



Subscribe

Login

All the news. Half the price. >

Gold Coast courts to face backlash of funding cuts to community legal centres

February 5, 2017 1:00am

DENIS DOHERTY



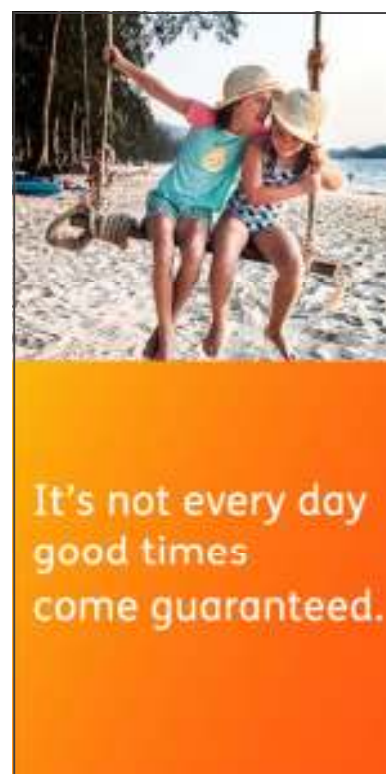
A bronze statue of Themis, the Roman Goddess of Justice, holding her scales of truth and fairness

THE Gold Coast's already creaking justice system is facing a tsunami of unprepared defendants as a result of funding cuts to community legal centres

The Gold Coast Community Legal Centre (GCCLC), the Coast's primary community legal group, is facing a 30 per cent cut to its funds in June while the Robina Community Legal Centre (RCLC) is still relying on volunteers and funding from sponsors and council

With the centre's primary focus being on early intervention and the de-escalation of legal matters to avoid court proceeding, organisers behind the centres warn they will be forced to turn away even more clients — a move that could lead to a raft of underprepared defendants forced to appear in more legal matters before the Coast's courts

Both GCCLC head solicitor Victoria Shiel and RCLC founder Ros



ADVERTISEMENT

Elton John to tour north Queensland

Ignorance led to abuse failure: Archbishop

Publisher cancels alt-right blogger's book



Vic plane crashed in a fireball: witnesses



Aconex posts HY loss of \$3.5m



Gold Coast Community Legal Centre principal solicitor Victoria Shiel

s Lee said the centre's had seen increased demand for their services in 2017

Ms Shiel said her group had started receiving phone calls from Gold Coasters desperate for legal representation on Boxing Day, while Mr Lee said despite extra volunteers joining the group it still had to turn away a dozen people at its first session of the year

Ms Shiel said the centre put on extra staff to help work through the number of people who contacted the centre over the Christmas break but that a move to a new venue, 34 Railway Street, Southport, would save the organisation some funds

"We had a spike in people seeking our services on family law and debt-related matters and on domestic violence," she said

"We are finding that people are presenting more in crisis than in previous years so their matters are more urgent"

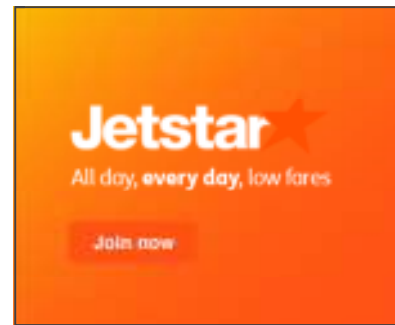
Mr Lee said the impact would also extend further than just the Gold Coast's magistrates and district courts



Robina Community Legal Centre president Ross Lee

"It will be the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal and those areas dealing with debt, employment and tenancy," he said

The head of Queensland Community Legal Centres James Farrell said any drop in services offered by the centres would lead to people turning up at courts unprepared and in greater numbers



ADVERTISEMENT

SPONSORED LINKS

[Celebrity news and video!](#)

Up to the minute celebrity gossip, photos & celebrity videos

[Breaking news video!](#)

Watch the latest Local and National breaking news

Ads By Google

3 Fatigue-Causing Foods

Boost Your Energy Level Every Day By Never Eating These 3 Foods Go to haveenergyatanyage.com



A NOTE ABOUT RELEVANT ADVERTISING: We collect information about the content (including ads) you use across this site and use it to make both advertising and content more relevant to you on our network and other sites. This is also known as Online Behavioural Advertising. You can [find out more about our policy and your choices, including how to opt-out here](#).

MOBILE

NEWSLETTER

SEND PICS

SEND STORIES

Follow Us

News

Sport

Entertainment

Network Sites

News Corp
Australia