family violence and immigration lawyers, consultants, court staff, and various community workers.

### THE AIMS OF THE FORUM WERE TO:

1. Share information, enhancing the awareness of the Indian Women's Family Violence Project and the types of legal assistance that NCLC can provide.
2. Enhance cultural awareness and knowledge, so that service providers were aware of the distinct cultural barriers to safety that Indian women experience.
3. To strengthen referral pathways and to provide networking opportunities.

The forum content was developed by internally drawing on the expertise of the team, particularly our Indian Community Development Worker, Immigration Lawyer and Legal Practice Manager. The section '*Understanding Cultural Impacts*' was shared with our project partner Oorja Foundation and other Indian community members to ensure its appropriateness.

The feedback from participants about the forum was overwhelmingly positive. Before the forum 40% of participants ranked their knowledge of Indian culture as it relates to family violence as limited or average and 32% ranked themselves as proficient or highly proficient, whereas after the forum only 0.5% ranked their knowledge as limited or average and 80% ranked themselves as proficient or highly proficient.

*“All the forum was informative and important discussion highlighting the complexities faced by Indian women in Australia”*



## ENHANCING ORGANISATIONAL & FINANCIAL CAPACITY TO MEET DEMAND

*One of the most recognised issues to have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic has been the impact on people's mental health.*

However, over the last few years we have been aware of the need to provide holistic services to people with mental illness and have partnered with Mind Australia and other Mental Health services to provide more integrated services. In 2019 we were successful in obtaining philanthropic funding to create a multi-disciplinary team with the addition of a mental health practitioner.

With additional funding in 2020 and as a response to the acute needs we were seeing in our clients and additional support from Hume City Council we have been able to grow this integrated mental health program to include support for reducing gambling harms as well as supporting the communities that we work with to enhance resilience. To ensure the value of this work we are now working with Mind to evaluate the impact of legal interventions on the lives of people experiencing mental ill-health.

An additional concern identified since COVID-19

changed the way we live and work, has been the financial impact upon international students, many of whom have lost casual employment, and who are mostly ineligible for ongoing payment support from the government. Through our advocacy and partnership work NCLC, with the financial support from Moreland City Council, has commenced a specific clinic dedicated to international students and is conducting a range of educational activities to ensure that international students are aware of their rights.

Coming to an end in December 2020 is our project with AMES students at Kangan Institute, funded by Hume City Council. This project enabled us to employ an Arabic Paralegal Support Worker to work directly with newly arrived English language students, to identify their legal needs, and to provide legal education regarding the Australian Legal System and legal rights. NCLC would like to thank and acknowledge Hume City Council for funding this important work.

While many of NCLC's programs are responsive to need, we also recognise that prevention is an incredibly important element of our work, and this is particularly significant in relation to family violence. We are delighted to have our Communities for Children funding extended for our women's group project: Towards Equality, 2020 and Beyond, which aims to prevent violence against women and children. This funding extension will ensure that we can continue to support and resource our group participants to become change-makers within their communities.



# FINANCIALS

*Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the financial year ended 30 June 2020*

<b>Our results</b>	<b>2020 \$</b>	<b>2019 \$</b>
Revenue and income	1,916,973	1,453,598
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method	1,444	8,247
<b>Expenses</b>		
Corporate and administration expense	(128,523)	(84,008)
Occupancy expense	(34,640)	(126,724)
Employee benefits expense	(1,502,950)	(1,255,632)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(111,609)	(31,860)
Finance costs	(16,798)	-
<b>Surplus/(deficit) before income tax expense</b>	<b>123,897</b>	<b>(36,379)</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Surplus/(deficit) after income tax expense for the year attributable to the members of Northern Community Legal Centre Incorporated</b>	<b>123,897</b>	<b>(36,379)</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
<b>Surplus/(deficit) after income tax expense for the year attributable to the members of Northern Community Legal Centre Incorporated</b>	<b>123,897</b>	<b>(36,379)</b>

A highlight this year was obtaining a first-time philanthropic grant which enabled the commencement of the Justice in Mind Mental Health Justice project. The year ended with a healthy operating surplus of \$ 123,897 (2019 [36,379]) with a contributing factor being the COVID-19 stimulation at the end of the financial year.

