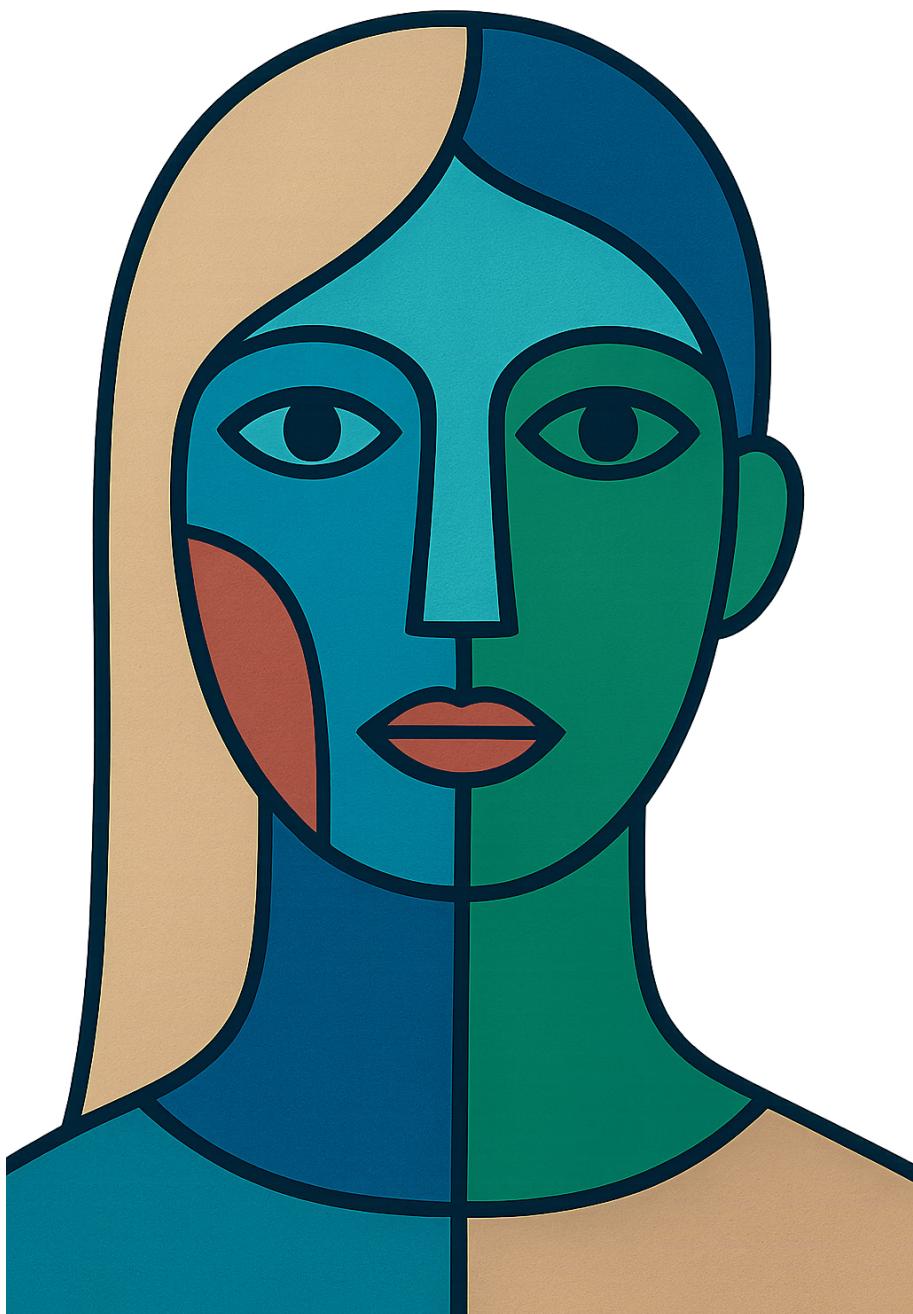




# Annual Report | 2024-2025



**promoting and protecting  
human rights**

# Contents

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Caxton acknowledges the Jagera (Yuggera) and Turrbul peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work.

We recognise the ongoing connection to lands, waters and communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia. Sovereignty was never ceded. It always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

We pay our respect to Elders. We celebrate the cultural distinctions of First Nations peoples. We value their rich and positive contribution to society.

We acknowledge the pain and injustices caused by colonisation and commit to promoting and protecting the human rights of First Nations peoples through our work and by walking in solidarity for justice, equity and healing.



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## Disclaimer

Where this report expresses commentary or opinion on an issue, these are to be understood as being the views of Caxton Community Legal Centre and do not reflect the views of any other organisation or government department. All the case studies in this report have been deidentified.

# Report from the Chief Executive Officer & President



Our CEO  
Cybèle Koning



Our President  
Kristin Ramsey

## FORTY-NINE

At forty-nine, Caxton stands in a strange place between history and invention.

We are a living archive of half a century of rights-based action, founded to address access to justice and still confronting the endless ways disadvantage and exclusion endure. We are also a modern, professional organisation adapting to a rapidly changing world, moving through a new kind of transformation where knowledge thinks for itself while our role is to keep justice human, measured and real.

Ours has always been human work: listening, validating, holding, empowering, translating complexity into understanding. We pause to honour a legacy built by countless staff, volunteers and supporters who have stood with people navigating the justice system. Across five decades, our community has trusted us with their stories that remind us that fairness is personal, participatory, relational and hard-won.

The coming 50th anniversary is not only a celebration of longevity but of purpose. Our efforts in the coming decade will be shaped by technology. Yet, the measure of our success will not be how quickly we adapt, but how deeply we remain connected to people and their experience of justice.

For now, plans are quietly taking shape for a celebration that brings Caxton back to where it all began, something for the whole community to look forward to.

## SUSTAINING THE PEOPLE WHO SUSTAIN JUSTICE

The heart of Caxton has always been its people. In the last year, through the *Safe and Sustainable Caxton* project, we deepened our investment in staff wellbeing, reflective supervision and leadership development. These are not luxuries. They are an essential infrastructure for human-rights work. While the gendered undervaluation of community legal work persists, we are working collectively across the sector to address pay parity and secure a suite of desirable workplace conditions. We are proud that every staff member has now benefited from pay improvements, new career pathways, and increased superannuation and leave benefits.

## OUR CLIENTS

At Caxton, our clients are at the heart of everything we do. Each year, thousands of Queenslanders come to us at moments of crisis, seeking safety, fairness and hope. Behind every statistic you read in this report is a person navigating complex systems, often against enormous odds.

This year, our work continued to reflect the diversity and resilience of the people we serve: older Queenslanders seeking protection from abuse, workers facing sexual harassment, people living with disability navigating bureaucratic barriers, and all of them contending with the compounding pressures of financial disadvantage that so often underpin legal and social injustice.

Our multidisciplinary practice—lawyers, social workers, financial counsellors, intake workers, educators, community engagement workers, and advocates working side by side—continues to show what is possible when legal help is integrated, trauma-informed and centred on the person and not on the problem.

## FIRST NATIONS JUSTICE STRATEGY

Caxton's *First Nations Justice Strategy* is one of the most significant steps we have taken towards embedding genuine cultural safety, self-determination and accountability across our organisation. Developed through a deeply consultative process with First Nations staff, leaders and communities, it is a living strategy whose strengths lies in its relevance to our work and the authenticity in its implementation. It informs how we listen, how we learn, how we lead and how we deliver justice. We are proud of the trust it represents and the responsibility it carries to create lasting systemic change.

## FUTURE FOCUSED

This year, the management committee reviewed Caxton's *Towards 2032 Strategic Plan* to ensure it remains fit for purpose and continues to reflect Caxton's vision for a just and inclusive Queensland. As part of its commitment to 'future-proofing' Caxton, the committee implemented an investment strategy and commenced work on a fundraising strategy. Together, these initiatives aim to diversify Caxton's revenue base and strengthen its long-term sustainability.

## FIFTY

### Acknowledging unparalleled service

Last year we celebrated the remarkable service of Louise Cox, who retired after two decades on our management committee, most of them as treasurer. This year, we acknowledge, with deep gratitude, the extraordinary contributions of Mark Thomas and Dan Rogers who conclude a combined 50 years of dedicated service to Caxton. Their retirements come only by virtue of our new tenure policy, bringing to a close their vital and truly distinguished volunteer careers with Caxton.

