

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Gosnells
Community Legal Centre



Ngaala Kaaditj Noongar Moort Keyen Kadaak Nidja Boodja

We acknowledge that we practice on the land of the
Whadjuk Noongar people and pay our respects to
elders past & present & their continuing culture.

Gosnells Community Legal Centre (Inc.) is a not for profit organisation that is
funded by the Federal and State government to support equal access to justice
within our community.

We are incredibly grateful for the support of our funding bodies, partner agencies
and our community for all of your support in 2021-22.



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Justice**



**Financial
Counselling
Network**

MAKING A DIFFERENCE, TOGETHER



COMMUNITY LEGAL
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Community Legal Centres
Australia



Government of Western Australia
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

Uniting

Relationships Australia
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



AnglicareWA



Langford Aboriginal Association
Heart of Our Community



**Sam's
Spares**

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Special thanks to our many Funders, Partners and Volunteers:

- Mark Hainsworth, Director Advisory Services, Department of Justice
- Helen Pearce, Principal Project Officer, Legal Assistance Branch, Department of Justice
- Chelsea McKinney, CEO, Community Legal WA
- Tim Leach, CEO, Community Legal Centres Australia
- Celia Dufall, Principal Officer, Financial Counselling Network and all members of the FCN
- Ben Derecki, Contract Manager Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
- Lorna Pritchard, General Manager Grants - Lotterywest and all members of the Lotterywest Grants and Community Development team
- The Law Society of WA's Public Purposes Trust
- Elizabeth Lee, Transitional Manager, Karnet Prison Farm
- Phyllis Jones, A/Transitional Manager, Casuarina Prison
- Sophie Liniardopoulos, Transitional Manager, and Michelle James, A/Transitional Manager, Hakea Prison
- Michael Sheehan, Executive Director, Relationships Australia (WA)
- Sophie Walker, Executive Officer, Langford Aboriginal Association
- Teresa Lynes, Mayor, City of Gosnells
- Denisse Frans (Coordinator) McCusker Centre for Citizenship
- Maria Cavill, Manager, William Langford Community House
- Ruuby-Sandra Leeder, CEO, Minawarra House
- All students and volunteers including Practical Legal Training volunteers, interns and lawyers who volunteer for the GCLC evening legal service.



CHAIRPERSON REPORT



Terri-Anne Famlonga

The year 2022 was a transitional year for Gosnells Community Legal Centre (Inc) (GCLC) in more ways than one. We celebrated our 40th Birthday on 10 June 2022 in style and launched our rebrand, giving a much-needed facelift to GCLC, including our new website that went live on 19 September 2022.

Like other CLC's in Western Australia, GCLC has faced significant challenges in the past 3 years, due to changes in funding, COVID-19 and the need to adapt services to meet the changing circumstances and demands of disenfranchised and vulnerable clients, including those who experienced loss of employment, financial deprivation and homelessness.

Against this backdrop, in the past 12 months, GCLC has experienced further significant change, by way of a restructure, introducing a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) position to replace the Managing Solicitor position, significant ongoing recruitment, adapting services to comply with ongoing COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions, expansion of working from home, implementation of significant policy developed during the year, planning and celebrating our 40th birthday and rebranding.

Sarah Patterson commenced as the CEO on 24 January 2022, and together with the Management Committee (the Committee) and GCLC's newly formed Executive Team, comprising of Principal Solicitor, Funmi Adesina, Senior Solicitor, Janet de Brito and Finance Administrator, Matt Blackshaw, Sarah has been instrumental in transitioning positive change in line with GCLC's Strategic Plan.

Late last year, I attended a meeting with Department of Justice (DoJ) Executives, Mark Hainsworth and Helen Pearce, facilitated by Community Legal WA, who presented a session on CLC Sector Sustainability and Reform. The meeting focused on the five Pillars of CLC Sector Sustainability identified by the DoJ: Client Centric; Minimum Service Standard; Evidence-based; Collaborative; and Increased Capacity. DoJ's vision is for a sustainable sector in the State, seeking that CLCs have a more strategic approach to service delivery, including being collaborative and collectively engaging to reduce the level of overhead services, in order to deliver effective and important legal services to clients. DoJ is closely monitoring the work of each CLC as they develop and implement Legal Assistance Action Plans.

The Committee has worked tirelessly with the CEO to ensure that strategy and risk issues feature heavily in our governance of GCLC. We have implemented a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan that includes a Treasurer's position, to complement the work undertaken by GCLC's Finance Administrator.

I am pleased to report that the Committee, together with the CEO, has commenced work on addressing sustainability issues and has developed a range of new partnerships and services, to ensure that we offer a more sustainable service to clients in the future, and we look forward to developing these partnerships and services further in the coming year.

Unfortunately, due to personal reasons, several valued Committee Members, including Leah Keegan (Chairperson), Jane Lean (Ordinary Member) and Phyllis Cusworth (Deputy Chairperson) resigned during the year. On 7 January 2022, I was elected as Chairperson and thereafter, the Committee welcomed two new Ordinary Members to the Committee, Mike Jones on 21 April 2022 and Associate Professor Michael Wise on 9 May 2022, who took up the position of Treasurer. Mike Jones was subsequently elected Deputy Chairperson on 24 June 2022.

I convey my heartfelt thanks to the CEO, Sarah Patterson, all Staff and Volunteers and particularly to my fabulous Committee, including Mike Jones (Vice President), Linda Saverimutto, Ferdinando Muccilli, Michael Wise (Treasurer) and Janet de Brito (Staff Representative) for your dedication, commitment and many, many hours of pro-bono service to ensure proper governance of GCLC.

I pay tribute to the wonderful long-term members of staff who have left GCLC this year: Patrick Mungar, Joshua Marks, Kirsten Gammer, Karen Headley and Rowena Wijesooriya. Thank you for your many years of dedicated service to GCLC and our clients.

I also pay tribute to the wonderful Committee Members who left the Committee this year: Leah Keegan, Jane Lean and Phyllis Cusworth. Thank you for your extraordinary, dedicated pro-bono service to the Centre, which has been greatly appreciated.



Sarah Patterson

This year has been one of significant change and evolution for our organisation as we have adjusted to leadership changes, new agreements, and a shift in the needs of our community due to COVID19.

The team have been not only resilient, but excited to embark on these changes, and our organisation has shifted with the times, ensuring we are meeting the evolving needs of our community and providing high quality, professional services that ensure everyone has access to justice.

We have rebranded our service to a more modern and professional theme, increased our hours of operation to support more people who are now working flexibly, and have created solid partnerships across the community we serve.

Our team has grown in size with the inclusion of a Specialist Small Business Financial Counsellor who assists small business owners to address the financial implications of COVID and other factors affecting their success. This program is unique for our region and will offer entrepreneurs a chance to access vital financial support to maintain their business.

