



27 October 2023

Street Law Centre WA (Inc) Submission to the National Legal Assistance Partnership Review 2020-2025

October 2023

1. Introduction

Street Law Centre WA Inc (Street Law) is a specialised community legal centre funded to deliver outreach legal services to those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Street Law's unique service delivery model was established to enable people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness access to justice through having access to a specialised legal service. Street Law champions for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness through legal work for social justice, working towards a compassionate community where every person has a safe place to call home. Street Law delivers legal services through a trauma informed, human rights lens. Street Law meets the needs of its clients through its co-located and integrated legal service delivered in partnership with community service agencies across the Perth metropolitan area and through a statewide advice line. Through these partnerships and collaborations Street Law lawyers ensure the legal, social, health and welfare issues the clients are experiencing are addressed in conjunction with one another thereby reducing the barriers to exiting homelessness.

This submission demonstrates how Street Law meets the objectives of the National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP): the delivery of integrated, efficient, effective, and appropriate legal assistance services that are focused on improving outcomes and provision of justice to vulnerable people facing disadvantage but is unable to meet objectives without the sustained effort to secure additional funding through other avenues. There is demonstrated need for increased, sustainable Commonwealth funding to ensure that Street Law can continue to meet the objectives.

2. Background

In 2005, the WA Homeless Person Legal Advice Clinic Steering Committee (the Committee) was established to identify a legal service model for homeless people and for those at risk of homelessness. The committee commissioned Shelter WA and Tenants Advice Service to conduct a scoping study which was undertaken in 2006. The study was based on the premise that people experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness have varied and complex legal needs that require specialist services. It was established that although service providers made referrals to generalist community legal centres, Family Violence Prevention Legal Services and Legal Aid, these services were not meeting the needs of the clientele due to the transient nature of homelessness and the absence of a fixed address. The steering committee established that legal outreach clinics co-located with service providers would be necessary for client accessibility. Lawyers that were trained to respond and communicate with people who had clusters of issues was also necessary, as was consistency of those attending.

The study identified that people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness faced unique barriers that prevented them from gaining the access to justice that they required and that a specialist legal service was needed.

3. Service Delivery Model

Street Law Centre's service delivery model has evolved over time to meet the needs of clients and align with contemporary evidence-based approaches to address the legal and non-legal needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness through integrated service delivery. Street Law has aligned with, and continues to align with the National Strategic Framework's guiding principles for Legal Assistance services which focus on service delivery and people facing disadvantage, client-centred services, integrated approaches, responsive services, preventative action, empowerment and resilience and continuous learning.¹ All guiding principles are implemented in Street Law's service delivery model.

The 2006 scoping study for Street Law Centre established that people experiencing homelessness required the following:

- Accessible location
- Appropriately trained staff
- Longer appointment times
- Consistency of service
- Ability to respond to a wide variety of legal issues
- Coordination of services with non-legal service providers
- Client education in regards to their rights

Street Law centre was established using an exclusive outreach model where Street Law legal outreach clinics were co-located with service providers that were already easily accessed by people experiencing homelessness. From 2009 – 2015, Street Law relied heavily on the support of law firms for pro bono assistance. Street Law was initially funded for a principal solicitor and administrative assistant, making pro bono support essential to meet the needs of clients, undertake ongoing case work and maintain a consistent presence in the community. The service delivery model evolved to operate as a secondment model where volunteers were seconded to Street Law for one day a week to provide support at outreach legal clinics then undertake casework, as opposed to only attending clinic and completing work remotely. The shift was a result of practical adaptations as the service rolled out, as it was important to manage regular presence and supervise legal work undertaken by volunteer solicitors.

In 2015, Street Law centre commissioned Kalico Consulting to undertake a review of the service delivery model . The review concluded that Street Law centre was effective in

¹ *National Strategic Framework for Legal Assistance* <https://www.ag.gov.au/system/files/2020-06/NationalStrategic-Framework-for-Legal-Assistance.pdf>.

relation to accessibility of legal clinics, providing lawyers and secondees that were appropriately trained, consistency of service, holistic service delivery and achieving outcomes through effective referrals and the provision of advice and ongoing representation services which resulted in the clients legal and non-legal issues being addressed. It also noted however that Street Law had limited capacity to develop other activities such as systemic community legal education and law reform. The review highlighted the effectiveness of the service delivery model and the capacity limitations.