Mark is a late-onset lawyer, who commenced as a student volunteer in the late 1990s with our longest serving lawyer, Ros Williams (who celebrated 30 years with us in 2021). Mark graduated in 1998 and soon after joined the management committee (later serving as president for 16 years). Mark's role demanded hands-on involvement in every facet of the organisation, from recruitment and HR to funding, financial oversight, law reform and casework. His influence was also felt through the *Queensland Law Handbook*, to which he made significant contributions as both author and reviewer. Mark has been a sage and principled adviser, a trusted sounding board for management and staff, and a constant source of counsel on ethical and governance matters. He is valued for his genuine interest in Caxton's daily work and his regular visits to stay connected with our people and purpose. Above all, Mark's steady presence, strategic insight and generosity of spirit have anchored Caxton through periods of growth and change, and helped to shape the organisation's character and continuity.

Dan also commenced as a student volunteer with Ros in 2001, then remained as a volunteer lawyer before taking up his role on the management committee in 2008. In addition to serving as a general committee member for many years, he held the position of secretary for eight years and president for four years. Dan's contribution and collaborative influence was felt in a significant way through his courageous advocacy for a Human Rights Act for Queensland, which was introduced in 2019. His leadership of Caxton's *Independent Legal Observers Project* for the 2014 G20 Summit was very much in line with his long-standing commitment to civil rights and police accountability. Both of these initiatives reflect the best of Caxton's values, ensuring transparency in the exercise of state power and promoting community confidence in justice processes. Dan matured Caxton's governance and saw it through a period of rapid expansion and sophistication, carrying forward the best of our traditions while embracing the change needed for what comes next.

# We work for a just and inclusive Queensland

## OUR PURPOSE IS TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS IN QUEENSLAND



### OUR CHALLENGE

disadvantage, trauma and marginalisation

+

unfair laws, service system failures and structural barriers

=

inequality and injustice



### WHAT WE DO

targeted, tailored free legal assistance and social supports

strategic law, policy and system reform

trusted legal resources, education and thought leadership

quality partnerships, volunteers and community engagement



### OUR IMPACT

increased access to justice

effective interventions

increased knowledge of laws and respect for human rights

improved legal and social outcomes



### THE END GOAL

inclusive society where human rights are realised

fair and just legal and service systems

individual and community wellbeing



I would like to thank Caxton Community Legal Centre and [the lawyer] for the service provided to me. The information provided is really helpful and hopefully will enable me to sort out my problem.

I will closely follow the advice given and will let you know the outcome. I thank you again, as well as all the team at Caxton, for the help given and I am singing the praises of Caxton to all and sundry at our complex. Thank you again.



I cannot thank you enough for your very thorough letter of advice and draft letter for us to send to the scheme operator. Your service has been outstanding and has been of great assistance. Many many thanks.



# Our impact

FOR OUR CLIENTS WE PROVIDED

**5965**  
legal  
advices

**445**  
casework and  
representation  
matters

**30 497**  
legal  
information

**890**  
legal tasks

**45**  
law reform  
activities

**1972**  
social supports

**361**  
community  
legal education  
activities

**16 216**  
referrals

**290**  
stakeholder  
engagement  
activities

**1351**  
duty lawyer  
assistance

**97**  
community  
legal education  
resources

**58 129**  
total services



This email is an official thank you.

I've recently moved into an NDIS home. It's the first time I've felt normal in years and if you didn't assist me throughout the year I would have missed the opportunity. I forgot what it feels like to be relaxed in my own place.

I can see what you were trying to introduce to me re having a support worker assist with some things and I have accepted it's to my benefit. I had been complaining for so long I missed the helping hand until now. Here are a cpl of pics to show off. You blessed me and I am ever so grateful. Women of the world have outshone the men who seem to have seriously lost their way. Thank you.



## 1 We increase access to justice for people experiencing disadvantage

Our representation and casework focuses on where it is most needed.

**96.2%**

experience financial disadvantage

**41.1%**

are older

**58.6%**

live with a disability

**50%** are affected by domestic and family violence

**13.8%** identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

**15.8%** are culturally and linguistically diverse

Our clients can connect with us and feel empowered to face their legal problem.

**85%**

said they know where to get help if they have another legal problem

**97%**

said staff listened to their legal problems in a friendly and respectful manner

**100%**

of stakeholders agreed Caxton is effective at addressing service gaps by reaching clients who face multiple or complex barriers to justice

**81%**

found it easy to contact Caxton when they first needed help

Our self-represented clients are supported to pursue their legal rights.

**890** legal tasks were completed such as writing a letter or filing an application with a court or tribunal

**1348** court proceedings involving family law and domestic violence. We provided legal advice, negotiations and/or representation

## 2 We increase knowledge of laws and respect human rights

Our knowledge is shared to help others prevent and resolve legal issues.

**361** community legal education activities conducted mostly in the community

**97** trusted community legal education resources published

Some of these resources are:

- *Tropical Cyclone Alfred: your rights in the aftermath of a natural disaster*
- *Discrimination in the workplace*
- *Bullying in the workplace*
- *Feeling pressured to respond to your employer immediately?*
- *Have you been asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement?*
- *Sexual harassment in Queensland: an overview.*

**266 172** visitors to the Queensland Law Handbook, which features **66** chapters on a plethora of legal subject areas

**700%** increase in engagement with our digital legal resources in some quarters

**85%** of clients said we helped them to understand how to deal with their legal problem and provided them with options

**87%** of clients found our legal information and resources useful

**45** law reform activities, including submissions to state and federal government, participation in consultations and advisory groups, and collaborating with stakeholders on advocacy campaigns

Our work builds greater respect for human rights.

**100%**

of our submissions explicitly referenced human-rights considerations

of our stakeholders agreed we are visible and influential in law reform and systems advocacy regarding issues affecting the human rights of our clients

of our newly or redrafted internal policies applied human-rights principles

of our strategic litigation focused on complex human-rights breaches such as the unlawful detention of children, limits on civil liberties and restrictions on decision-making autonomy



## 3 Our interventions are effective

### Our services are rights respecting.

**86%** of clients said Caxton was able to meet their specific cultural or personal needs. Caxton continually provides training to staff and volunteers about how to provide inclusive and rights-respecting services

**89%** of clients felt confident in Caxton's ability to assist them

**Zero** clients complained that we failed to consider their human rights in making decisions about how we provide services to them as a public entity under the Human Rights Act

**100%** of staff engaged in the SBS inclusion program

**100%** of stakeholders agreed that Caxton staff provide client-centred, trauma-informed, culturally responsive, empowerment-focussed services to our clients

### Our partnerships amplify results.

Building a more just and inclusive Queensland relies on strong collaboration. Every day, Caxton works with partners who play key roles in supporting people with legal and social needs, making access to our services easier and more effective.

**290** stakeholder engagements were recorded and we worked intentionally with partners across Queensland, including hospitals, courts, universities, other community legal centres, financial counselling services and grassroots neighbourhood organisations.

Our major partners include:

- 200 Volunteers and Pro Bono Partners—approximately **lawyers, law students, social work students and community members** contributing **11000 hours** to the value of **\$2.2 million** and providing **2111 legal services**
- Metro South and Metro North Health—our health-justice partnership approach, which is part of our health-justice strategy sees our lawyers working on site in hospitals and health services, training staff and receiving direct referrals
- Institute for Urban Indigenous Health—delivering our elder abuse services to First Nations older persons
- Basic Rights Queensland—our partner in delivering statewide workplace sexual harassment and discrimination services
- UQ and Griffith—for our student legal clinics
- Uniting Care—their financial counsellor works on site at Caxton
- Beenleigh Neighbourhood Centre—our Seniors Financial Protections Service worker works on site and engages with community members to improve financial safety
- Townsville Community Law—our partner in delivering statewide coronial legal services
- Queensland Health—we coordinate a statewide Community of Practice on guardianship, decision-making capacity and human rights. More than **200 workers** attend regular online sessions for shared learning, problem solving and raising systemic issues with policymakers.

Across our services, we made **16175 referrals** to other support providers, ensuring clients received holistic, wraparound help for their interconnected legal and non-legal needs.

### Our multidisciplinary approach enhances responsiveness.

**47** lawyers and

**23** social support workers applied a multidisciplinary approach to our service, which remains part of the 'Caxton Way'

Our management committee members hail from diverse professional backgrounds. We offer law and social work student placements.

Social support is available across **all** of Caxton's programs.

**59%** of clients we represented also received social supports

Not all our clients who present with legal problems need or want social supports. It is most often accessed when a client experiences violence, abuse or significant vulnerability that affects their safety or capacity to engage with legal processes.