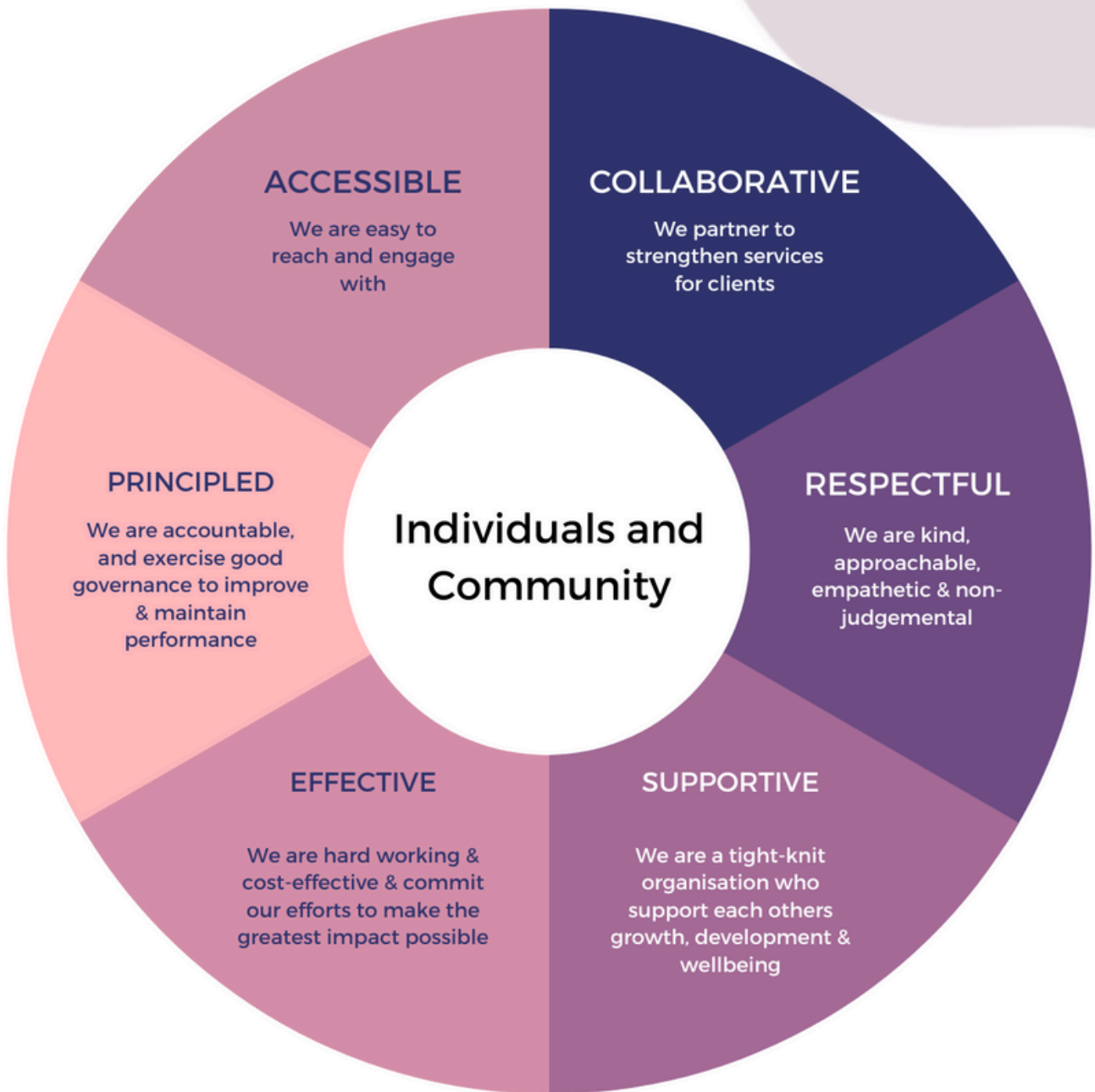
To complement our thriving Family Law practice, we have included additional Family Lawyers with specialist knowledge in Family Violence who are supporting our Family Law team to be responsive and ensure that risks are identified and addressed.

As it has been for the past 40 years, our internal culture and commitment to the community we serve is paramount and is what drives our success, and this will not change. Our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan has a focus on strengthening these internal capabilities, but also looking outward to develop and enhance strategic partnerships. This will be our primary focus in the coming year.

As the new CEO for the organisation, I would like to thank my predecessor Patrick Mungar for his many years of tireless service to the organisation, as well as the Leaders who have come before him that have made GCLC the organisation that it is. I am excited to see where the next 40 years will take us, and honoured to be a part of the journey.

Strategic Plan 2021-2024

"Together we achieve community empowerment by providing excellent legal services, education & advocacy"



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Terri-Anne Famlonga (BCom, LLB, GDLP)

Chairperson

Terri-Anne is the Chairperson of GCLC (Inc), has served on the Committee for 9 years and provided pro-bono Family Law advice to clients at the Centre's Volunteer Legal Service for 13 years. Terri-Anne is a Barrister and Solicitor, and Director of FamLaw Legal.



Mike Jones (FAIM, GradCertHRM)

Deputy Chairperson

Mike is an independent consultant to the NFP sector, experienced board member, founder & non-executive director, with experience as NFP CEO, executive and senior management positions in peak body, universities and tertiary health service.



Michael Wise (BA, BE, PhD, GAICD)

Treasurer

Michael Wise is a Trustee of the Committee on Publication Ethics, since 2017, and Treasurer since 2019. He was the Chair of a health promotion charity from 2010-2016, and Associate Professor of Computer Science at University of Western Australia.



Linda Saverimutto (LLB, FDRP)

Committee Member

Linda is a Solicitor who worked for GCLC for 28 years as a Lawyer, and then Principal Solicitor before retiring in 2019. In 2020 Linda returned to GCLC as a Management Committee member to support the community and the team.



Ferdinando Muccilli (BBus LLB GDLP (Merit))

Committee Member

Nando has served on the GCLC Management Committee since 2018 and has also volunteered as part of the Centre's Evening Legal Service. Nando currently works as a Solicitor at the Department of Health.

Janet de Brito (JD FDRP GDLP BLS)

Staff Representative

Janet is a Criminal Injury Compensation Lawyer & Mediator with GCLC and serves as the Staff Representative to the Management Committee. Janet was elected by her peers and has been filling the role for 3 years.

Thank you to our former Chairperson Leah Keegan, Committee members Phyllis Cusworth & Jane Lean who served on our Management Committee and completed their service during 2021-22.



**Management
Committee**



Sarah Patterson
CEO



Funmi Adesina
Principal Solicitor



Matt Blackshaw
Finance Admin



Janet De Brito
Senior Solicitor



Louise McNamara
Family Lawyer



Seiminie Kottage
Mediation Assistant



Aubrey Chisanga
Prisons Lawyer



Joshua Marr
Financial Counsellor



Tara Sherwood
Family Lawyer



Rowena Wijesooriya
Family Lawyer



Jamie Le Roux
Financial Counsellor



Renaye Dicker-Lee
Tenant Advocate



Kalanie Fernando
Family Lawyer



Sharon Edwards
Legal Admin



Lisa Castel
Tenant Advocate



Karen Headley
Admin Officer

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

May 2022 commemorated 40 years of Gosnells Community Legal Centre serving our community through Information, Advocacy, and Legal services. To celebrate this auspicious milestone we had a large event & launched our new brand and services to our partners, life members, colleagues and community.





GCLC
Awesome
since
1982



VOLUNTEERS

Our team are our greatest asset and we are privileged to have an amazing team of Legal Volunteers and Mediators who make our Centre a fantastic place to be.

We thank all the volunteers who give of their time & expertise to help make our community stronger, safer and more equitable.