Street Law's service delivery model has further evolved from a co-location model to an integrated service delivery model. This has been due to the longstanding relationships with stakeholders that Street Law has developed. These relationships have resulted in working closely with the community service agencies where Street Law's legal clinics have been located for many years. This has resulted in the social, welfare and health needs of the clients have been met alongside their legal needs. These partnerships and collaborations continue to strengthen Street Law's current service delivery model.

The current service delivery model is;

- Client-centred, trauma informed and accessible;
- Co-located outreach legal clinics;
- State wide accessibility through an advice line with skilled lawyers responding to the clients legal issues;
- Ongoing representation and end to end legal services which provides the depth of service the clients require;
- Continuously developing legal skills to respond to Street Law's community need, for example New Zealand citizens seeking to make Australian Citizenship applications; and
- Comprehensive Community Legal Education program (funded by Public Purposes Trust)
- An integrated legal service delivery model co-located with existing service providers increases our client's access to justice while promoting holistic service delivery. Our service delivery model ensures our client's have access to timely responsive legal service where they are able to speak to a lawyer on the day the service is scheduled for delivery.

Street Law Centre currently runs the following outreach legal clinics in the Perth metropolitan area:

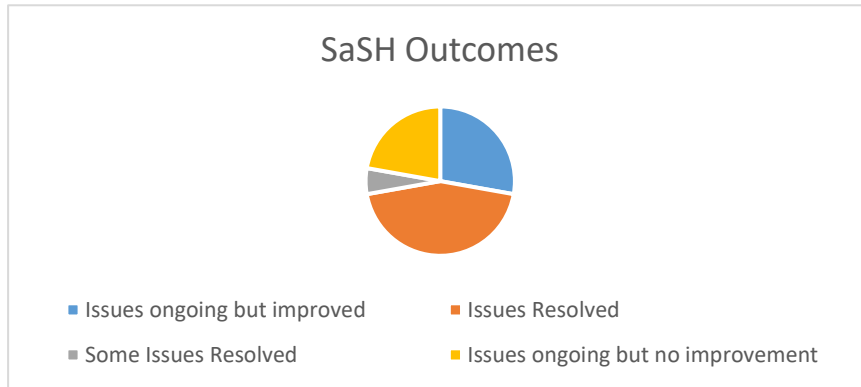
Tuesday	Karnany (Indigo Junction) weekly 9am – 12pm
	Ruah Centre (Ruah) fortnightly 10am – 12pm
	St Pats (St Pats Community Centre) fortnightly 9am – 11am
Wednesday	Passages Youth Hub (St Vinnies) weekly 10am – 12pm
	Koort Boodja (Uniting WA) once per calendar month 1.30pm – 2.30pm
	The Beacon -
Friday	Tranby (Uniting WA) weekly 8.30am – 10.30am
	Swan Districts Football Club Bassendean (in collaboration with Street Doctor) 11am – 12.30pm

Aside from when the designated lawyer is on leave or otherwise away from the office the clients will see the same lawyer each time. This model is designed to offer continuity, and this is central to trauma informed practice and building trust. The building of the relationship between the Street Law lawyer and client is enhanced by the collaboration with non-legal service providers. This provides the holistic response needed to ensure all social, welfare, health and legal issues are responded to and offers greater support to the client.

In addition to its core integrated legal service delivery model, Street Law has been a partner in two successful integrated legal services programs. To the extent current funding allows we are seeking to further embed this model of socio-legal service delivery at each outreach centre.