For example, nearly

**100%** of clients experiencing elder abuse were assisted by both lawyers and social workers

Our experience shows us that focusing on a legal process can be almost impossible when a person's housing is at risk or if they cannot access mental-health support. Taking a holistic approach is more likely to achieve safety, a good legal outcome, and generally increase the quality of life for the client.

What we see as some of the key elements for success are:

- good communication and professional respect in a partnership of equals—lawyers and social support workers
- client consent for the types of assistance they wish to proceed with
- clarity about each other's roles
- joint case planning and review
- a practice that is client-focused, trauma-informed, culturally responsive and flexible
- clarity about managing risk.

 Thank you very much for your assistance and support me with building my confidence and aiding me with legal information and guidance to take the issue I'm dealing with head on. You reassured me and made me feel acknowledged and valued. I am currently in the QCAT process as I haven't been able to reach the desired solution yet. But I feel well prepared in my qcse and hoping for a positive outcome. Thank you. 



## 4 We improve legal and social outcomes

### Our clients get improved outcomes.

These outcomes come from all our work and represent only a fraction of the assistance and impact we provide annually. Our impact is described in more detail under each program area.

**97%** said staff listened to their legal problems in a friendly and respectful manner

**92%** would recommend Caxton to other people

**75%** of our clients were satisfied with the resolution of the matter they received assistance for. This is good news given that we are unable to respond to many clients who need more intensive assistance

**89%** said they felt confident in Caxton's ability to assist them

 ... overall, I cannot fault the work the Caxton Team provided for me. I found the coronial process to be so helpful and I am very grateful there is a service like this that exists and an organisation such as Caxton that provides the support that you do.

I call my Caxton Team the Dream Team because this is exactly what they are. The professionalism, the complementary nature of their work roles and how they without exception provided me with so much patience combined with their professional integrity and expertise has me in awe ... 

### CLARA'S STORY

#### our multidisciplinary approach

More than 40% of women experience workplace sexual harassment, yet only 18% make a formal complaint due to the significant personal and structural barriers to reporting.

Clara was a young girl with autism and learning difficulties. She had started her first job as a kitchen hand at a catering business, working permanent part time.

The much older head chef sexually harassed Clara at work. When Clara complained to the business, little action was taken. Instead she was treated unfavourably by her colleagues and told she should change her shifts to avoid him. The business made her casual then stopped her shifts altogether, and Clara was forced to find alternative employment.

Clara came to Caxton unsure if she had any claim and not confident to pursue legal action. She felt that she would be unable to draft anything due to her learning disability and felt quite disenfranchised by the entire experience.

Caxton was able to help Clara understand her legal rights and what is meant by discrimination and sexual harassment. Using a multidisciplinary approach, a lawyer and social worker worked with Clara to build her confidence and draft a Queensland Human Rights Commission claim with her, outlining the sexual harassment and discrimination.

The claim was filed and a conciliation date was set down. Due to the trauma she had suffered, Clara felt unable to attend the conciliation and face her perpetrator.

The lawyer requested a telephone conciliation conference and started negotiations with the respondent's solicitor to try and settle the matter ahead of conciliation. The social worker kept in touch with Clara to monitor how she was coping and provided emotional support throughout the matter.

Caxton was able to negotiate a very significant settlement before conciliation, which allowed Clara to avoid seeing her perpetrator and the risk of exacerbating her psychological injury. The settlement funds enabled Clara to get the medical assistance she needed and set herself up for a decent quality of life. The social worker linked her with a financial counsellor to help her manage the funds and plan to future proof her spending.



# First Nations justice strategy

## OUR STRATEGY

In 2024-2025, Caxton launched its *First Nations Justice Strategy*, a cornerstone of our organisation's *Towards 2032 Strategy*. This builds on our previous reconciliation action plans commenced in 2016. The strategy reflects our vision for a just and inclusive Queensland for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, **grounded in justice, reconciliation, self-determination, cultural responsiveness, and truth-telling and healing**.

Structured around two four-year action plans, it commits us to transformative change through 'Closing the Gap' actions, together with longstanding foci on relationships, cultural respect, strong advocacy, governance and impact.

## SERVING FIRST NATIONS CLIENTS

We created and strengthened pathways to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by:

- introducing a rapid-response cultural-safety protocol to improve accessibility to all Caxton services
- securing new funding to deliver financial-rights services to First Nations clients, and partnering with the Salvation Army in Logan to provide legal information and assistance to First Nations peoples
- formalising our ongoing partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health to extend our Seniors Legal and Support Service's reach to First Nations older persons
- strengthening the work of our First Nations Older Persons liaison and engagement worker in the Logan and Beaudesert areas, reaching out with community partners to build trust and access.

## WALKING WITH COMMUNITY

Walking with community remained central to our year. NAIDOC celebrations were again a highlight, with our face-painting and information stall at the Logan Family Fun Day drawing strong engagement.



Caxton team at NAIDOC 2025



## TOBIAS' STORY

Tobias, an Aboriginal man in his 60s, was referred by the Elder Abuse Helpline after enduring years of violence and financial abuse from his son Dustin and Dustin's partner. With disabilities limiting his independence, Tobias relied on his son for support but discovered that Dustin was stealing from his bank account. Despite approaching both his family and the bank, he was left with virtually no money.

Tobias received integrated support from a Caxton lawyer, our First Nations social worker and a financial counsellor from UnitingCare. Together they helped Tobias navigate the difficult cultural and personal decision to report Dustin to police. A protection order was secured and a fraud investigation commenced. Our team also held the bank to account, arguing they had failed in their duty.

The bank reimbursed Tobias more than \$200 000. With a new financial safety plan and support from our social worker, Tobias can now cover essentials, plan for a holiday and protect himself against future exploitation.

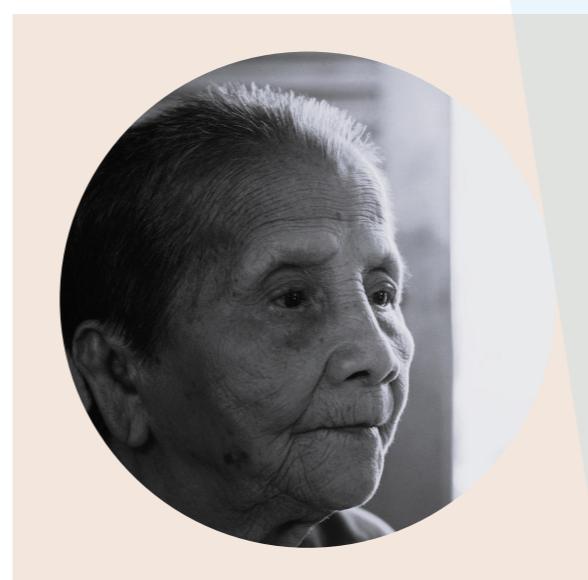


## ANGELINA'S STORY

Angelina, an Indigenous woman in her early 60s, was referred by a counselling service after ongoing violence and intimidation from her former daughter-in-law Greta. Despite a protection order in place since 2019, Greta continued to threaten and harass Angelina and her grandsons, who live in her care. The fear was so severe that Angelina sought social housing to avoid being found.

Caxton's lawyer worked with Angelina to extend her protection order through the Magistrates Court until 2029, ensuring long-term safety. Alongside the legal work, our social worker provided counselling, safety planning and emotional support throughout the stressful proceedings.

With stronger legal protections in place and new safety strategies, Angelina feels secure and confident to move forward with her life. She knows she can seek immediate help if Greta reoffends.



# First Nations justice strategy



## BUILDING CULTURAL CAPABILITY IN ALL STAFF

**We embedded a cultural capability framework** including cultural learning, self-reflection and ways to demonstrate cultural respect by:

- holding truth-telling and reflection events throughout the year from a weaving circle marking the anniversary of the National Apology to truth-telling sessions attended by staff and volunteers and led by community Elders, and a dedicated reflection space on National Sorry Day
- sharing resources and reflections on significant cultural dates via our Engage platform, helping staff build respect and awareness in daily practice
- gathering staff to watch the Indigenous Literacy Foundation's live stream from remote communities, and to witness historic milestones including the Queensland Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry ceremonial hearing.

## STRENGTHENING OUR OWN ORGANISATION: SUPPORTING FIRST NATIONS STAFF

Our top priority has been to ensure that

**Caxton is a culturally safe and supportive workplace**

for our First Nations team members. We introduced:

- more identified roles in programs that are focused on reaching community
- colonial-loading payments and regular cultural check-ins to recognise lived experience and support wellbeing
- up to 30 hours of paid community service leave for cultural and community work beyond staff members' core roles
- dedicated opportunities for professional growth including participation in the National Indigenous Legal Conference and the Wunya networking gathering.