VOLUNTEER FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION PRACTITIONERS (MEDIATORS)

Linda Saverimutto
Susan Hewitt
Hayden Armitage
Annelie Van Zyl
Catherine Rudyard
Greg Mahney
Brenda Green
Margaret Mendelawitz
Zahra Fakki
Margaret Dixon
Barbara Kwiecien
Verginia Serdev-Patterson
Denise Bowen
Mark Wallbridge
Santhusha Karavita
Diane Dewing
Peter Moyles
Jessica Cartwright
Rekha Bhatt
Sara Dostanic
Lionel Grant

VOLUNTEER LAW STUDENTS

Vinuli Perera
Tife Adegboye
Gabrielle Meys
Ajay Singh
Denis Lopitya
Morgan Wade
Nesreen Abumousa
Sharon Conley
Tristan Baiamonte
Jacqueline Pasich
Seiminie Kottage
Noel Jackson
Sophia Stannard
Gayani Jayasekera

VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICE LAWYERS

John Cooke
Joshua Lee
Leah Keegan
Kirsten Gammer
Jeanette Pedulla
Celeste Saxon
Patrick Mungar
Fernando Muccilli

MCCUSKER STUDENTS

Aaron Oughtibridge
Aliyah Butler
Rachel Lim

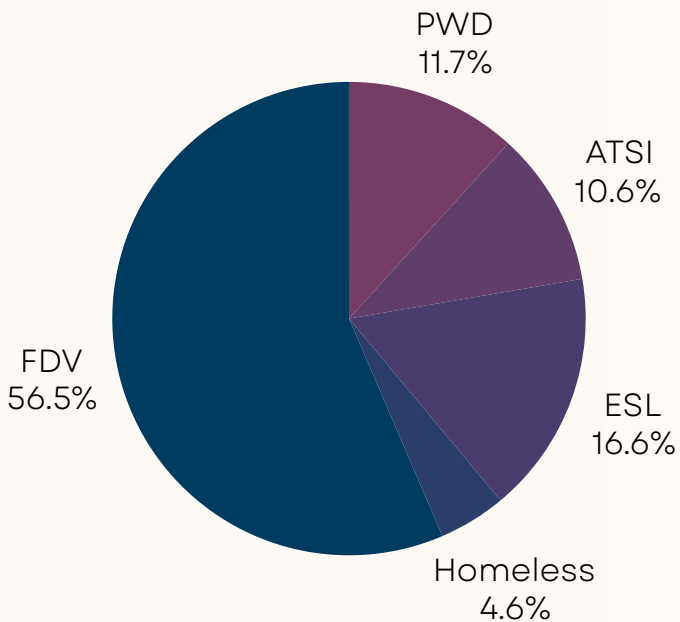
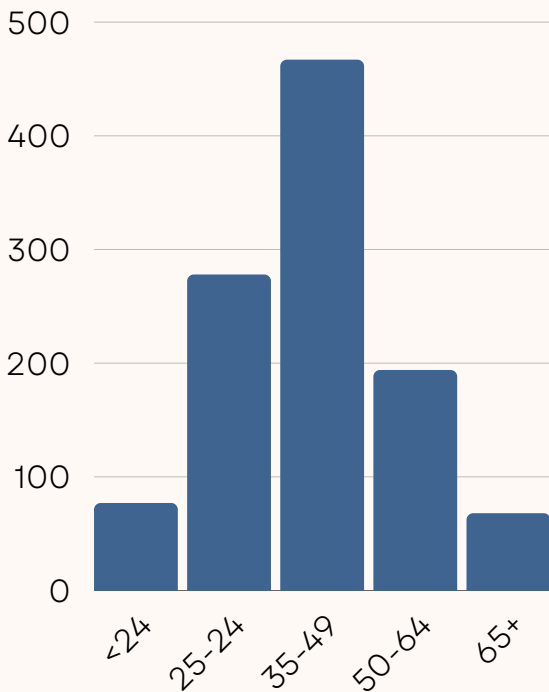


ANNUAL SNAPSHOT



26.8%

73.2%

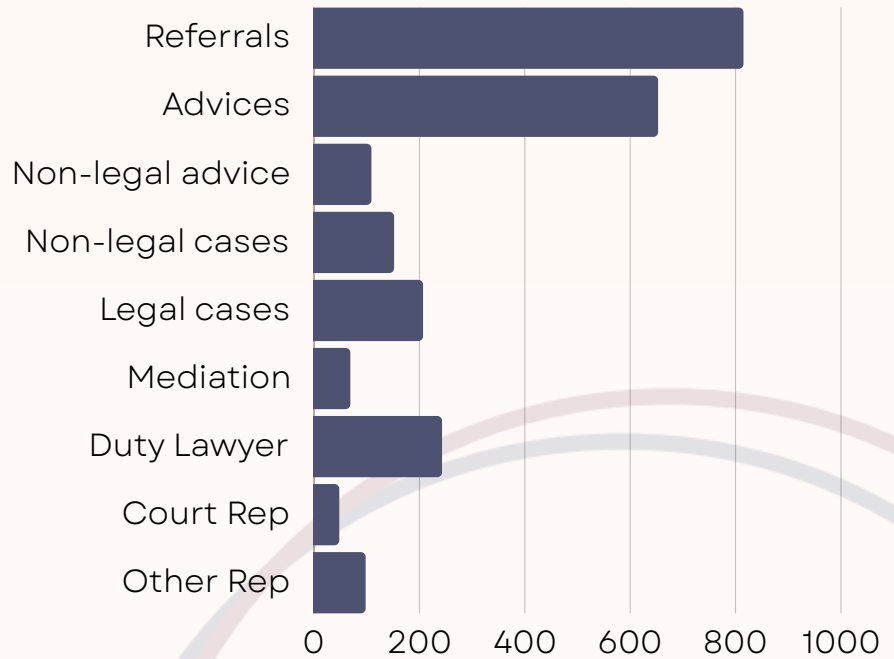


PRIORITY GROUPS

3013 people supported in 2021-22

\$2.17m Compensation paid out

33 Community Education sessions



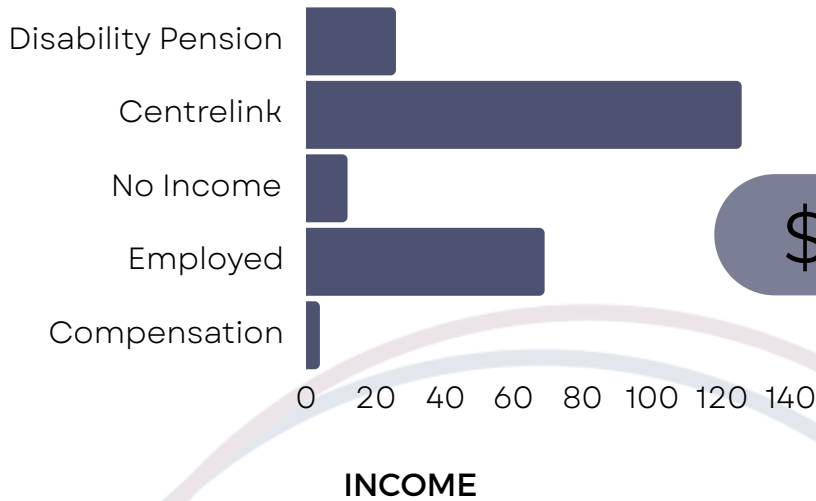
SERVICES

51

clients avoided homelessness due to GCLC Emergency Relief & Tenancy support

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

Financial counsellors help people who are experiencing financial hardship. Financial counsellors aid people to understand and weigh up their options and assist them to work towards improving their financial situations. This assistance includes working on budgeting, managing bills and looking at ways to managing debt. They will often advocate on behalf of people to credit institutions to apply for hardship variations to contracts, compassionate waivers of debt and complaints about lending malpractice.

