

Employment Law Service

IMPACT REPORT

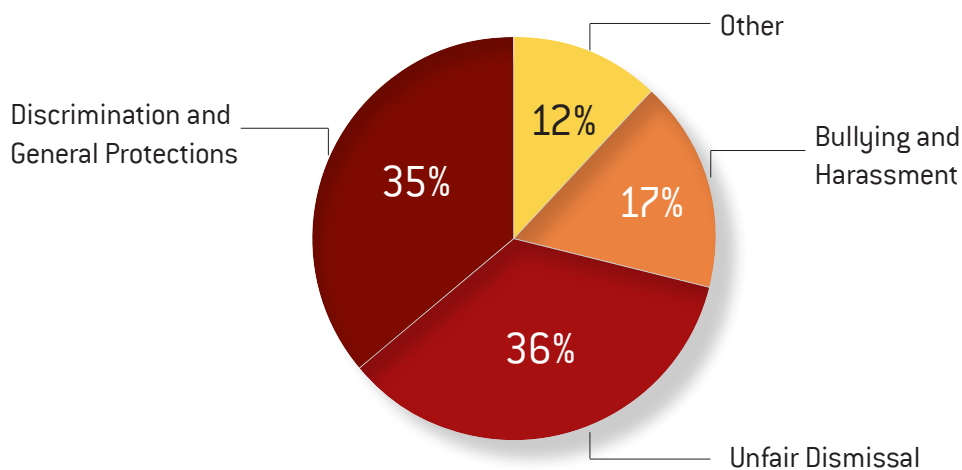
Caxton Legal Centre provides free legal advice and representation in Queensland to people who have experienced a legal problem at work. We represent clients in the Fair Work Commission, the Federal Circuit Court, the Australian and Queensland Human Rights Commissions and the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission at conciliation conferences and hearings. In 14 years of delivering our specialist employment law program, we assisted over 8000 vulnerable workers.

The impact of the pandemic

Demand for employment law advice has surged in the last 18 months, particularly in April 2020 and March 2021 around the COVID-19 lockdowns. We continuously have to turn people away as appointments are fully booked. Extra resources were allocated to the employment law program from April to June 2020, however, more funding would be necessary to meet the ever-increasing demand.

Demand for legal advice across employment law areas

We assisted **662** clients in the 2020–2021 financial year, but due to limited funding only 3% of clients are represented.



Our vulnerable clients



23% identified as living with a disability or mental illness



42% were caring for dependent children



Help for Hannah

Hannah* moved to Brisbane to study at university. To support herself, she got a job at a café.

At work, her colleagues would constantly slap her bum, flick her with a tea towel and talk about their sexual relationships.

Hannah felt very uncomfortable, and realised she had to take action to stop this behaviour. Hannah talked to her manager to 'stop it'.

Not long after the meeting, she was let go because she was 'not the right fit'.

Hannah sought help from Caxton Legal Centre and an employment lawyer assisted Hannah in running a sexual harassment complaint in the Queensland Human Rights Commission. During this process, the lawyer also identified that Hannah had not been paid at the award level.

At the conciliation conference the matter settled for compensation and a payment of her award entitlements. Hannah's former employer also offered an apology—he had not realised the impact his actions had on Hannah and made a commitment to change the workplace culture so this would not happen again.

* This is a deidentified story made up from elements of various clients' matters.