



**Community
Legal Centres
Queensland**

Membership Policies 2021



Contents

Overview	3
Context.....	3
Background.....	4
Policy: Membership Administration	5
Scope and purpose	5
Principles.....	5
Policy statement.....	5
1. Eligibility and application.....	5
2. Induction of new members.....	6
3. Membership fees and levies	6
4. Membership renewal	6
5. Voting rights	7
6. Member responsibilities	7
7. Membership benefits	8
8. CLCQ responsibilities	8
9. Research, law reform and advocacy.....	9
10. Supporting member funding applications	9
11. Member register	9
12. Member feedback.....	10
13. Disputes, grievances and complaints.....	10
14. Membership termination	10
Related documents	11
Related procedures.....	11
Related supporting documents	11
Policy review and version tracking.....	11

Overview

Community Legal Centres Queensland Inc. ('CLCQ') has five key policy and procedure documents:

- Policy Framework
- **Membership Policies** (this document, supported by the **Membership Procedures**)
- Governance Policies and Procedures
- Employment Policies and Procedures
- Operations Policies and Procedures.

Pursuant to the *Policy Framework*, changes to this document must be approved by:

- **Policies:** approved by CLCQ members, at a General Meeting, following consultation with members and endorsement by the CLCQ Management Committee
- **Procedures:** approved by the Management Committee
- **Supporting documents:** approved by the Director.

The *Membership Policies* and *Membership Procedures* will be made available to CLCQ members on request and major revisions will be circulated to members via email.

Context

These Membership Policies relate to:

Legislation or other requirements

- *Associations Incorporation Act 1981* (Qld)
- *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth) and *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* (Cth)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) including the Australian Privacy Principles
- CLCQ Statement of Objects and Rules (as amended on 19 October 2017) ('CLCQ Rules').

Standards or other external requirements

- CLCA National Accreditation Scheme (Phase 3)
- National Legal Assistance Partnership ('NLAP')
- Community Legal Services Program ('CLSP') Service Standards
- Human Services Quality Framework ('HSQF') Standards
- ACNC Governance Standards.

Contractual obligations

- CLCQ membership criteria
- CLCA membership criteria.



Background

CLCQ is the State peak body for community legal centres ('CLCs') in Queensland.

CLCQ is a membership based and driven organisation that promotes the interests and concerns of the community legal sector and its clients so that the Queensland community has greater access to justice and legal assistance.

CLCQ is a member of the national peak body, Community Legal Centres Australia ('CLCA') and has rights and obligations as a member of CLCA.

CLCQ is an incorporated association established in Queensland and governed by a voluntary Management Committee drawn from representatives from its ordinary members.

This policy is designed to be read together with the CLCQ Rules, specifically *Part 3 – Members and Memberships*.

This document is designed to give policy guidance to CLCQ and its members about the administrative procedures and processes involved in membership as a member of CLCQ, and includes the following policies:

- Membership Administration.

Scope and purpose

As the state peak body for CLCs in Queensland, CLCQ aims to provide members with a range of services and benefits that add value and assist them to provide high quality services to their clients and communities.

As a member-based organisation, CLCQ also has expectations for itself and its members in relation to participation and engagement, and this policy aims to provide guidance to CLCQ and its members when they are working together or in areas of common interest.

This policy applies to:

- Existing members of CLCQ
- Staff and Management Committee of CLCQ
- Any parties that are considering becoming a member of CLCQ.

This policy outlines who is eligible to be a member of CLCQ and the rights and responsibilities of CLCQ and its members to each other.

Principles

As a member-based organisation with obligations to both its members and to CLCA, CLCQ strives to have fair and transparent membership processes that are consistent with the CLCQ Rules.

Policy statement

The CLCQ Rules outlines membership classes, eligibility, rights and responsibilities and the basis for membership decision-making. The following sections give detail to those Rules.

1. Eligibility and application

Under the CLCQ Rules there is one class of membership: 'members'.

To be eligible to be a member of CLCQ, the applicant must be **an organisation** that is a **community legal centre ('CLC')** as defined by the CLCQ Rules, which includes:

- independent from government, commercial and professional bodies
- located or operating in Queensland
- non-profit, incorporated community-based organisation whose goals and priorities are established in response to a geographic community and/or community of interest

- organisational aims to:
 - provide free legal and support services
 - inform the community of its legal rights and responsibilities
 - provide disadvantaged and/or vulnerable sections of the community with access to legal and related information and/or services
 - advocate for the development of laws, administrative practices and legal justice system that is fair, just and accessible
 - develop and maintain close links with the community to ensure that areas of unmet need are detected and appropriate services developed
- management and operational structures which involve the community/ies it serves.

Applications to CLCQ for membership will be managed as per the CLCQ Rules and the *Membership Applications and Induction Procedure*.