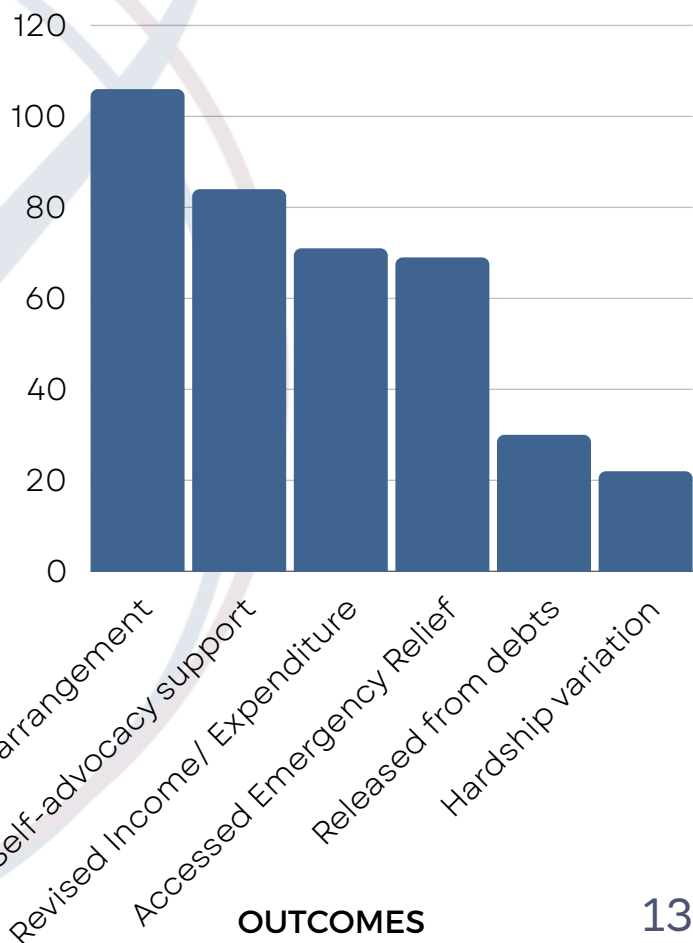


\$25.3m total presenting debt

\$340k debts waived for GCLC clients

174 education session attendees

14% of clients identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



Jamie Le Roux
Financial Counsellor

OUTCOMES

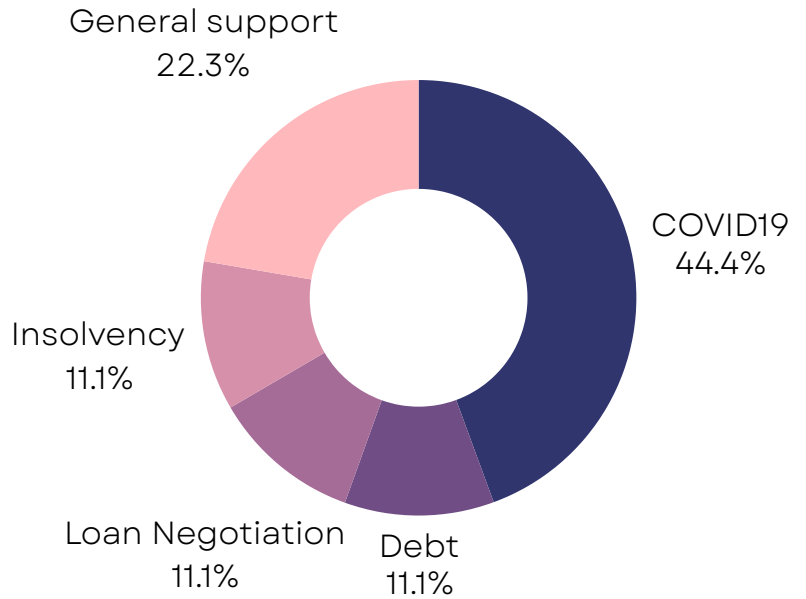
SMALL BUSINESS FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

This year, Gosnells CLC embarked on a new Financial Counselling program to support small business owners and sole traders to address financial issues in their businesses. The program commenced in February 2022 and will continue into the near future, offering local entrepreneurs a new avenue for support and advice.

6 hrs

Average case time per client

New Partnerships



Primary issues



Josh Marr

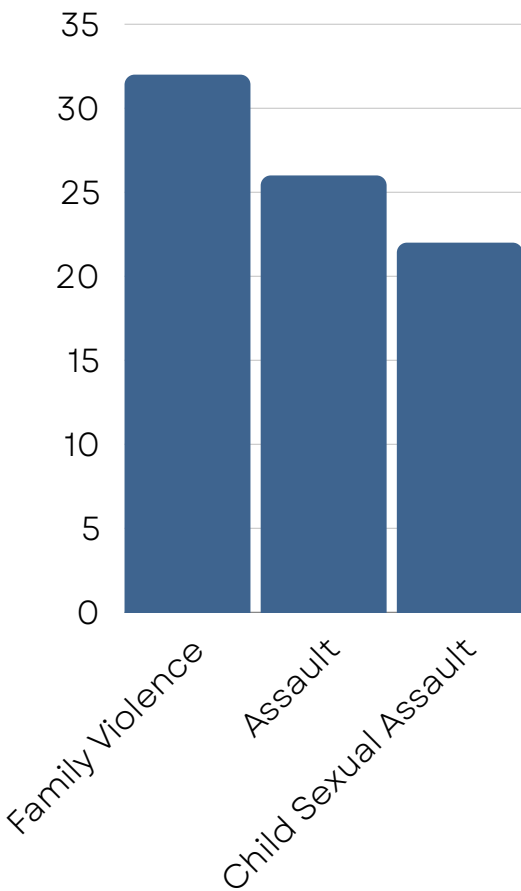
Small Business Specialist Financial Counsellor

“ Everything has changed for small business owners over the past few years and it can be really hard to manage it all and still run your business. I am so grateful for Josh's help ”

VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICE

The Victim Support Service provides advice and casework for victims of crime in relation to applications for compensation under Criminal Injuries Compensation Act.

The service is provided at a low cost when GCLC is successful in obtaining a grant of compensation for the client and it is otherwise free.



"When I was assaulted I lost my front teeth, this CIC payout has enabled me to smile again"

"The Police could not charge my offender, but this process made me feel finally heard"

80

completed applications

51

submissions to defend claims

15

extensions of time CIC applications

\$2.17m

in compensation paid to victims in 2021-22

FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICE

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) is a process where an independent Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP) assists parties affected by separation to resolve issues about their children and make a parenting plan. A parenting plan is a signed and dated agreement about arrangements for children and can include things such as living arrangements, special occasions, communication, and health. FDR is required before applying to the Family Court unless a party is eligible for an exemption.

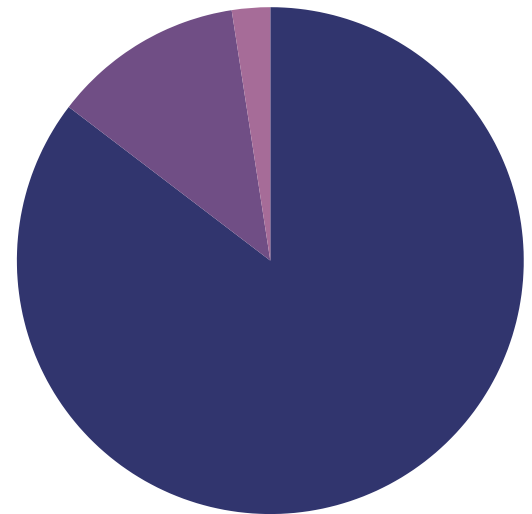
GCLC also mediates disputes between neighbours around dividing fences, tree branches, encroaching roots, nuisance, and noise. At GCLC we aim to assist neighbours to resolve their conflict and reach a mutual agreement at a low cost.