# Programs & services

## TARGETED PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION & SPECIALIST RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FOCUS

Caxton adopts a comprehensive approach towards legal issues. Prevention activities are targeted towards groups of people who are at higher risk of particular legal issues. Early intervention strategies are used to resolve legal problems before they reach crisis point. Responses are tailored to protect human rights. Recovery is facilitated by working with clients to create a legal and social support environment that promotes ongoing human rights realisation.

Programs	Targeted Prevention	Early Intervention	Response & Recovery
<b>Families &amp; Domestic and Family Violence</b>	<p>Community legal education about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interplay between domestic violence orders and family law delivered to Queensland Health social workers</li> <li>amendments to the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012</i> (Qld) delivered to our volunteer lawyers</li> </ul>	<p>Court Plus for Men</p> <p>FASS</p> <p>Refuge outreach</p> <p>DFV rent assistance</p>	<p>FDFVLS, FASS and DVDLS</p> <p>legal assistance and social support</p>
<b>Seniors &amp; Elder Abuse</b>	<p>SFPS information stalls and sessions</p> <p>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day events</p> <p>Community education and engagement program</p> <p>Justice of the Peace training</p>	<p>SLASS HJPs</p> <p>SFPS case management</p> <p>Professional training program</p> <p>Family financial mediation</p>	<p>SLASS &amp; SFPS case-managed legal assistance and social support</p> <p>Queensland Police Service training</p> <p>Vera Raymer Fund for urgent financial hardship relief</p>
<b>Financial Rights &amp; Housing Security</b>	<p>Compass webinar on moving into a retirement village</p> <p>QRVPAS community education stalls</p> <p>QRVPAS residents info sessions</p> <p>QRVPAS pre-contractual legal assistance</p> <p>FRS education to mums and bubs group</p> <p>ABC local radio</p>	<p>QRVPAS &amp; FRS dispute resolution casework</p>	<p>FRS &amp; QRVPAS legal assistance and social support</p> <p>Financial counselling</p>
<b>Workplace &amp; Sexual Harassment</b>	QELS & QSHADS education to migrant students and migrant workers	QELS & QSHADS dispute resolution casework	QSHADS & QELS legal assistance and social support
<b>Public Law &amp; Community Rights</b>	<p>NAIDOC</p> <p>Pasifika Legal Connection Project</p> <p>Homeless Connect</p>	Dispute resolution casework	Legal assistance and social support
<b>Coronial Law</b>		QCLS legal assistance and social support for recently bereaved families	QCLS inquest representation and social support
<b>Disasters</b>	<p>Disaster Legal Checklist</p> <p>Disaster legal preparedness education for young mums, seniors and community groups</p> <p>ex-tropical cyclone contact with high-risk clients to help prevent legal issues arising</p>	<p>Dispute resolution casework especially with insurance providers</p> <p>Relief payments</p>	Legal assistance and social support
<b>All areas of law</b>	<p>Queensland Law Handbook (QLH) information</p> <p>Law, policy and systems reform activities</p> <p>Networks, committees, stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>MALS</p> <p>QLH and other self-help resources</p>	<p>EAS legal advice</p> <p>MALS legal assistance and multicultural advocacy</p>

# Programs & services

## SENIORS & ELDER ABUSE

1 in 6 older Australians experience abuse and neglect, including coercive control, at the hands of adult children, long-term abusive partners, other family members, friends and other trusted people.

We have assisted 957 clients, delivered 1646 legal and social support services and provided 7745 information services.



### Seniors & Elder Abuse

#### Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS)

Caxton's longest running, specialist, multidisciplinary legal and social support service for older persons who experience abuse and neglect at the hands of trusted people in their lives.

#### SLASS Health Justice Partnerships (HJP)

Our HJPs with Metro North Health, Metro South Health, World Wellness Group and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health bring together legal and health services to enhance early interventions with older people and older First Nations people with coexisting health and legal issues related to elder abuse.

#### Seniors Financial Protection Service (SFPS)

A targeted outreach prevention to help persons who are older or nearing retirement to manage financial decision making and planning to mitigate the risks of financial elder abuse.

### OUR CLIENTS

- 81% of our clients experienced financial disadvantage
- 70% experienced domestic and family violence
- 49% have a disability
- 15% were homeless
- 12% were from a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- 24% were First Nations peoples

### TOP 6 PROBLEM TYPES OUR CLIENTS PRESENTED WITH AT OUR SENIORS LEGAL AND SUPPORT SERVICE

39%	financial abuse
32%	psychological abuse
9%	physical abuse
7%	problems with systems
7%	social abuse
4%	neglect



Thank you very much for your assistance and support me with building my confidence and aiding me with legal information and guidance to take the issue I'm dealing with head on.

You reassured me and made me feel acknowledged and valued. I am currently in the QCAT process as I haven't been able to reach the desired solution yet. But I feel well prepared in my case and hoping for a positive outcome. Thank you



## SENIORS & ELDER ABUSE

### HEALTH-JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS

#### Dedicated lawyers were embedded within hospitals

across Metro North Health at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, the Surgical Treatment and Rehabilitation Service and the Redcliffe Hospital, and across Metro South Health at the Princess Alexandra, Logan, QE2 and Redlands hospitals. We provided accessible legal advice to older patients. In parallel, we offered deidentified secondary consultation support to health professionals. We also facilitated regular targeted training for health service providers with a focus on identifying 'red flags' or signs of elder abuse and promoting awareness on how to refer into our health-justice partnerships.

### FIRST NATIONS OLDER PERSONS

#### Our First Nations older persons client-liaison officer and First Nations paralegal have cultivated, and built trust and connections

with the Logan and Beaudesert communities. We regularly visited Logan Elders and YFS, and Gunya Meta at the 'gather and yarn' group as part of the Logan Elders Healthy Program. In Beaudesert, we spent time at Beaucare, Beaudesert Hospital and Jumbilung House.

Our longstanding health-justice partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH), supporting older First Nations clients in the Moreton Bay North region, remains integral to delivering culturally appropriate and responsive services. Our First Nations clients in this region were able to benefit from IUIH's Indigenous-led, culturally centred healthcare setting, which provides integrated, legal-psychosocial support services to First Nations older peoples who are at risk of or are experiencing elder abuse.

### FINANCIAL PROTECTIONS

The Seniors Financial Protections Service (SFPS) observed and addressed a broad spectrum of needs this year including housing, emergency financial support, family agreements, debt and financial counselling, and help with unregulated financial products.

#### As housing becomes unaffordable, younger family members move in with older relatives out of necessity, increasing financial strain, dependence and household conflict, which heightens the risk of financial elder abuse.

Consequently, SFPS has seen a sustained rise in demand for preventative legal advice and assistance with drafting documents related to loaning money, co-purchasing property, granny-flat arrangements, life interests and co-living with adult children.

Our service has maintained a strong footprint throughout the Brisbane, Logan, Beaudesert and Moreton Bay North regions this year. We presented community legal education at events of all shapes and sizes, ranging from Seniors Expo through to Men's Sheds groups, Over 50s women's groups, as well as providing outreach on demand for walk-in clients at the Beenleigh Neighbourhood Centre.

We provided approximately **150** education sessions to the community that attracted over **1100** attendees this financial year.



### COMPLEX CASEWORK

Our team has undertaken a series of complex casework this year. We represented clients:

- at pro bono mediations involving joint ventures, issues around assets for care arrangements and equitable interests with pro bono counsel assisting
- at the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal in guardianship matters to successfully contest inappropriate appointments of substitute decision makers
- at court in domestic and family violence matters
- at AFCA conciliation conferences following lengthy negotiations
- with high complex social situations including fluctuating decision-making capacity.

#### Our multidisciplinary framework ensured that clients involved in complex or prolonged legal matters received tailored social work support.

This included counselling, safety and wellbeing planning, court support and practical assistance. Our social workers also

promoted supported decision making, helped clients clarify goals, coordinated referrals and services, and provided advocacy to ensure clients could participate meaningfully and safely in their legal processes.

### PRO BONO AND PARTNERSHIPS

#### Collaborations with pro bono lawyers, social work student placements and an embedded financial counsellor have strengthened our ability to provide holistic, wraparound support to older clients.