## assets

Current assets	2020 \$	2019 \$
Cash and cash equivalents	985,207	904,669
Trade and other receivables	166,650	7,333
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>1,151,857</b>	<b>912,002</b>
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	50,589	79,302
Right-of-use assets	324,541	-
Other	21,500	21,500
Total non-current assets	396,630	100,802
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1,548,487</b>	<b>1,012,804</b>

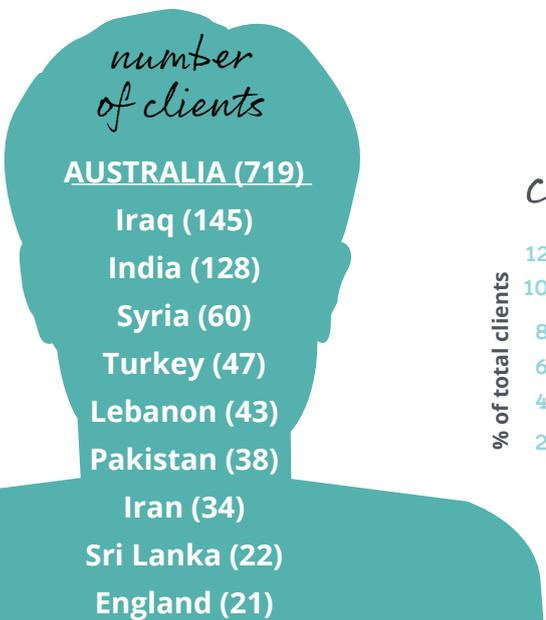
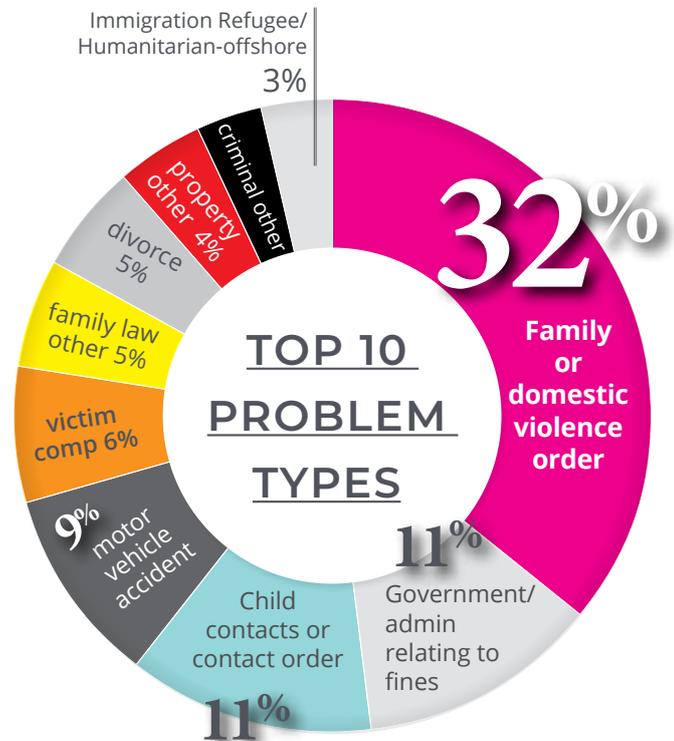
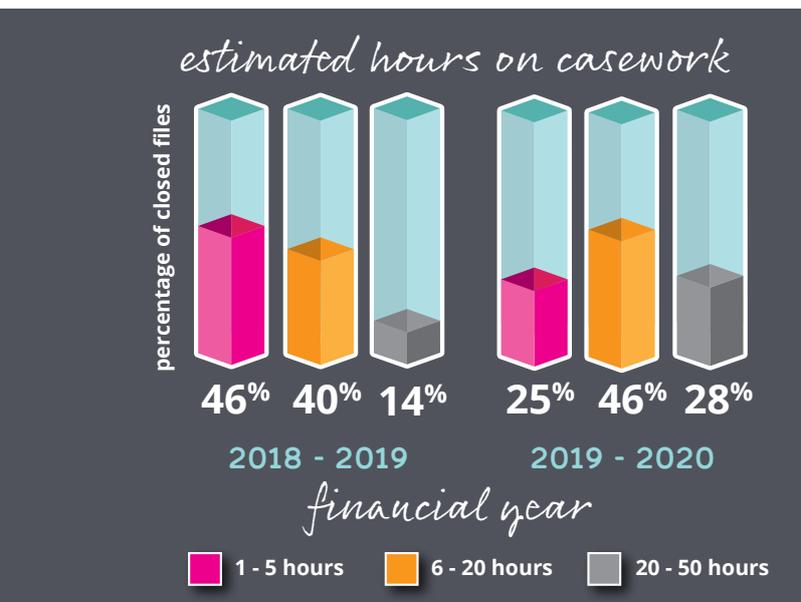
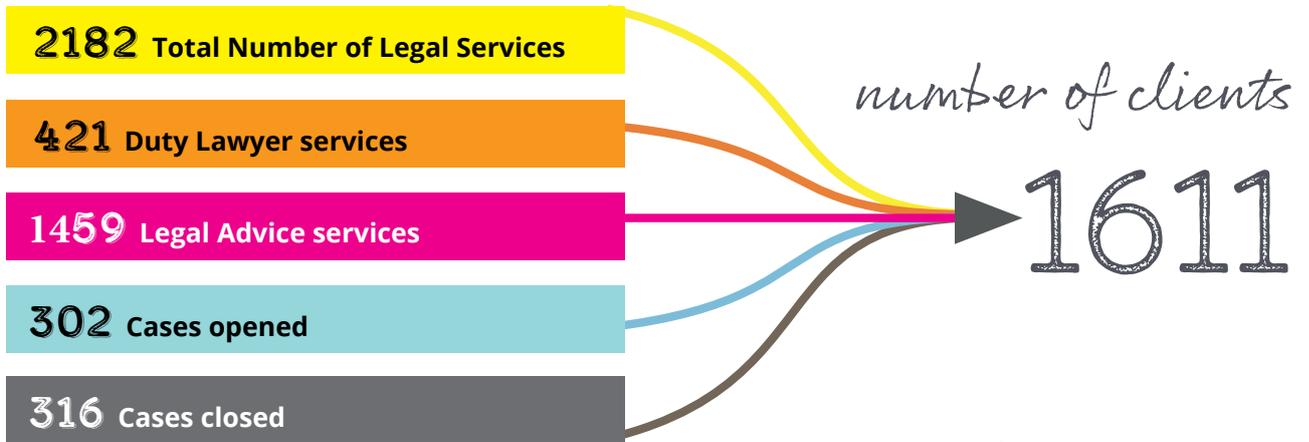
## Liabilities