41 Mediations held

39 Agreements reached

83 Assessments undertaken

Parenting FDV
12.2%



Parenting
85.4%

95%

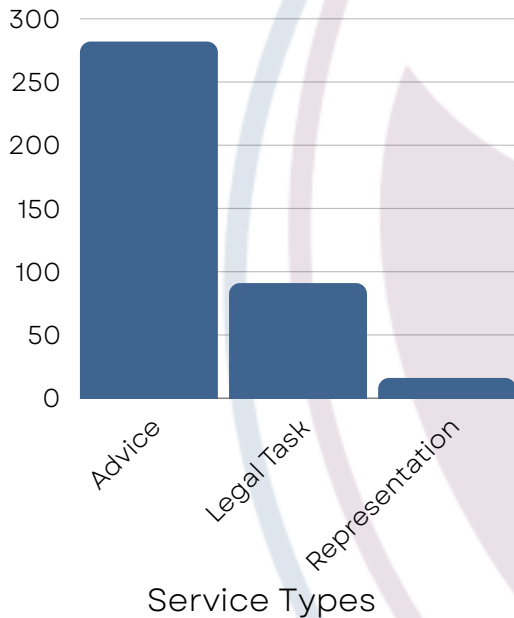
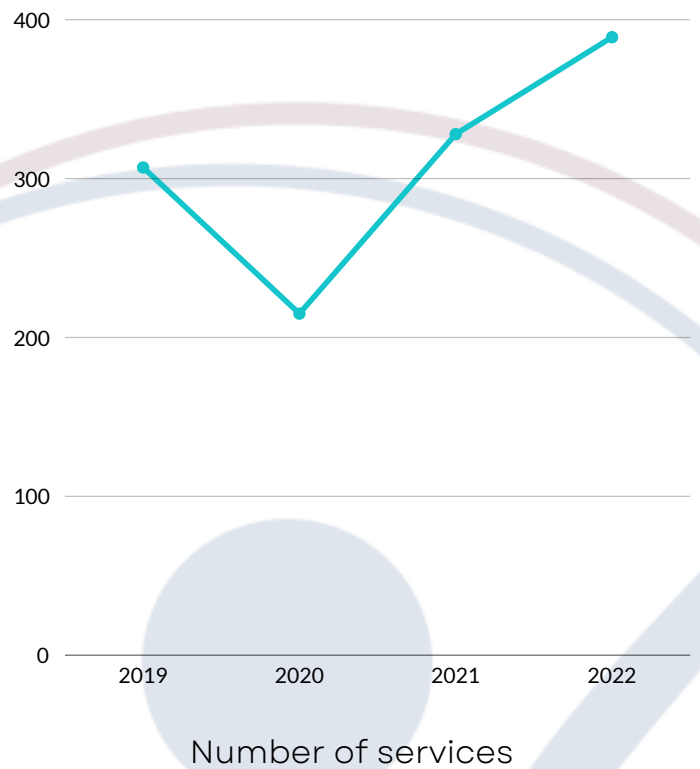
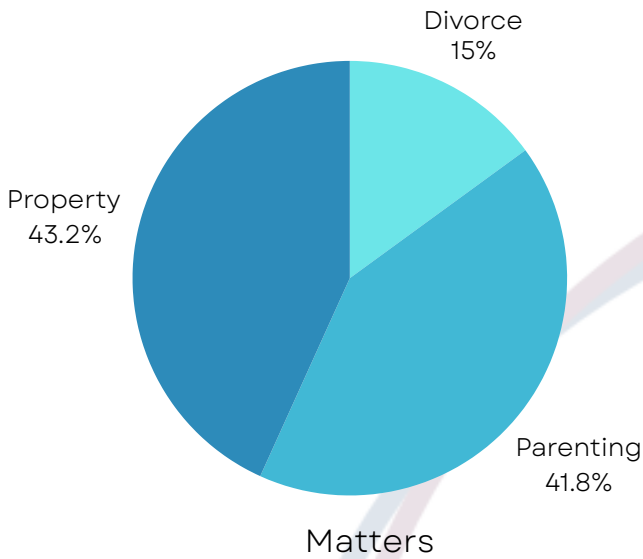
of our clients
reach an
agreement in
mediation



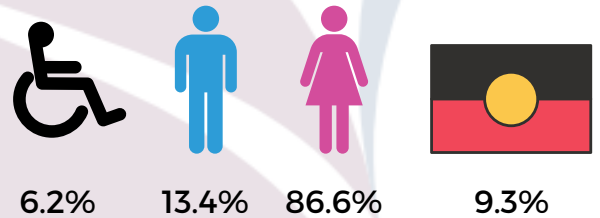
Tara, Seiminie, Funmi, Sharon & Kalanie

FAMILY LAW

Our Family Law program supports people with Divorce, Separation, Property Law, Children's matters and parenting issues. We provide legal advice, legal cases and representation in both the Armadale Magistrates and Family Court.



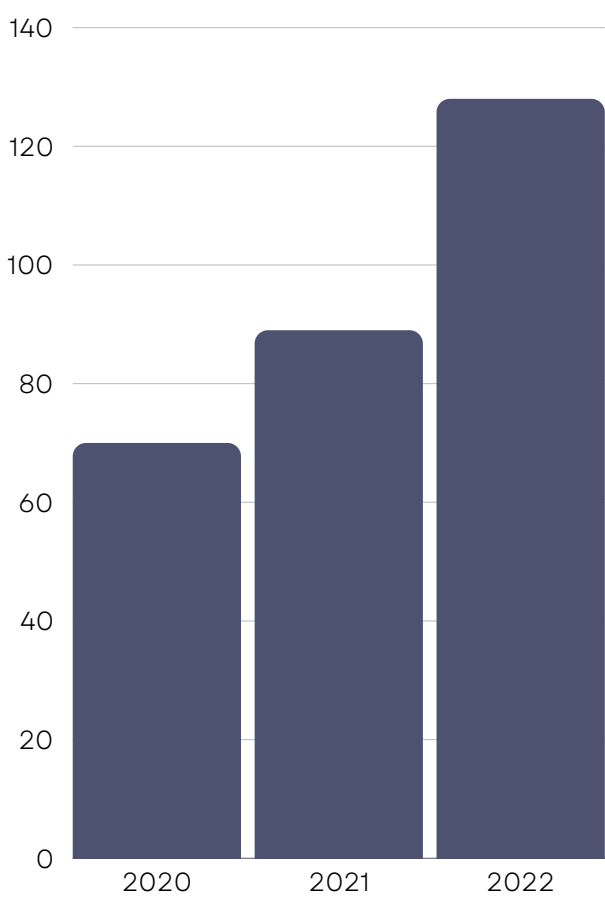
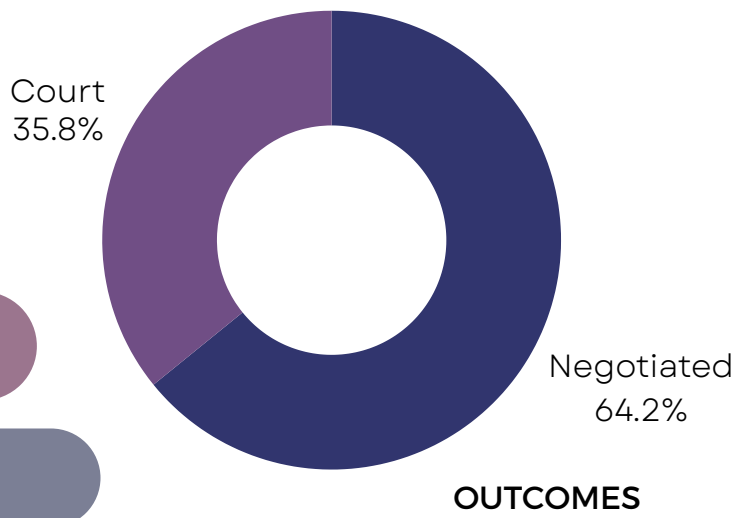
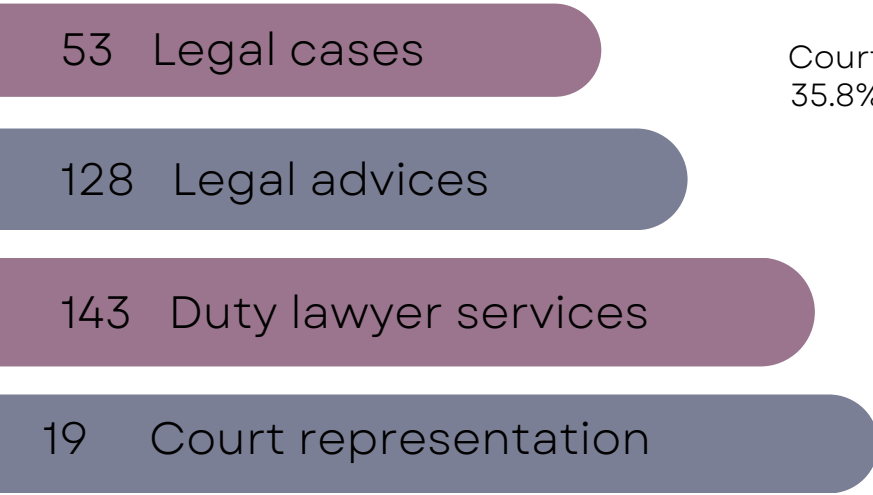
389 Family Law clients