Our partnership with UnitingCare enables a full-time financial counsellor to work on-site, giving SLASS clients timely access to assistance with debt, financial concerns and financial elder abuse. We also work closely with Good Shepherd's Financial Independence Hub to support clients with financial counselling and resilience services. In addition, our long-standing pro bono legal partners continue to assist with representation, negotiations, and research support in complex elder abuse matters.

### GERALDINE'S STORY

Geraldine's son misappropriated more than \$500 000 from multiple bank accounts, often coercing her into making large withdrawals by accompanying her to the bank and intimidating her during transactions. When she sought help from the banks, her concerns were dismissed and no responsibility was accepted.

SLASS supported Geraldine to progress her complaints through the Australian Financial Complaints Authority. Following a conciliation conference, one bank agreed to return over \$300 000, and another entered negotiations with our lawyer and ultimately refunded the remaining misappropriated funds.

Our involvement helped 'level the playing field' between Geraldine and the banks. Where her complaints had previously been ignored, SLASS ensured her voice was heard and her rights upheld, enabling her to recover almost all of the stolen money and restore her financial stability.

## SENIORS & ELDER ABUSE

### QUEENSLAND ELDER ABUSE INQUIRY

Caxton made submissions to the Queensland Elder Abuse Inquiry containing

**55 recommendations**, and we appeared as a witness at the parliamentary hearing in Brisbane. We agitated for a range of reforms including that:

- a new Adult Safeguarding Body be established as a central trusted agency for all at-risk adults, which should be integrated in Queensland's existing strong network of elder abuse services
- a ten-year plan to end the abuse of older Queenslanders be developed, in consultation with older persons and key stakeholders, to support and expand the Queensland Government's commitments under the ten-year National Plan to End the Abuse of Older Australians
- QPS engage in consultation with stakeholders to co-develop an elder abuse co-responding model through which police will collaborate with specialist elder abuse legal and support services
- funding should be allocated for free and legally informed EPA drafting.

### COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

We delivered hundreds of workshops, information sessions and presentations including specialist elder abuse training to approximately

**450 Queensland Police Service staff** (since 2023) and **health professionals**, and more than

**200 volunteer justices of the peace** within Brisbane courts and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Our Community of Practice network focused on decision-making capacity, guardianship and safeguarding the human rights of older persons.

### NATIONAL ELDER ABUSE CONFERENCE

Caxton's presence was strong at the 2024 National Elder Abuse Conference held in Adelaide in July including in three sessions:

- 'Decolonising Elder Abuse Responses'—a panel of First Nations Elders and experts
- an elder-abuse legal masterclass to a packed room of legal and other professionals
- 'Bringing Human Rights Practice to Life'—a discussion in the context of health-justice partnerships.

In 2026 we are co-hosting the National Elder Abuse Conference on the Gold Coast together with Elder Abuse Action Australia and ADA Law.



Logan Elders  
WEAAD 2025



Redcliffe Neighbourhood Centre WEAAD 2025



Multilink  
WEAAD 2025

### VERA RAYMER FUND

Vera Raymer OAM (1919-2013) was a remarkable contributor to social justice and a pioneer of the social work profession. Funds bequeathed by the Estate of Vera Raymer are administered in accordance with her express wishes. We honour her memory by contributing to her legacy to improve the lives of older people.

We funded:

- a capacity assessment with a geriatrician for a client subject to guardianship proceeding
- transport and accommodation to facilitate client attendance and participation in their QCAT hearing
- a divorce application for a client experiencing ongoing domestic and family violence from a separated partner
- removalist fees for a client to escape from unsafe living arrangements
- urgent food vouchers where no other reasonably accessible sources were available.

### WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

In commemoration of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on 19 June 2025, we partnered with various stakeholders to co-host over

**25 community events** across the month of June. Our various partnerships enabled us to raise awareness of elder abuse in locations that are accessible, safe and familiar for attendees. This enabled our team to foster enthusiastic participation by older persons across Brisbane, Moreton Bay North, Logan and Beaudesert. A highlight of the series of events included the Roma Street Parklands BBQ for the multicultural community. Together with our long-standing partner World Wellness Group, we organised educational and recreational activities.



Roma St Parklands BBQ WEAAD 2025

# Programs & services

## FAMILIES & DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Caxton continues to experience high demand for legal assistance and social support for people impacted by domestic and family violence and family law issues, especially when they are self representing at court. Our services operate five days per week from our centre, five days per week at the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA) and four days per week at Brisbane's specialist domestic and family violence (DFV) courts.

We provided **1893** court-based legal and social support services.



### Families & Domestic and Family Violence

#### Families and Domestic and Family Violence Legal Service (FDFVLS)

Assists families, victim-survivors and users of violence with a wide range of family law and DFV issues. Lawyers are trained to deliver trauma-informed and DFV-informed services, and can make a referral to our in-house social workers.

#### Family Advocacy and Support Service (FASS)

Provides specialist, wrap-around legal, social, mental health and men's support to persons in family law proceedings at courts throughout Queensland.

#### Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer Service (DVCLS)

For respondents to a domestic violence application at the Brisbane Magistrates Court. Clients are linked to our FASS and FDFVLS for additional assistance.

#### Court Plus for Men

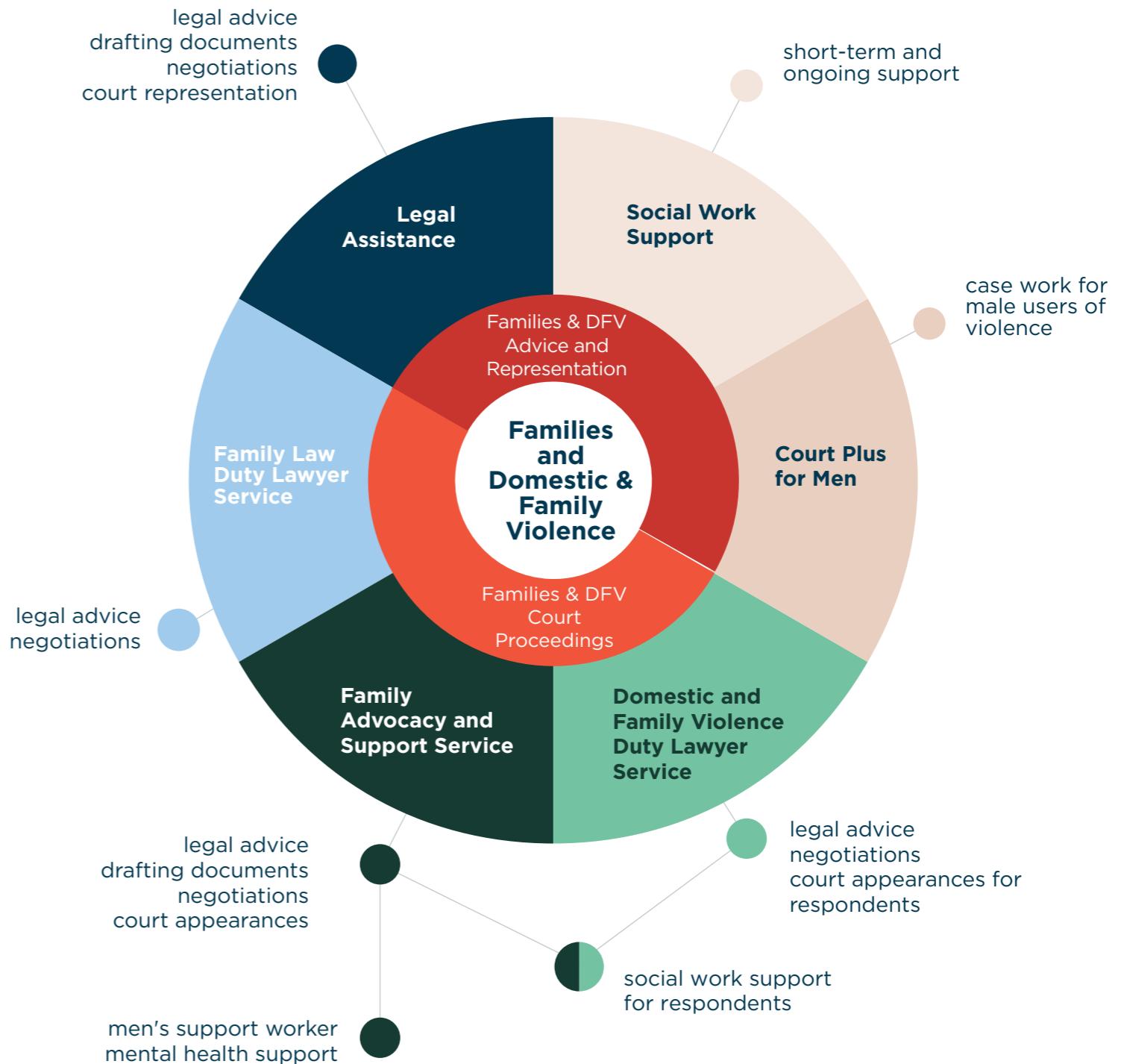
A social worker provides case-managed support to men to reduce the risks of using DFV as part of our overarching goal to keep women and children safe, and hold men accountable for addressing their behaviours.