Current liabilities	2020 \$	2019 \$
Trade and other payables	91,044	90,981
Lease liabilities	86,573	-
Employee benefits	130,518	126,662
Other	419,327	367,107
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>727,462</b>	<b>584,750</b>
Non-current liabilities		
Lease liabilities	264,055	-
Employee benefits	50,903	37,523
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>314,958</b>	<b>37,523</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>1,042,420</b>	<b>622,273</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>506,067</b>	<b>390,531</b>

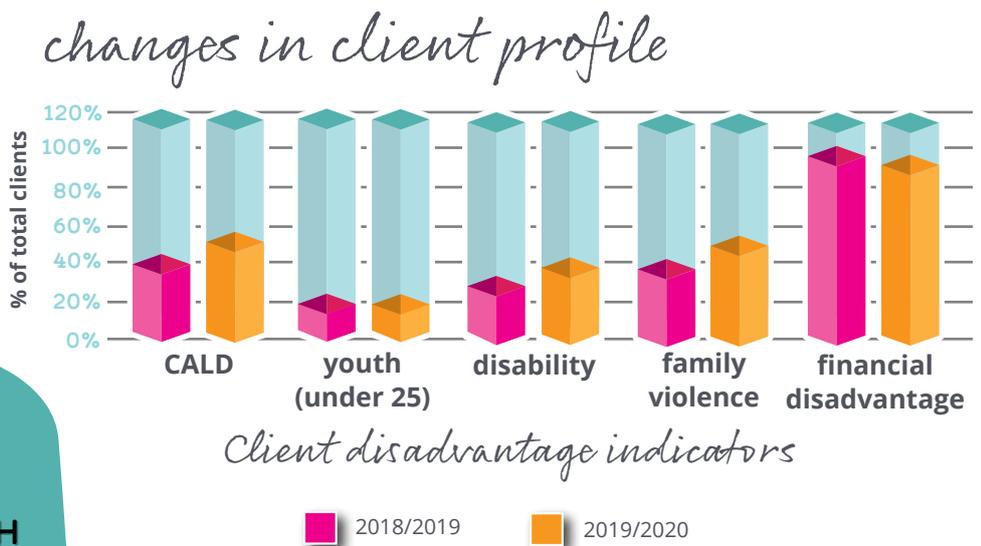
## equity

Equity	2020 \$	2019 \$
Reserves	272,297	272,297
Retained surpluses	233,770	118,234
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>506,067</b>	<b>390,531</b>

# CLIENT STATISTICS



**TOP 10 COUNTRIES BY BIRTH**



# OUR PEOPLE

## Board

**Nicole King**

Chairperson

**Daphne Hiew**

Secretary

**Tony Macafee**

Treasurer

**Steve Gartland**

Board Member

**Brooke McKail**

Board Member

**John Rutherford**

Board Member

**Ajit Singh Chauhan**

Board Member

## Staff

**Jenni Smith**

Chief Executive Officer

**Soni Baidar Rajbhandari**

Community

Development Worker

**Cameron Bloye**

Complex Case Coordinator



**Tania Cass**  
Project Officer

**Oscar Cantieni**

Community Lawyer

**Flora Culpan**

Family Violence Community  
Coordinator

**Ella Dunstan**

Family Violence Lawyer



**Dylan  
Goldsworthy**  
Youth Lawyer

**Heyam Haddad** Paralegal  
Community Worker

**Cameron Hunter**

Youth

& Family Violence Lawyer

**Milka Jankovic**

Administration Manager



**Nhirushni  
Somasundaram**  
Immigration  
Lawyer

**Cheryl Koh**

Policy Officer

**Emma Mackay**

Community Lawyer

**Tania McKenna**

Partnerships and Community

Development Manager

**Cassandra Meade** Community

Lawyer

**Caterina Medici** Administration

Officer

**Marquita Nolan**

Legal Practice Manager

**Alana Ray**

Family Law

& Family Violence Lawyer

**Gagandeep Sharma**

Community

Development Worker

**Karisse Sinclair**

Administration Assistant

**Sauna Stanley**

International Students Lawyer /

Community Development Worker

**Morgan Wright** Mental Health

Support Coordinator

**Thaera Yonan** Community

Development Worker

## Temporary Staff

**Alysha Bond**

Administration Assistant

**Bridget Dwyer**

Community Lawyer

**Su Robertson**

Project Coordinator

**Pippa Whishaw**

Community Development

& Communications Officer

**Helen Yandell**

Community Lawyer

## Departing Staff

**Kim Chalmers**

Mental Health Support

Coordinator

**Lauren Crome**

Youth Lawyer

**Pratichhya Guni** Community

Development Worker

**Frankie Hanman-Siegersma**

Project Coordinator and

Communications Officer

**Lily Hardman**

Family Violence Lawyer

**Henry Hunt**

Community Lawyer

**Lilly Jackson**

Family Violence Lawyer

**Emma Lee**

Youth and Family Violence Lawyer

**Anadil Nusrat**

Community Lawyer

**Sanjana Shrestha**

Community

Development

Worker



**Jenni Smith**

Chief Executive Officer

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

## Lawyers

Andre De Almeida  
Lois Erickson \*\*\*  
Stacie Gull  
Mary Higgins  
Peter Higgins  
Abhilasha Jha  
Serenay Kalkan  
Jessica Saidel  
James Spencer  
Rachel Szydowski