Mariah called with serious concerns about her children's safety following her ex-husband's threats to kill them. We made an urgent application to the Family Court for an injunction to stop him taking the children. We lodged her application only 1.5 hours after her call. We then represented her at a series of court hearings where we advocated for the children's safety and obtained a Family Court Order to protect the children.

FAMILY VIOLENCE LEGAL SERVICE

Our Family Violence legal service works with women experiencing Family Violence to access legal, social and support services to help them break free from violence and start over.



LEGAL ADVICE

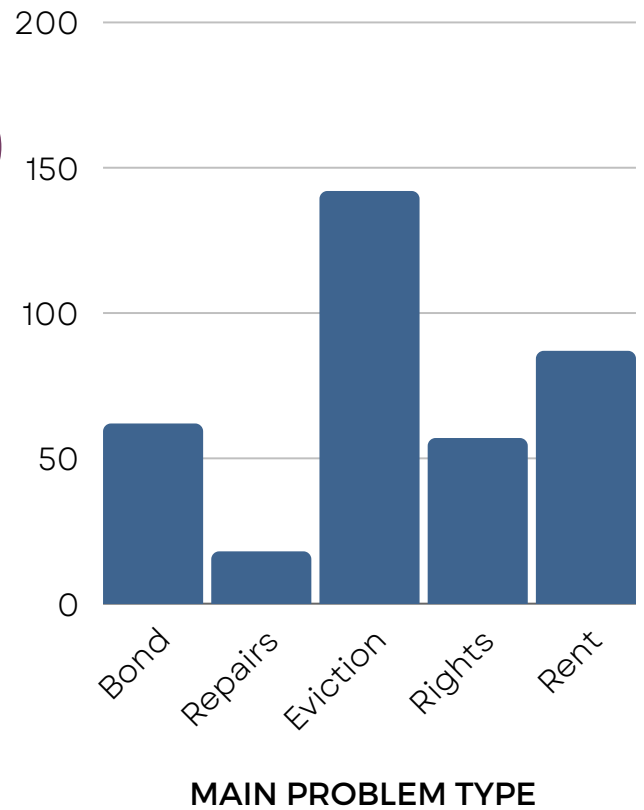
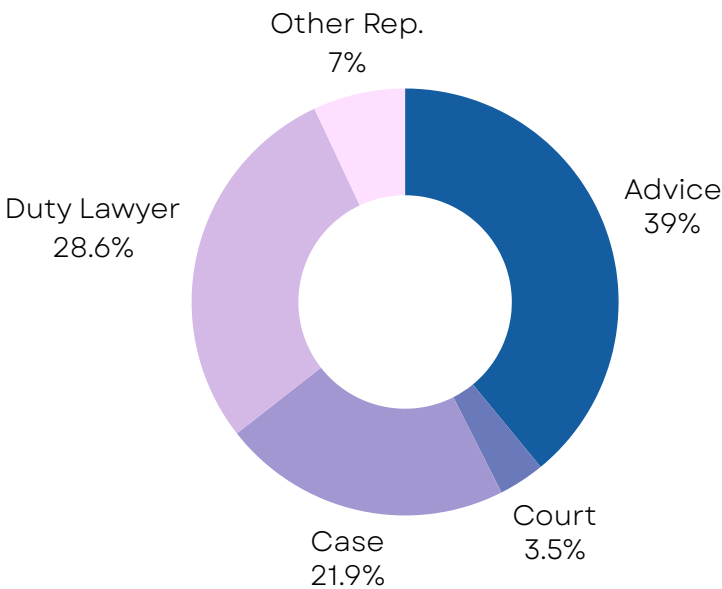


Funmi, Kalanie, Louise & Tara
Family Law & FDV Legal Team

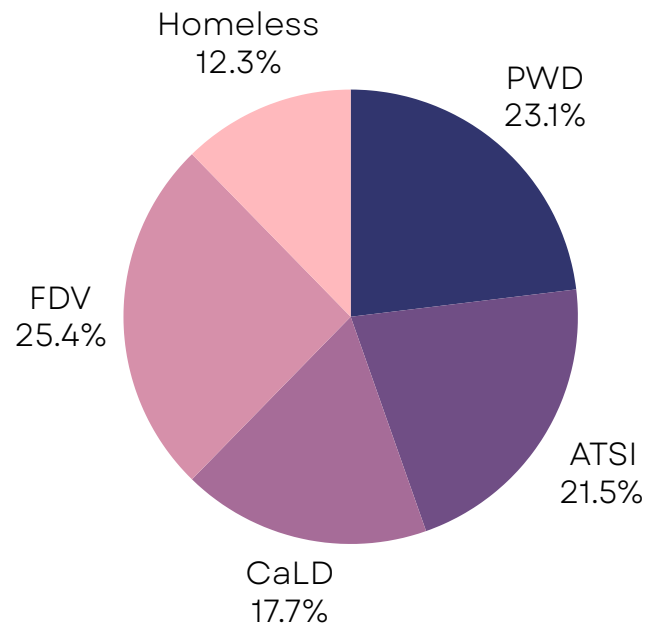
TENANT ADVOCACY

Tenant Advocates work with residential tenants in both private and public housing to advocate on their behalf, and represent them in court on issues such as eviction, breach notices, maintenance issues, and other matters that put their home at risk.

443 services provided



Lisa & Renaye - Tenant Advocates



PRIORITY GROUPS

CHILD SUPPORT LEGAL SERVICE

The Child Support Legal Service provides advice and casework for people who are struggling to get child support payments. We offer a holistic service, including:

- Applying for child support or Maintenance through the Family Court
- Proving who is the father (Paternity/DNA testing assistance);
- Support through the Appeals process, and
- Advice on collection of the debt.