Safe As Houses Program 2017-2019

The Safe As Houses (SasH) program was a collaboration run by Tenancy WA (now Circle Green Community Legal Centre) and Women’s Legal Service and Street Law funded by the Criminal Property Confiscation Grants Program (State). The program sought to address the multitude of legal and non-legal issues of women and children who had experienced domestic violence faced, and that was consequently placing them at risk of homelessness. This group of clients is a priority group of Street Law’s and is identified as a priority group under the NLAP. By providing case managed legal and support services, wrap around services were provided to vulnerable women and children and holistic outcomes were achieved. SasH had three main areas of focus; health and wellbeing, keeping women and children safe and preventing and ending homelessness. In the 23 months that SasH was operational, it assisted 133 women. The program catered to women’s needs depending on their circumstances, and due to the complex nature of their legal, social and financial issues the majority received ongoing representation, support from the SasH program coordinator and partner agencies.



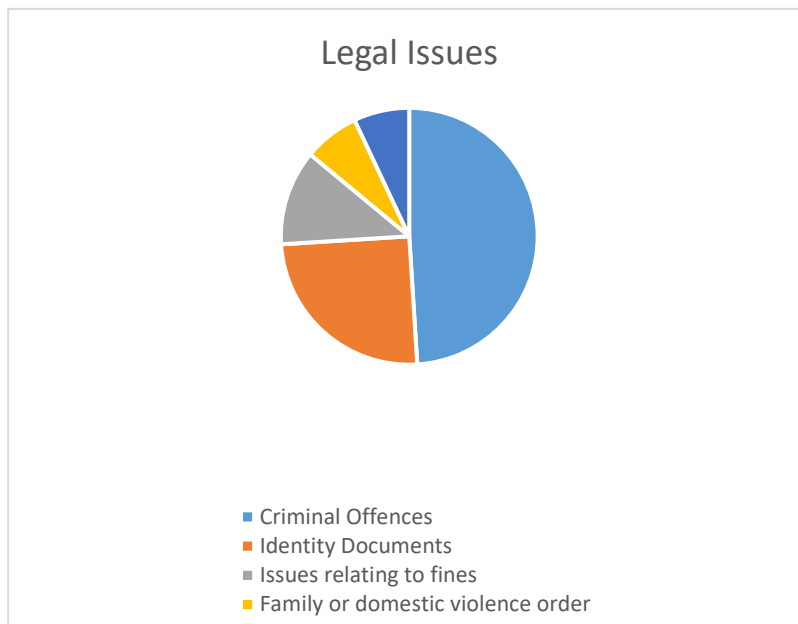
Youth Outreach Legal Program 2021 – 2023

The Youth Outreach Legal Program (YOLP) was a collaboration between Street Law Centre and Passages Youth Engagement (St Vinnies). This program was funded through a Lottery West grant. YOLP was designed for people under the age of 25, a priority cohort of Street Law Centre clients and the NLAP. Clients that entered the YOLP program presented with complex interrelated social, health and welfare issues that contributed to the development of their legal issues and their experience of homelessness.

A holistic response was required to address these issues that the clients were facing. Street Law delivered end-to-end legal representation services which included court representation. The wide range of criminal and civil law matters that the clients presented with required a service such as Street Law that was equipped with the expertise to respond. Youth workers from Passages provided ongoing non-legal support to clients to support the holistic resolution of these complex issues. This included support to address mental health challenges, access financial counselling, address health issues and engage with medical services, and assistance with accessing accommodation and youth workers also regularly attended court appearances with clients. The clients that entered the YOLP program were particularly vulnerable with complex legal issues. The table below shows the high rate of vulnerability the clients presented with.

Percentage of clients	Vulnerability
100%	Experiencing homelessness
92%	Disability and/or Mental Health Issues
92%	Experienced Family and domestic violence
52%	Identify as street present
16%	Identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

The most recurrent legal issues that clients presented with are shown in the chart below.



Complex legal issues and Interactions with the justice system are overwhelmingly common for people experiencing homelessness, and it is crucial that they can address their legal issues. Coordinated responses to people experiencing homelessness is key in ending homelessness and there is need for further funding toward legal and justice needs for people who are experiencing homelessness as there are very few services that cater for the complex needs of people who are in this situation and facing multiple legal issues². Street Law’s service delivery model is designed to best suit the needs of the clients, and it is effective in leveraging available resources and relationships to provide holistic services to clients. The SasH and YOLP programs highlight the effectiveness of adequately funded integrated legal services for the client group.