## Paralegals

Mohammad Amir  
Jessica Baker  
Lloyd Bitar  
Oscar Cantieni \*  
Marcela Castro Farfan  
Natasha Chand  
Rita Charchar  
Leanne Cousinery  
Laura Di Natale  
Katia El Azar  
Yasemin Erden  
Shanuka Fernando  
Andrew Finn  
Melike Gorkem  
Rubina Habib  
Robby Halibi

April Heaver  
Grace Hill  
Laura Hillard  
Stephanie Ho  
Manolya Ilanli  
Marcella Isho  
Devinda Johanne  
Sabrina Kochary  
Lauren Lorenzo  
Emma Mackay \*  
Derek Maota  
Shelby McLean  
Bridget Morales  
Sabrina Nassar  
Andre Poblete  
Minhal Rizvi  
Lexi Savige  
Hammad Shahin  
Olivia Shmoon  
Judgebir Singh  
Emily Yates

## Masters Students – Social Work

Soni Baidar Rajbhandari \*  
Gagandeep Sharma \*



**Gagandeep  
Sharma**  
Community  
Development  
Worker

## Structured Workplace Learning

Abuk Galuak

## DLA Piper

Cindy Bors  
Vu Dang  
Adam Tsegay  
Kade Sheely

*\*we are pleased to highlight the important role that volunteers have in our service and note that in the last year that we have recruited four volunteers into paid positions;*

**Oscar Cantieni,  
Emma Mackay and  
Soni Baidar Rajbhandari  
Gagandeep Sharma.**

*Lois Erikson*

**\*\*\* We would like to pay tribute to Lois Erikson who sadly passed away this year. Lois had been an accomplished and dedicated lawyer at NCLC and previously Broadmeadows Community Legal Service lawyer for over 15 years, prior to her retirement in 2017. Lois will be sadly missed by the service.**



## FUNDING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Thank you to all our funders, pro bono partners, community partners and supporters*

**AMES Australia**

**Anglicare**

**Arabic Welfare**

**Assyrian Australian**

**Social Development Group**

**Banksia Gardens Community Services**

**Berry Street**

**Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court**

**Brotherhood of St Laurence**

**Collingwood Language School**

**Communities for Children**

**Corrs Chambers Westgarth**

**Craigieburn Connections  
(Brotherhood of St Laurence)**

**Craigieburn Sports Stadium**

**Craigieburn Youth Centre**

**Craigieburn Secondary College**

**Dallas Neighbourhood House**

**Deakin University**

**Department of Education and Training**

**Department of Education – Health,  
Wellbeing Specialists Branch**

**Department of Justice  
& Community Safety**

**Department of Social Services**

**DPV Health**

**Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria**

**DLA Piper**

**Family Relationship Centre  
(Broadmeadows) –**

**McKillop Family Services**

**Fawkner Primary School**

**Maria Vamvakinou, Federal Member of  
Parliament for Calwell & Deputy Chair  
of the Joint Standing Committee on  
Migration**

**Foundation House**

**Glenroy Youth Projects**

**Glenroy Secondary College**

**Headspace (Craigieburn Central)**

**Hope Street (Brunswick)**

**Hume City Council**

**Hume Domestic and Family Violence  
Network**

**Hume Whittlesea LLEN**

**Iraqi Australian Friendship Association**

**InTouch**

**John T Reid Charitable Trusts**

**Kangan Institute Broadmeadows**

**Lentara Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre**

**Meadow Heights Learning Centre**

**Thank  
you**

**Melbourne Polytechnic Broadmeadows  
John Moore, Barrister  
Monash University  
Merri Health  
Migrant Resource Centre  
Mind Australia  
Mitchell Shire  
Monash University  
Moreland City Council  
Multicultural Centre for Women's Health  
North West Area Mental Health Service  
Oorja Foundation  
Oxygen Youth Space  
Refugee Legal  
Russell Kennedy Law Firm**

**SBS Punjabi  
Spectrum  
Sunbury Community Health Centre  
Uniting  
VICSEG  
Victorian Arabic Social Services  
Victoria Law Foundation  
Victoria Legal Services Board &  
Commissioner  
Victoria Legal Aid  
Victoria Police  
Women's Health in the North  
Wallan Family and Children's Centre**

# 2020

staying together... apart



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COMMUNITY  
LEGAL CENTRE

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