## OUR CLIENTS

**68%** experienced financial disadvantage

**31%** were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

**10%** identified as First Nations Peoples



# FAMILIES & DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

## FAMILY LAW

In family law, we assisted separating families with complex and intersecting vulnerabilities. Of our clients,

**31%** were from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and

**10%** identified as First Nations peoples.

## Dispute resolution remains a vital focus, offering families a safer, faster and less adversarial way to reach agreement.

We represented clients at conciliation conferences in the FCFCOA. We continued our strong warm-referral pathway with Legal Aid Queensland's Family Dispute Resolution Services, representing clients at family dispute resolution conferences for small property pool matters, often acting for the male partner alleged to have used DFV behaviours. Ensuring both parties are represented increases the likelihood of early resolution and reduces the need for court intervention, minimising prolonged engagement with an already stressful legal system.

Where matters cannot be resolved, we provided assistance with court document preparation including urgent recovery applications and initiating applications in parenting matters. Our duty lawyers assisted self-represented people on the day of their hearing with advice, document drafting, negotiations and representation (in limited circumstances). Where families were affected by domestic and family violence, our social support workers provided emotional support, safety planning, practical assistance and **engaged respectfully with men using DFV behaviours to challenge harmful patterns and encourage accountability.**

## DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Caxton, like many other centres, does not receive any funding to respond to domestic and family violence, despite its prevalence for many clients we see. We have limited court-assistance DFV funding. Therefore, we focus our attentions on filling three gaps in the service system by assisting:

- users of violence with social support (court based and case management) and legal advice, and negotiations and document preparation to promote accountability, encourage behaviour change and improve the safety of victim-survivors of DFV and their families
- misidentified victim-survivors of DFV where police have failed to take action to secure the safety of the person most in need of protection
- victim-survivors of coercive controlling DFV who need representation in DFV proceedings to increase their safety.

The diagram (above) shows how we effectively bring together our DFV and family law services to offer a seamless, integrated and supportive response for families. Our lawyers provided immediate legal advice, representation and safety-focused support to people at court, helping them understand their options, negotiate orders and navigate the domestic violence process. They worked alongside our social workers and dedicated men's support worker, who provided emotional support, safety planning, practical assistance and **engaged respectfully with men using DFV behaviours to challenge harmful patterns and encourage accountability.**

They provided follow-up support to ensure referrals were progressing as planned, and empowered clients to remain engaged with various supports throughout their legal matters.

## COURT PLUS FOR MEN

Court Plus for Men (Court Plus) was a pilot case-management program initially funded under the Keeping Women and Children Safe program for 12 months, and then self-funded as a priority initiative to ensure men using DFV could access structured support to change their behaviour and address co-occurring issues.

Using assertive outreach, we helped to articulate concrete, individualised plans and goals to address DFV behaviour change, substance misuse, mental health, homelessness, language barriers, visa issues, financial hardship, low literacy, adverse childhood histories and trauma.

The scope was to work with up to 60 men over 12 months who voluntarily engaged. Most participants presented at the Brisbane Magistrates DFV Court and were referred by magistrates, lawyers, social workers, court staff and service providers. We also received some self-referrals.

The Court Plus social worker completed intakes with **61** men.

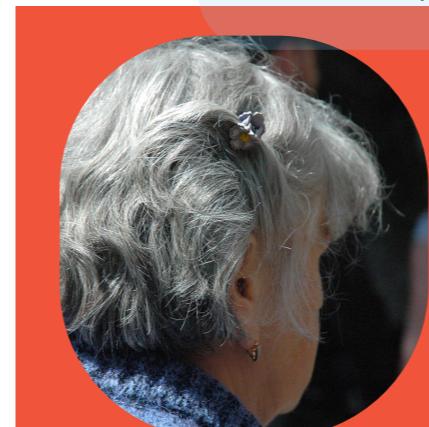
**42** opted to engage with the project, meaning they established goals for change and were available for a follow-up meeting with the social worker.

The entry and exit questionnaires completed by the men gauged their level of awareness and insight as to the impact of domestic and family violence. Prior to participation in the casework, **20** men demonstrated a low level of understanding of violence towards survivors and the impact of that violence. At program exit only **3** men showed a low level of awareness and insight. Thirteen men stated that the outcomes sought through the project were all substantially met.

## KATE'S STORY

Kate was referred to Caxton's family law program after receiving duty lawyer assistance at the Brisbane DFV Court. Although she was the person needing protection, police had incorrectly identified her as the respondent. Kate's partner was coercively controlling, and emotionally and physically abusive.

Over three months, Caxton advocated for police to withdraw the application. Due to police inaction, the matter was adjourned four times—a delay which would discourage anyone. However, through coordinated support from our social worker, who provided ongoing safety planning and counselling, and our lawyer, who challenged the incident-based policing response that led to Kate's misidentification, the application was ultimately withdrawn.



# Programs & services

## PUBLIC LAW & COMMUNITY RIGHTS

The Public Law and Community Rights team focused on assisting clients experiencing trauma, marginalisation and disadvantage by helping them address human rights breaches, discrimination and victims' rights issues.



### Public Law & Community Rights

This is our longest running program assisting with a range of civil, minor criminal, policing, anti-discrimination, government decision making and democratic rights issues.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

The *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) (Human Rights Act) is central to our work in protecting clients' rights and holding government agencies accountable for fair and lawful decision-making. This year, we applied the Act to:

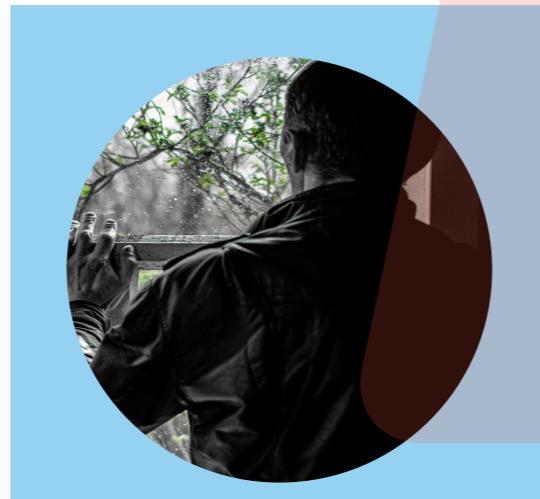
- give our clients **access and transfer to more suitable public housing**. We advocated with the Department of Housing to facilitate a transfer of a woman and her children to more suitable housing to accommodate the disabilities of her children
- ensure **fair treatment by police** and Corrective Services. Our client had been stalked, predominately online by a person known to her for a number of years. She had made reports to police but they had failed to act on her complaints. We advocated for police to investigate the complaints. This led to the alleged perpetrator being charged and a restraining order being made
- ensure that people can **practise their culture and religion**. We advocated for a person in prison to gain access to religious items so that they could practice their religion
- help clients **protect their privacy** and ensure their safety. We advocated with police for a woman who had her address

disclosed to her ex-partner who was the respondent in a domestic violence order after police disclosed information about her address. Police took steps to ensure that her privacy was maintained in the future and compensated her for the harm that the breach of privacy had caused. We were also able to assist her to find alternative housing to ensure her safety.

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

We have continued to operate our advice clinic with the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC). This clinic allows us to provide targeted support to people who have already made anti-discrimination and human-rights complaints to the QHRC to resolve them at the earliest possible stage. Our anti-discrimination casework focused on the rights of:

- **children in education**. We assisted a primary school student with ADHD who was repeatedly suspended for behaviours linked to his disability. We advocated for reasonable adjustments, including a behaviour support plan and access to specialist support. The school agreed to withdraw the suspensions and implement the adjustments, enabling the child to stay safely engaged in education



- **children while detained**. We advocated for a young person in custody in a youth detention centre to attend the cultural ceremony related to an important relative who had passed away

- **people with disability in relation to accommodation, education and the provision of services**. We assisted a man who had his disability aid left behind by an airline when he went on a flight. We advocated for the man to resolve the complaint with the airline in a way that best suited his needs.