Wrap around service provision is key to clients being able to address their legal issues and the underlying issues that often result in legal problems. Street Law Centre has relied on grants such as that of Lottery West and the Criminal Property Confiscation Grants Program to deliver integrated legal services programs such as SasH and YOLP and continues to deliver its integrated legal services at co-located outreach legal clinics with limited Commonwealth funding.

It should be noted that Street Law Centre’s work contributes to broader government priorities, being the All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia’s 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030 (the Strategy) as well as the National Plan to End Homelessness currently being developed, and therefore should be adequately funded by the Commonwealth to provide these programs on an ongoing, sustainable basis. Street Law Centre plays a direct and vital role in preventing and ending people’s experience of homelessness.

4. Funding

Street Law has delivered services to people experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness through Commonwealth (CLSP/NLAP) and State funding (LCT/CPC/NLAP).

² *Homelessness in Western Australia: A Review of the Research and Statistical Evidence*. 2018.

<https://doi.org/10.25916/5b6386ebc913a>.

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The current and previous funding models have not met the need that Street Law's clients require. People experiencing homelessness require holistic, wrap around services with end to end legal support, they need the depth of legal service the legal issue requires. Street Law has sustained high quality service delivery through co-located legal clinics with service providers, and specialist programs targeting particularly vulnerable priority client groups. These partnerships with service providers have allowed Street Law to further integrate its legal services at the co-located legal clinics and respond to the clients social, health and welfare needs.

The prioritization, allocation, distribution, timing and length of Commonwealth funding are noted as a key areas of focus in the NLAP terms of reference. Since 2010, the Commonwealth has contributed an average of 27% per year of the total funding Street Law receives. Street Law received Commonwealth funding contracts on a 12 month basis until 2020. No indexation of funding was received on these 12 month contracts. It was not until the NLAP 2020-2025 was rolled out that the longer contract and guarantee of five-year funding was received which has been beneficial, but it does still not meet the increasing demands on the service.

The NLAP funding has been supplemented by the Commonwealth government over the life of the NLAP agreement to respond to changing circumstances and unanticipated community needs. This resulted in top up funds including:

- Supporting people with mental health conditions to access the justice system; and
- enhancing mental health supports through Domestic Violence Units and Health Justice Partnerships.

In the 2021 - 2022 FY Street Law received Commonwealth mental health conditions funding, taking the proportion of funding provided by the Commonwealth to a total of 31% for that financial year. This funding was beneficial, and Street Law Centre was able to expand services delivered to people with mental health conditions but was not allocated further funding in the following years. The funding was instead allocated to Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Service and Ruah Legal Services. Notwithstanding, 50% of Street Law's clients experience mental health issues and as can be seen from the YOLP data 92% of the clients seen in that program experienced mental health issues.

Similarly, funding for Domestic Violence Units/Health Justice Partnerships has not been received by Street Law. Through its integrated co-located legal service delivery model Street Law works closely with community workers to ensure that client's social, welfare and health needs are addressed. In addition, Street Law has commenced a weekly outreach legal clinic in collaboration with Street Doctor. Accessible, informal settings are crucial for our client group to access legal and medical services. Although this is a different model to having an employed social worker, it is a collaboration based on health justice principles and more suitable to the client group.

The legal needs of Street Law's client group are ever increasing, due to a rental market that they cannot access and the increasing cost of living. The increasing rate of homelessness is an unanticipated community need. Which is demonstrated through the increased percentage of street present clients Street Law has assisted in the last

financial year, which has increased from 23% in the 2021 financial year to 38% in the 2023 financial year.

5. Priority Client Groups

Street Law's clientele present in multiple National Priority Client groups as specified in the NLAP Schedule A, clause A.3.

People experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness

Street Law Centre is specifically designed to provide services to people who are experiencing homelessness, or at risk of, homelessness. Street Law defines homelessness as 'a person having no access or inadequate access to safe, secure, affordable and adequate housing that affords the right to live in security, peace and dignity'. To be eligible for Street Law's services, clients must be experiencing homelessness or have a legal issue that, if unresolved, renders them likely to begin experiencing homelessness. In determining whether a person is eligible, it is assessed as to whether the legal intervention will directly prevent the person from becoming homeless.