2. Induction of new members

New CLCQ members will be inducted via the *Membership Applications and Induction Procedure* so that they understand their rights and responsibilities as members to facilitate their full engagement with membership processes.

3. Membership fees and levies

Under the CLCQ Rules and the *Membership Fees, Levies and Renewals Procedure*, CLCQ memberships are renewed annually by **1 July** each year and membership fees are due at the same time. A failure to pay membership fees may result in the membership being terminated.

Membership fees are determined by the CLCQ Management Committee in consultation with members. The Management Committee sets our fees as a proportion of CLCA's fees (currently **25%** of the CLCA general fee).

The Management Committee may consider the viability of CLCQ to represent member interests, the member's capacity to pay and other contemporary considerations that are relevant to setting the amount of membership fees.

CLCA levies are determined by CLCA and are directly invoiced by and payable to CLCA.

4. Membership renewal

Under the CLCQ Rules and the *Membership Fees, Levies and Renewals Procedure*, all memberships must be renewed annually, with membership fees being due on or before **1 July of each year**. CLCQ will use its best endeavours to issue membership fee invoices on or before 15th June, subject to the timing of CLCA providing advice on which membership fees are based.

If the membership fees are not paid within 60 days, a reminder will be issued and if the fees remain unpaid for a further 14 days, the CLCQ Management Committee may terminate membership.

5. Voting rights

Members of CLCQ are entitled to one vote at general and special meetings of CLCQ under the CLCQ Rules. Membership of ordinary members is not transferable.

6. Member responsibilities

Ordinary members agree to:

- The Rules, objects, purposes and policies of CLCQ
- Promote the aims and interests of CLCQ and its members
- Pay membership fees to CLCQ and levies to CLCA
- Work cooperatively, collegiately and professionally with CLCQ and with other CLCs
- Advise CLCQ of relevant activities, proposed funding and project submissions to enhance cooperation between CLCs and prevent duplication
- Comply with the CLCA National Accreditation Scheme ('NAS')
- Comply with the CLCA Professional Indemnity Insurance ('PII') Scheme (if the CLC has joined the scheme)
- Subscribe to the purposes of CLCQ by including similar purposes in their own governing documents (Rules/Constitution)
- Nominate a person who is authorised to vote on behalf of the member at General Meetings.

Members will promote the interests of CLCs and work cooperatively with other CLCs (within resource constraints) by:

- Participating in sector-wide discussions and working groups facilitated by CLCQ
- Sending a representative to CLCQ activities, including the annual State Conference and annual AGM and Leadership Forum
- Reaching out to any other CLC that may be affected or may be able to contribute, prior to commencing a particular project or piece of work
- Avoid engaging in 'competitive' behaviour with other CLCs unnecessarily, though it is noted that there are competitive tendering processes put in place by funders
- Advising CLCQ of changes in service delivery or capacity, relevant activities, proposed funding and project submissions to prevent duplication and enhance cooperation
- Providing copies of annual reports including financial statements to CLCQ
- Providing 'warm referrals' to other CLCQ members for particularly vulnerable clients or those with urgent legal needs
- Making supportive statements when speaking to the media and participating in public events.

Members will comply with NAS criteria by engaging with the CLCQ Sector Sustainability Team and completing any actions required by the NAS process.

Members will comply with the requirements of the PII scheme by complying with the Risk Management Guide ('RMG'), participating in yearly peer-based cross-checks and attending twice-yearly PII sessions as arranged by CLCQ.

Members will maintain an organisational structure that complies with the CLCQ Rules, in particular, the definition of a CLC, and will advise CLCQ immediately of any changes.

7. Membership benefits

The benefits of CLCQ membership for ordinary members include:

- Eligibility to join the CLCA PII Scheme, with insurance premiums to be paid centrally through DJAG
- Support to comply with members' professional obligations under relevant legislation and risk management practices and procedures by answering questions promptly and by proactively engaging with the regulator if common issues arise for more than one member
- Access to the NAS, with CLCQ employing staff members within the Sector Sustainability Team to undertake NAS site visits, reports, improvement plans and progress updates
- Opportunities to apply for particular government funding due to CLCQ advocacy and engagement with the NAS (for example, under the NLAP)
- Coordination of the annual client survey and optional stakeholder surveys
- Access to a regular members e-newsletter
- Access to CLCQ resources, free or heavily subsidised
- Access to training, webinars, forums or conferences organised or facilitated by CLCQ
- Access to concessional or special arrangements negotiated by CLCQ from third parties
- Supporting and maximising the equitable participation of members in CLCQ activities, for example, through travel subsidies, on application to CLCQ
- Support members to raise their profile with key decision makers
- Participation in any research, law reform, advocacy or education campaigns, working groups or networks run by CLCQ
- Support on governance and service provision issues
- Listing in all CLCQ referral resources including print and online materials
- Consultation on any proposals, activities or policies impacting upon the CLCQ membership
- Access to participate in, provide input towards and/or access CLCQ projects and resources related to service delivery, law reform activities and operational support that may be undertaken from time to time.