## VICTIMS' RIGHTS

We continued to focus on enabling victims of crime to access justice by advocating for them and supporting them to:

- access financial assistance from Victims Assist Queensland
- access their rights under the Victims Charter of Rights
- make reports to police, including by ensuring that victims of crime have access to interpreters and are treated in a trauma-informed way that promotes their rights
- advocate where police have failed to investigate
- understand the criminal justice process and their role and rights in the prosecution process
- access housing and other necessities
- receive appropriate social and psychological supports.

## IAN'S STORY supporting accountability and fairness in complaints processes

Ian was an individual respondent in an Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) sexual harassment complaint made by an NDIS worker he had met on one occasion.

Ian is totally blind and was quite overwhelmed with the legal process. We made adjustments to our service to ensure he was able to receive and fully understand our advice.

We provided advice and representation to Ian at the AHRC conciliation conference. Following the conference, the complaint was discontinued against Ian, and Ian was able to understand why his actions had contributed to the other party's complaint.

At the AHRC conciliation conference Ian said, 'I want to say that I have listened to everything you have said in your complaint. I can hear that you have suffered hurt and I apologise for anything I may have done that made you feel that way. I have worked with both male and female support workers throughout my life and have never had a complaint raised about me before. I was very shocked and saddened to hear about your experiences. While I can't change that, I have learned to think about the questions I ask when meeting someone and will ensure I do it in a way that explains the reason I am asking those questions.'

Providing legal representation to individual respondents in sexual harassment complaints helps ensure a fair and thorough process that ultimately protects the complainant. When respondents have access to legal advice and representation, they are more likely to understand and comply with investigative procedures, reducing the risk of retaliation or procedural delays. Legal representation also promotes accountability by facilitating clearer communication, structured defences and quicker resolution. This supports the integrity of the process, helping to uphold the complainant's rights and foster a just outcome for all parties involved.

# Programs & services

## WORKERS' RIGHTS



### Workers' Rights

#### Queensland Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Service (QSHADS)

The lawyers and social workers of this service provide specialist assistance to vulnerable workers to increase access to workplace justice, limit financial and psychological harm and promote recovery.

#### Queensland Employment Law Service (QELS)

This service's lawyers provide specialist assistance with dismissal, bullying and general workplace protections.

### Caxton continued to **partner with Working Women Queensland**

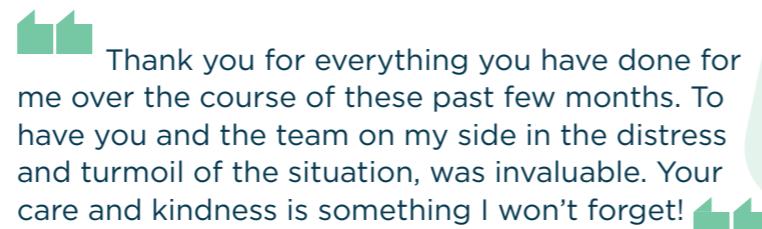
(WWQ) to provide vital support to workers across Queensland experiencing unfair treatment, sexual harassment, discrimination and exploitation. With rising cost-of-living pressures and insecure work arrangements, workers' rights remain a high-demand area of assistance.

Many of the people who seek our help experience **intersectional disadvantage** including temporary visa holders, young workers, people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse workers who face additional **barriers to speaking up about workplace harm**.

Our multidisciplinary model ensures that clients not only receive legal advice about their workplace issue but are also supported to navigate the emotional, financial and safety impacts that often accompany workplace issues. Social workers assist with safety planning, goal-setting and practical assistance, ensuring clients can meaningfully participate in enforcing their rights.



Thank you for everything you have done for me over the course of these past few months. To have you and the team on my side in the distress and turmoil of the situation, was invaluable. Your care and kindness is something I won't forget!



## TO OUR CLIENTS, WE DELIVERED

**1191** legal services

**998** legal information

**1335** referrals

**65** disputes resolutions

## FOR THE COMMUNITY, WE PROVIDED

**188** community legal education and engagement



## KYLIE'S STORY

Kylie is a young apprentice mechanic from regional Queensland who was subjected to ongoing sexual comments, unwanted touching and repeated propositions from the business owner. Afraid of losing her apprenticeship, she tried to cope until the behaviour escalated and she became too unwell to work. She was later diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety and depression.

Her experience shows the significant risks faced by young women in male-dominated industries and the complexity of navigating multiple systems. Kylie's situation involved WorkCover, Victim Assist Queensland, apprenticeship issues and an external workplace investigation.

After being referred to Caxton, our multidisciplinary team provided coordinated support, including advice during the investigation, assistance with WorkCover and VAQ, drafting and lodging a Queensland Human Rights Commission complaint and representing her at conciliation. We also offered psycho-social support to help her understand the power dynamics and impacts of harassment.

With this support, Kylie gained insight into the impact of the harassment and developed confidence to advocate for herself. Her complaint resulted in the business implementing sexual-harassment training, workplace policies and other safety measures, and she received financial compensation for the profound harm she experienced.

Over 16 months, Kylie engaged with Caxton while navigating slow and overlapping legal processes. She told us she hoped the employer learned from the experience, and she continues to heal with the support of her family and health providers. Kylie said to the Caxton team: 'Honestly, you've been my saving grace through this whole situation. I've appreciated everything you've done so much.'

# Programs & services

## FINANCIAL RIGHTS



### Financial Rights & Housing Security

#### Financial Rights Service (FRS)

A specialist service focused on responding to consumer credit and debt issues with a small team dedicated to promoting and protecting the financial rights of First Nations peoples.

#### Volunteer Credit and Debt Clinic

Caxton ran a volunteer-led credit and debt advice clinic each Wednesday under the supervision of an experienced staff lawyer supported by individual lawyers, students, and law firms.

#### Student Credit and Debt Clinic

This student clinic has been running for 15 years. It delivers high-quality discrete legal assistance under the supervision of our staff lawyer. These clinics form part of the University of Queensland student clinical legal education.

With many Queenslanders feeling the cost-of-living pinch, Caxton's small but dedicated Financial Rights team and embedded financial counsellor have worked hard this year to protect the rights of some of the most vulnerable in our community. We delivered

**961** legal services,

**427** referrals and provided

**1849** pieces of information.

We have experienced a consistent flow of clients seeking urgent assistance because their homes are being repossessed, and they have already exhausted the hardship arrangements that would usually protect a borrower from losing their home during a rough patch.

**In the midst of the current housing crisis, the outlook for these clients is bleak. These days, home repossession means more than losing a major asset and having to rent. Many of our clients face the real prospect of homelessness. For some, it might mean living in a tent with their young children, sleeping in their car or maybe even moving back in with an abusive partner.**

#### Recognising housing security as a priority

This year, we expanded the scope of our Financial Rights service beyond consumer credit and debt to provide advice and assistance in relation to body corporate debts, unpaid council rates and small business debts where the debt puts the client's home at risk.

Our representation services have focused particularly on the housing and financial security of people with additional vulnerabilities including women experiencing or escaping domestic and family violence, older people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and First Nations peoples.

Some highlights for the year include:

- obtaining an urgent stay of an enforcement warrant to seize and sell the home of a vulnerable client facing ongoing financial abuse, allowing her time to find alternative housing for herself and her children
- obtaining the waiver of a large debt for a client who had been coerced into taking out a loan by an abusive partner

- obtaining the waiver of a large debt for an elderly pensioner who had been the victim of misleading and unfair practices during an unsolicited sale.

There is an overwhelming unmet need for financial rights legal services in Queensland.

We are grateful for the pro bono partnerships that we have with the firms who sent their lawyers to volunteer at the Consumer Credit and Debt Clinic each week, and with those who accept our referrals for complex casework. These partnerships are a key part of our service, allowing us to assist as many people as possible.

## PAUL'S STORY

Paul receives the pension and lives remotely.

A merchant provided an unsolicited agreement for solar panels that was to be paid to a 'Buy Now Pay Later' credit provider (BNPL credit provider) agreement.

The merchant did not provide the contract or explain the contract terms, misrepresented the contract and mislead Paul under the Australian Consumer Law.

Paul could not afford the payments without significant financial hardship. He also has dyslexia and was reliant on the merchant's explanation of the contract terms.

We originally wrote to the BNPL credit provider to seek a waiver of the debt, and to the merchant to seek compensation for their conduct, but the matter was not resolved at that stage.

We lodged a detailed complaint at the Australian Financial Complaints Authority. The BNPL credit provider reviewed the information and opted for early resolution by offering to waive the remaining \$6000 debt, which our client was grateful to accept.