Current economic conditions and the housing crisis have increased the number of people experiencing homelessness. From 2011-2015 an average of 70% reported experiencing homelessness, with the remaining 30% of clients identified as at risk of experiencing homelessness. This figure remained steady, increasing to 75% experiencing homelessness in the 2021-2022 FY and 78% experiencing homelessness in the 2022-2023 FY.

Street Law has especially seen the increase in clients that are experiencing street present homelessness. Unfortunately, data on clients experiencing street presence was not captured until the 2018 – 2019 FY where 19% of clients indicated they were street present, this figure rose to 23% in the 2020 – 2021 FY to climb significantly to 36% in the 2021 – 2022 FY and to a further 38% in the 2022 – 2023 financial year. Service provision to street present clients is a major focus for Street Law, and requires significantly more time and resources. This is due to the complexity of the social, welfare and health issues the clients are dealing with and the multiple legal issues they present with. On average Street Law's clients present with three legal issues per client. Just being able to get in contact with and stay in contact with a client, creates a layer of complexity that other legal services generally do not have to manage.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Services delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are increasing. Street Law data shows that from 2011 – 2015 an average of 12% of people presenting identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This number continued to grow reaching 16% in 2018, and increased to 24% in 2019. Since the 21-22 FY, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made up 28% of Street Law's total clientele. In the 2022 – 2023 FY Street Law delivered 319 services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. All Street Law Centre staff undertake cultural awareness training in order to deliver culturally appropriate services.

Children and young people (0-24)

Street Law has also seen an increase in the number of young people experiencing homelessness and requiring legal assistance services. From 2011 – 2015, an average of 15% of clients presenting were under the age of 24. Since the 2019 – 2020 FY, 20% of the clientele have presented in this age group.

People experiencing, or at risk of, Family Violence

Family and domestic violence is widely known as a causal factor to people experiencing homelessness for both victims and perpetrators. Street Law data shows that there has been an increase in the number of people experiencing family and domestic violence. From 2011 – 2015, there was an average of 11% of people indicating that they were experiencing family violence. This figure climbed to 18% in 2016 and peaked at 29% in the 2021-2022 FY. In the 22-23 FY, 25% of clients indicated they were experiencing family and domestic violence. It is important to note that this data is likely to be under the actual percentage of people experiencing family and domestic violence. Family and domestic violence contributes to the legal issues that clients are experiencing therefore is easily identified, however if it is not directly related to the legal issue, it is often the case that solicitors will refrain from inquiring about this due to the extremely sensitive nature of such questions.

Street Law is one of a few community legal centres that provides legal services to the perpetrators of family violence. This is a large unmet legal need, and it is critical that legal services are provided. Street Law's data shows that there has been an increase in demand for legal services for the perpetrators of family violence. With holistic service provision, integrated legal services being provided alongside social, welfare and health providers the causal factors of family violence will be addressed alongside the legal issues.

In the 2022 - 2023 FY, Street Law provided 9 ongoing representation services to respondents of family violence restraining orders. Street Law data shows that this figure has increased by 20% since the 2021 – 2022 FY however this is likely to underrepresent the actual figures.

Recent work has been undertaken to ensure data capturing family violence issues presenting clearly separates legal work undertaken for victim/survivors and perpetrators of family violence. Specific funding to undertake this work is necessary. Addressing the causal factors alongside the legal issues is an essential component of rehabilitation for perpetrators of family violence.

People who are culturally, or linguistically diverse

Clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are a growing demographic of Street Law's clientele. Between 2011 – 2015 the percentage of clients born overseas remained under 12%. This grew to 15% in the 2016 – 2017 FY, to 18% in the 2021 – 2022 FY and is at 24% for the 2022 – 2023 FY.