13 DNA/ Paternity tests secured

4 Child support agreements in place

12 Matters proceeded to Family Court

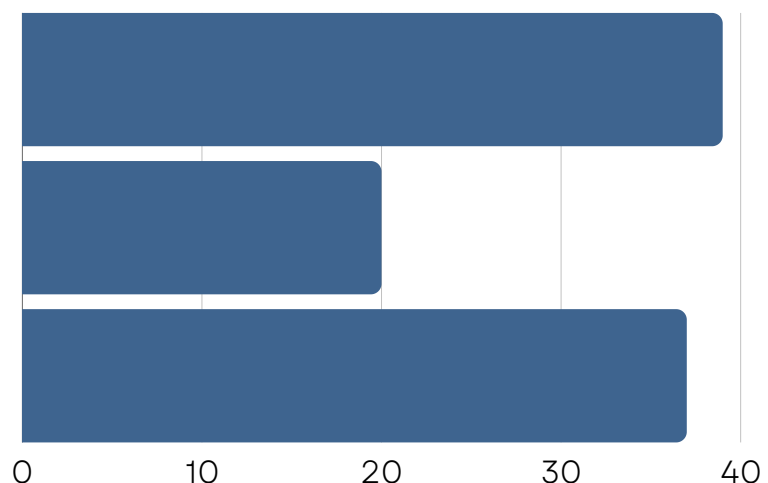
3 DNA Paternity tests paid for by GCLC



Funmi Adesina
Principal Solicitor
Child Support Lawyer

"This was such a stressful time, but the non-judgemental approach of the Lawyer at GCLC made it so much easier"

Info/ Referral
Legal Advice
Legal casework

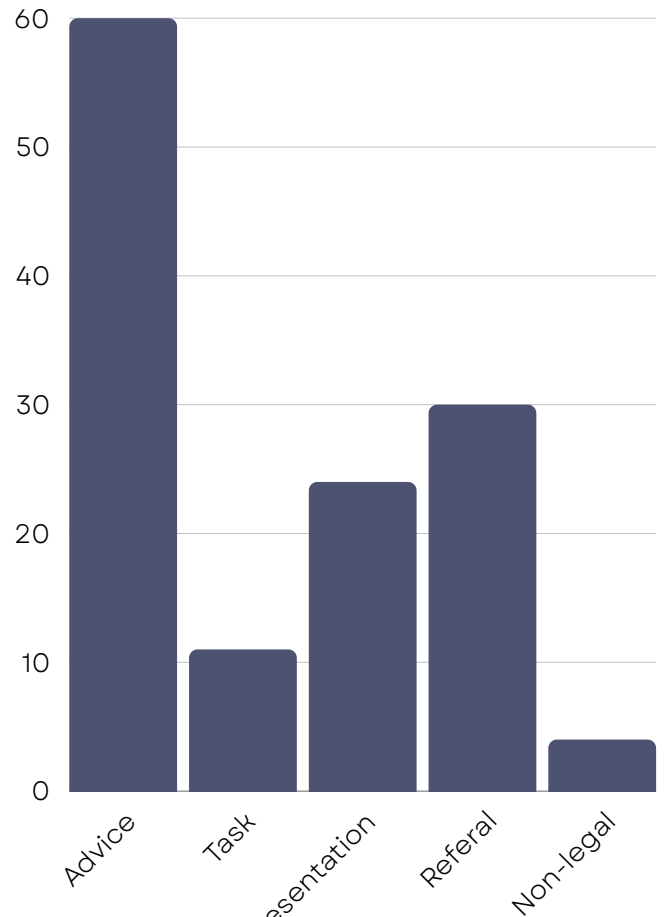


PRISON OUTREACH PROGRAM

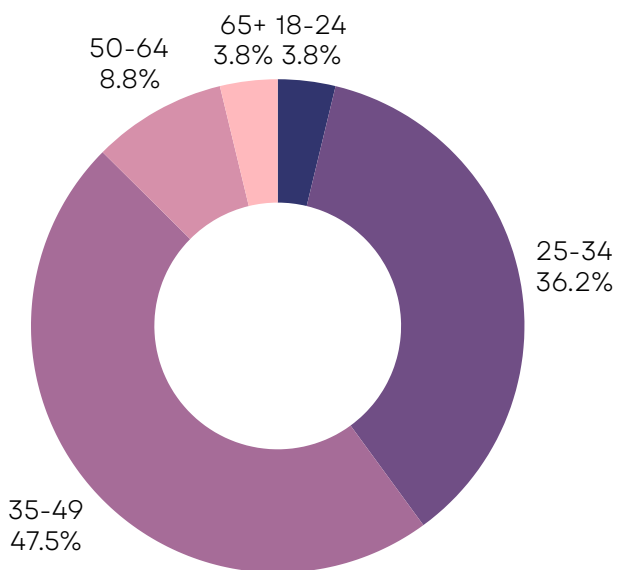
GCLCs Prison Outreach Program works with men serving time in prison to help them address parenting matters and visitation with their children both while in prison, and after their release.

131 services provided

4 different prisons



SERVICES PROVIDED

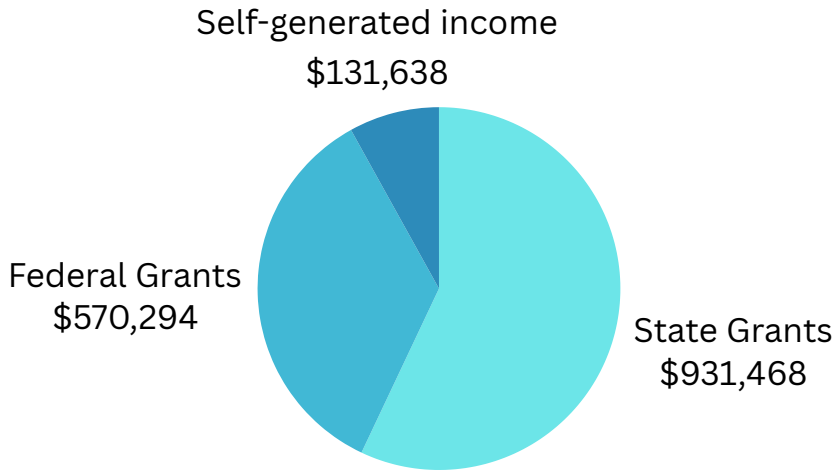


CLIENTS BY AGE

John's ex-wife had a FVRO and wanted nothing to do with him. We were able to address her safety concerns, turn her focus to the best interests of the children and negotiate a successful agreement that included a third party facilitating contact between John and the children who really missed their dad.

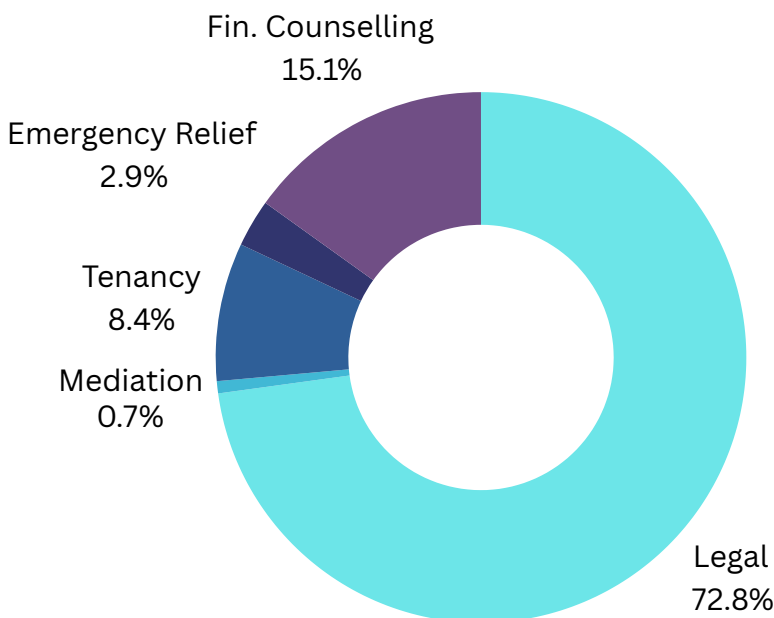
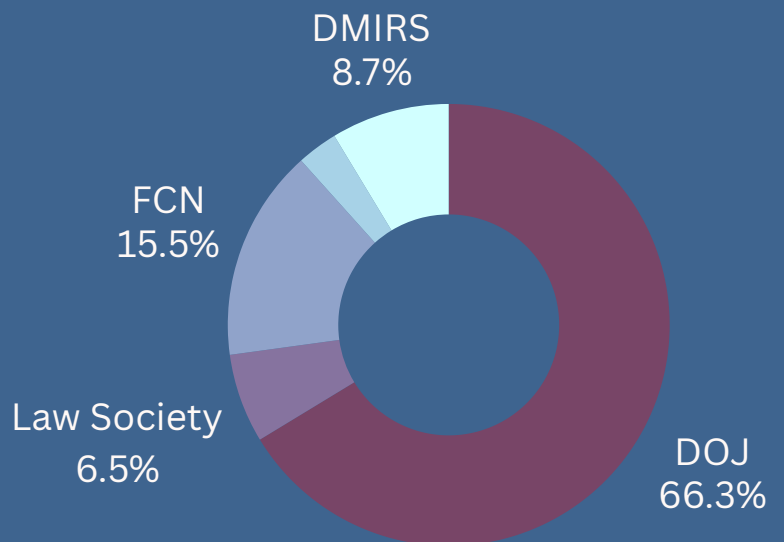
Financial Overview 2021-22

