

Five-year funding terms for community legal centres

From July 2020, community legal centres in Queensland will be entering into five-year funding terms instead of three years or less. The announcement was made by the State Attorney General, Yvette D'Ath MP and the Department of Justice and Attorney General last Friday.

Community Legal Centres Queensland welcomed the announcement as it would provide certainty to Queensland communities about the ongoing availability of services.

Rosslyn Monro, Director, Community Legal Centres Queensland congratulated the Attorney-General and her department for this landmark step. "We welcomed the news that our members will have service agreements which are in place for five years rather than three. This will allow community legal centres to devote more time and resources to serving their communities and they will not be weighed down by having to apply for funding every three years," she said.

Queensland community legal centres will be invited by the Queensland Government to apply for funds at the end of October which will see them apply for State and Commonwealth funds.

Ms Monro went on to say, "While we were delighted by the news that we will be moving to five-year funding we continue to be frustrated by the fact that the Federal Government is not being clear with the Queensland Government about the amount of Commonwealth funding available for community legal centres in Queensland from July 2020."

"This potentially undermines the upcoming procurement process. We are therefore calling on the Federal Government to provide the funding amount before procurement open later this month. This will ensure that funding is in place well in advance of the expiry date of 30 June 2020."

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“The Federal Attorney-General needs to make this commitment to community legal centres so we know we can continue to provide legal services for our communities.”

“Over the last year, our 34 Queensland community legal centres provided assistance to nearly 50,000 people. Community legal centres provide services to people facing discrimination, hardship and economic disadvantage. Our legal centres perform a vital role in our communities, helping people navigate through tough times, and our early support stops their problems spiraling out of control. The continuation of these services hangs in the balance while we wait for an announcement from the Federal Attorney General,” said Ms Monro.

Ends**NOTES:**

Community Legal Centres Queensland is the state-wide peak body representing community legal centres in Queensland. Queensland community legal centres have 40 years of service delivery experience providing free information, advice and referral, casework and representation to the community.
www.communitylegalqld.org.

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