People with disability or mental illness

Disability and mental health issues are understood as factors that contribute to people experiencing homelessness. The percentage of clients reporting disability and/or mental

health issues increased from 30% in 2010-2011 FY to 40% in the 2014-2015 FY. Since this time, the proportion has continued to increase. In 2021-2022 55% of Street Law Centre clients reported disability and/or mental health issues, this figure was at 50% at the end of the 2022 – 2023 FY. This statistic relies on clients self-reporting their diagnosis. It is likely to be under the actual percentage of people experiencing disability and or mental health issues.

We have not provided data on each of the priority cohorts listed in NLAP Issues Paper, but Street Law is able to demonstrate that it provides legal services to each of the priority cohorts listed. Further the clients that Street Law assists often fall within more than one priority cohort, which increases the complexity of the social, welfare, health, and legal issues the client is experiencing.

6. Legal Issues that Street Law Responds to

Street Law lawyers are trained to respond to the legal issues that clients present with. Street Law centre clients present with complex legal issues that are often interrelated to other chronic non-legal issues that clients live with such as health issues, including mental health and substance use, welfare issues, family and domestic violence and more frequent interactions with police as a result of being street present. If left unaddressed, this results in creating and prolonging homelessness.

In the 2022 – 2023 financial year, Street Law’s clients presented with an average number of three legal issues per client. The complex legal issues clients present with often results in them requiring a greater depth of legal services including ongoing legal representation and wrap around services to resolve these issues. End-to-end legal services are time and resource intensive but are critical for the client group.

One of the most significant issues Street Law clients face is obtaining identity documents which, since 2019, has emerged as a major area of legal need for Street Law Centre clients. Without identity documents, clients are unable to purchase a sim card, open a bank account, access Centrelink payments or be placed on the housing list.

In the 2022 – 2023 financial year the top five legal issues were as follows:

Most Prevalent Legal Issues	Number of services	Percentage of services
Services relating to ID documents	686	43%
Govt/Admin issues relating to fines	186	13%
Various Criminal Issues	165	11.5%
Injuries compensation	112	8%
Govt/admin complaints/issues relating to govt other (Govt/admin issues relating to Dept Housing)	73	5%

*It is important to note that this is the percentage of services, it does not equate to the time spent on matters.

Street Law responded to the following Commonwealth civil legal issues in 2022 – 2023. It needs to be noted that the CLASS data for these matters appears as State ‘other civil’. For the purposes of this submission, we have reviewed the problem types to highlight the level of Commonwealth legal issues Street Law responds to. We do not consider that the

Commonwealth should only fund Commonwealth matters, the funding of legal assistance services, is a National and State responsibility.

Primary Law Type	Law type	Problem type
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Employment unfair dismissal
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Immigration Temporary Visas
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Application of proof of ID document - Replacement Australian Citizenship CT
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Application of proof of ID document - Australian Citizenship CT
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Early release of superannuation
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Release of superannuation
Commonwealth law - Civil	Civil Law	Application for proof of ID document – Overseas

Street Law responded to the following state civil legal issues in the 2022 – 2023 financial year

Primary Law Type	Law type	Problem type
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Child protection other
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Consumer complaints financial/insurance/super etc
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Credit and debt owed by client
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Family or domestic violence order
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Tenancy general rights and responsibilities
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Tenancy Other
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Tenancy rent
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Tenancy termination by the lessor

State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Criminal Injuries Compensation
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Injuries compensation
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Injuries transport/motor vehicle accident
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Motor vehicle property damage (where no charge)
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Application for proof of ID documents

State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin applications drivers license
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin issues relating Dept Housing
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Medical Negligence claims
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Personal property recovery
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Application for proof of ID – WA photo card
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Application for proof of ID documents – BDM WA
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Application of proof of ID documents – interstate BDM
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Application of proof of ID documents – Photo ID
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Change of Name or Birth Records
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Criminal Injuries Compensation - Recoveries
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin complaints against police
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin complaints/issues relating to govt Other
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin FOI/privacy
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin issues relating to fines
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Govt/admin issues relating to fines/infringements
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Laws in relation to pets
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Misconduct restraining orders
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Other civil legal system or process