Income



In 2021-22 GCLC generated 8.1% of our income from fee-for-service initiatives, and the residual 91.9% from government grants.

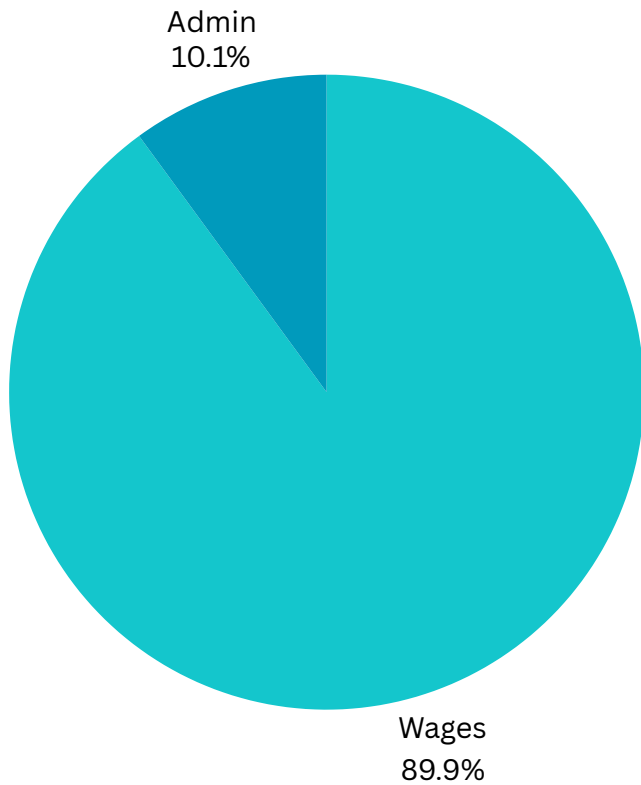
Dept. of Justice is our primary funding body, but we have actively aimed to diversify our income sources, and have made this a strategic ambition over the next 12 months.



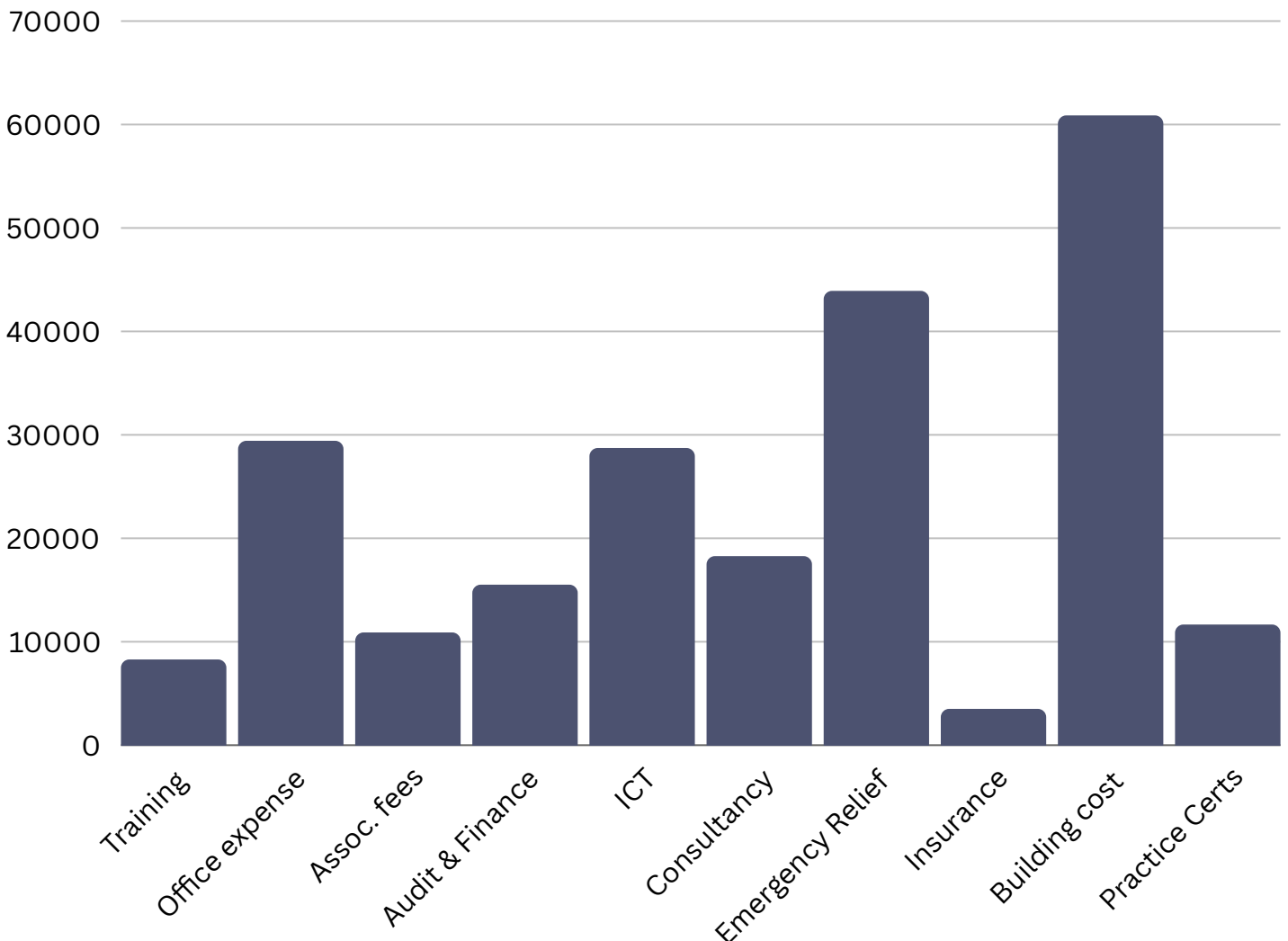
Given the proportion of funding we receive from Dept. of Justice and Law Society, legal services accommodate for 72.8% of our business expenditure,

Expenses

Wages and wage on-costs for staff accommodate nearly 90% of our expenditure, enabling us to have a robust team of legal and non-legal professionals able to deliver high quality services to our clients when they need them



*Wages are the associated costs to deliver services to clients.





Gosnells Community Legal Centre
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admin@gosclc.com.au