CLCQ will promote the aims and interests of CLCs and will encourage members to do so, subject to resourcing, through:

- Making use of social and traditional media
- Participating on panels, speaking at conferences and being involved in member events and other public events
- Engaging with government and non-government funders and other key stakeholders.

8. CLCQ responsibilities

In addition to the member benefits outlined above, CLCQ will:

- Work cooperatively, collegiately and professionally at all times in any dealings and communications with members
- Highlight the important impact members make in their communities, share 'good news' stories through our social media and newsletters, and speak positively of all members to government and other external stakeholders



- Be fair and equitable in provision of professional services, advocacy support to our members, recognising that some members (for example, smaller centres or unfunded centres) may require additional support from time to time to help ensure their sustainability
- Update member details on our website member listing promptly
- Maintain your privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and advise of any privacy or data breaches in accordance with the Act and CLCQ's *Privacy Policy and Procedures*
- Inform and consult with members about any proposed changes to membership policies before they are implemented.
- Provide receipts for membership fees.

9. Research, law reform and advocacy

Under the *Research, Advocacy and Law Reform Procedure* and subject to resourcing, CLCQ conducts research, advocacy and law reform when that work could assist disadvantaged and vulnerable Queenslanders to access legal services, improve the effective running of member organisations, or impact on the CLC sector and its interests as sustainable organisations, including their employees and volunteers (for example, charity fundraising laws).

Any CLCQ research, advocacy and law reform activities are informed by and planned with members, through collective action and/or a community development framework.

CLCQ will amplify members' law reform, research, advocacy, submissions and campaigns, recognising that our members are the content experts in their specialist area of the law or the communities they serve.

10. Supporting member funding applications

CLCQ will support members' grant or funding applications when requested, subject to time and resourcing, for example, writing a reference letter or acting as a referee on a grant application.

However, where funding is sought by multiple centres in a competitive tender based process, for example, funding provided by Queensland Government through the NLAP for core or project funding, CLCQ is unable to provide references or support letters to individual centres in the interests of fairness and equity.

11. Member register

A register of members must be maintained by CLCQ and may be inspected by any member of CLCQ after giving the CLCQ Management Committee reasonable notice.

The register will contain:

- Name and address of the member
- Date the member was admitted to CLCQ
- The category of membership

- The date the membership ends
- Details about the termination or reinstatement of membership
- Other details as determined by CLCQ.

The register will be updated annually or upon request from a member where their details have changed.

12. Member feedback

CLCQ encourages its members to give feedback at any time. CLCQ will specifically ask for feedback in relation to the annual State Conference, the annual Leadership Forum, the CLCQ webinar program and specific projects and initiatives.

Any feedback will be taken into account in future planning, though it may not always be accommodated.

13. Disputes, grievances and complaints

Any membership disputes will be dealt with in accordance with the CLCQ Rules and the *Disputes, Grievances and Complaints Procedure*. The dispute process should ensure due process and procedural fairness, including that:

- Each party of the dispute or grievance is given an opportunity to be heard
- Disputes or grievances are ultimately determined by an unbiased decision maker if unable to be resolved informally.

CLCQ is committed to all membership disputes being resolved promptly and to exhausting informal conflict management avenues before engaging in formal processes.

CLCQ does not mediate disputes between members and cannot hear complaints from clients or the general public about members. Such disputes or complaints will be referred to the relevant member or agency.

14. Membership termination

A member can resign from CLCQ by written notice to the CLCQ Management Committee.

In accordance with the CLCQ Rules and the *Termination of Membership Procedure*, the Management Committee can reprimand, suspend or terminate membership if the member:

- Does not comply with CLCQ Rules or policies, including no longer fitting the definition of a 'CLC' under the CLCQ Rules
- Membership fees are in arrears for 74 days or more and a reminder has been issued
- Fails to satisfy the requirements of membership or NAS accreditation
- Acts in a manner that is harmful to the interests of CLCQ and/or
- No longer exists.

Procedural fairness and transparency must be afforded to any parties in dispute about membership termination or suspension.

Related documents

Related procedures

- Membership Applications and Induction
- Membership Fees, Levies and Renewals
- Disputes, Grievances and Complaints
- Termination of Membership

Related supporting documents

- Membership Application Form, including Checklist for new members
- Travel subsidy form

Policy review and version tracking

Review	Changes required?	Date Approved	Approved by	Next Review Due
1				
2				
3				