State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Violence restraining orders
State/territory law - Civil	Civil Law	Wills/probate making/contest/obtain benefit under

Street Law responded to the following state criminal legal issues in the 2022 – 2023 financial year

Primary Law Type	Law type	Problem type
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Acts intended to cause injury
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Assault in circumstances of aggravation
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Assault occasioning bodily harm
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Common assault
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Property and environmental offences
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Deception and related offences
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Illicit drug offences minor
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Breach of bail
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Disorderly conduct
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Failure to obey order of officer
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Justice procedure - bail
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Justice procedure – sentencing
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Obstructing police
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Police enquiries
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Street Drinking
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Trespass
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Vary bail
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Assault on public officer
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Being Armed or pretending to be armed in a way that causes fear
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Breach of restraining order

State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Fraud
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Threats
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Prohibited and regulated weapons and explosives offences
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Property damage
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Theft and related offences
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Motor vehicle offences
State/territory law – Criminal	Criminal Law	Unlawful entry with intent burglary break/enter

In 2022 – 2023 Street Law lawyers made **104 court appearances**, delivered **650 legal advices**, opened **129 ongoing representation** services and closed **81 court/tribunal** services.

7. Community Legal Education

Community legal education is an essential part of core service delivery and preventative action. Street Law has relied on funding sources other than State and Commonwealth funding to deliver this. In 2014 Street Law was successful in securing its first Public Purposes Trust funding. Since this time, Street Law’s community legal education program has been fully funded by the Public Purposes Trust. Community legal education is an essential component of community legal services and aligns with the National Strategic Framework for Legal Assistance guiding principles such as preventative action, empowerment and resilience and continuous learning and improvement³. This would not be possible to deliver with State and Commonwealth funding alone.

In the 2022 – 2023 FY, Street Law provided community legal education to 147 clients, 145 community workers and 16 organisations. Street Law presented to 45 community workers and eight organizations in regional areas.

Street Law’s client directed training is critical. Due to the living circumstances of clients, they are more likely to interact with the police and the courts. The client directed training is focused on empowering the client group with knowledge and tools to understand their rights when interacting with the police and the courts, assist them to access legal advice as well as equip them to act promptly when problems arise. The training sessions developed for the client group include;

- How to manage your fines and infringements
- Your rights and responsibilities when interacting with the police

³ *National Strategic Framework for Legal Assistance* <https://www.ag.gov.au/system/files/2020-06/NationalStrategic-Framework-for-Legal-Assistance.pdf>.

- Restraining orders: how to apply and how to respond
- Going to court: a step-by-step guide

Community service worker training is designed to equip workers with the tools to identify legal issues and to increase knowledge of where to seek legal advice and assistance for their clients. Collaboration with community service workers is a crucial component of holistic service delivery and Street Law's integrated legal service delivery model. It is critical that Street Law works with homeless sector agencies to streamline processes for clients.

8. The need for Street Law's services

As outlined above, people who are experiencing homelessness present with a combination of health and/or mental health issues, a history of violence including family and domestic violence, trauma, discrimination, and disadvantage. Identity documents, fines and infringements, domestic violence, and related criminal problems, are issues for many Street Law clients. The current housing and cost of living crisis is negatively impacting people who are experiencing homelessness and further prevents them from exiting homelessness. It is essential that people experiencing homelessness have access to legal services that can meet their needs. The demand for Street Law's services has continued to grow, as well as the number of vulnerabilities that clients present with. Aligned with the National Strategic Framework for Legal Assistance guiding principles, Street Law's services are targeted at people experiencing the most vulnerability.

9. Current Challenges

It has only been at the commencement of NLAP that Street Law has had some certainty of ongoing funding. Notwithstanding this level of certainty Street Law still does not receive funding necessary to respond to the needs of its client group. Further Street Law continues to face ongoing challenges. They are:

- Workforce – retaining lawyers and being able to pay them at pay rates that can compete with Legal Aid and State Government solicitor rates;
- Insufficient resources, funding, to be able to adequately engage in law reform activities;
- Having sufficient resources to respond to client matters with the depth of service required

If you require any information or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

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