I wanted to thank you for all that you have done, prior to speaking with you I was feeling hopeless and out of options.

Not only did you restore that hope and give me confidence but resolved this issue that has followed me my entire adult life. I am so grateful for what you have done. Thank you.



# Programs & services

## HOUSING RIGHTS: RETIREMENT VILLAGES AND PARKS



### Housing Rights: Retirement Villages and Parks

A specialist, multidisciplinary service that promotes residents' rights by providing information, legal assistance and social supports to people who are entering, living in or exiting a retirement village or residential park (often advertised as Over 50s lifestyle communities).

Older Queenslanders have the right to live in an environment where their wellbeing, rights and dignity are protected.

Our objective is to empower clients to assert their own rights where possible and to advocate for those who are most vulnerable. Some of the ways we have done this in the 2024-2025 financial year include:

- delivering **66** community legal education and information events to over **10 957** people, including face-to-face seminars, expo stalls and online webinars
- maintaining and updating online factsheets that have been accessed more than **8000** times
- successfully representing a client in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal to help them oppose an unfair application for a termination order that would have left them homeless
- providing advice and advocacy in relation to illegal site-rent increases



I would never have been able to cope without your help, support, empathy and information which you provided to me.

- assisting clients to self-advocate for better processes and outcomes during the closure of retirement villages
- assisting clients to understand discrimination laws and, in some circumstances, to lodge discrimination complaints with the Queensland Human Rights Commission
- empowering clients to make informed decisions and build self-advocacy skills, thereby enhancing their quality of life
- providing emotional and psychosocial support to clients that are at risk, and connect them to local community services, health care and social systems
- promoting mental health and social connection to reduce isolation and vulnerability.



Thank you so much for the precious advice. We appreciated very much how we have been welcomed and heard. Caxton is a very important service and it helps people to empower their rights.



I felt like a human with stature. That I can hold myself up. When someone sees you as being human, it's wonderful.

### MARY'S STORY

#### a little bit of advice goes a long way

Mary booked in for a one-hour face-to-face advice appointment with QRVPAS after many years of raising her concerns with park management without any recognition.

She had been poorly treated in the process. She was teary, defeated and felt targeted when she attended her appointment.

Mary told her story, and we assured her that the way she was being treated was not okay. We advised Mary of her legal rights and available avenues to help her rebuild some confidence. We spent time talking through practical solutions and next steps, so Mary had a clear plan when she left the appointment. We then assisted Mary to draft a letter to send to the park owner that clearly set out her legal position and the outcome she was seeking.

A week later, she let us know that the matter had resolved. Her rights were recognised and she received two apologies. Mary thanked us for our diligence and understanding. She said our advice and direction really gave her the confidence to stand up for herself.

# Programs & services

## DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY



### Natural Disaster Response and Recovery

The lawyers and social workers in this program collaborate with other frontline disaster recovery and preparedness organisations to assist disaster-affected people.

We provided **665 services** of legal information, referrals, legal advice, social support, representation, and community and stakeholder engagement.

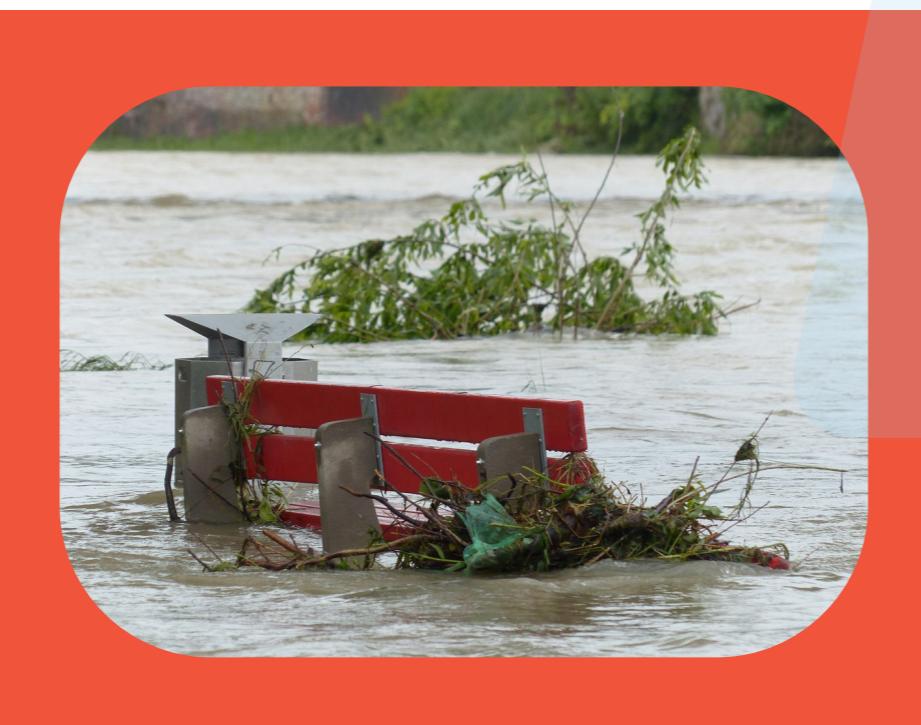
We continued to support clients impacted by the 2022 floods and expanded our support to disaster impacted clients across Queensland.

We boosted our already strong relationship with the financial counselling sector by presenting at Financial Counselling Australia's disaster recovery training events in Brisbane and Cairns.

We continue to look for opportunities to support communities to prepare for disasters. We worked with our pro-bono partners to provide a *Disaster Legal Checklist* to help people get legally prepared prior to a disaster, and we put together a community legal education presentation on this issue. We learned about different community experiences in disasters, including First Nation communities. We attended expos and community events, and spoke to groups for young mums, seniors and other communities about legal issues including preparing for disasters. We supported sessions hosted by Yeronga Community Centre to introduce community members to the work of the Resilient Building Council.

We also took up opportunities to speak directly to insurance companies and regulators, and made submissions to AFCA reviews to improve industry practices. We took part in the review into Queensland's Resilient Homes Fund, as we believe that expanding resilient programs is an essential step to getting the whole community ready.

As tropical cyclone Alfred was approaching, we prioritised contacting higher-risk clients across all of Caxton's programs and gave them information and referrals to help them prepare. Across the organisation, we stood up our Disaster Legal Helpline after the cyclone passed. We promoted information across media interviews, social media posts and through community legal education at events hosted by community groups.



### LAURA'S STORY

Laura is a First Nations grandmother who cares for her grandchildren. She works as a carer and is on a very fixed income. Her home was damaged by a cyclone. Repairs have been delayed by her lack of understanding of insurance and government grant processes.

Caxton provided Laura with legal and social work support to try to minimise any further delays, and to ensure that she has safe, secure and resilient housing for her family. We worked very closely with her local neighbourhood centre and financial counsellors.

We ensured that she was supported by the appropriate insurance team and advocated for a larger cash settlement. The insurer did partially decline the claim, and we advised the client to not waste time contesting the insurance claim, which would likely be unsuccessful. Instead, we suggested to apply for a resilience grant. This grant offers low-income Queenslanders living in certain areas 80% of the cost of a new cyclone-strength roof, but this is capped at \$15 000.

Caxton's social worker helped Laura to approach a builder for quotes and apply for State Government and charity funding.

By working closely together with the client, the local neighbourhood centre, her financial counsellor and Caxton were able to provide practical support to Laura to navigate the various programs. The work will shortly begin on Laura's roof, which will result in her and her family being able to live in a safe and secure home that is more resilient to future disasters.

# Programs & services

## CORONIAL LAW



### Coronial Law

Our Queensland Coronial Legal Service (QCLS) lawyers and social workers provide holistic assistance to bereaved families involved with the coronial process.

Caxton and Townsville Community Law partner to deliver the Queensland Coronial

Legal Service, which assisted **159 families** with legal and social work services in relation to the death of their loved one. Caxton also

represented **15 families** in inquests before coroners across Queensland.

We have continued to advocate for the human rights of families and for the deceased to be at the centre of the coronial process. We spoke about human rights in the coronial jurisdiction at the Asia Pacific Coroners Society Conference and presented to the Human Rights Law Association.

Recent coronial inquests have involved deaths tied to mental-health issues, self-harm or drug usage. These raise complex issues around appropriate mental-health care, crisis intervention, policing and systemic failures.



I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Caxton. [The lawyer] was not only incredibly knowledgeable and professional, but also kind, understanding, and genuinely compassionate throughout my case.

From the beginning, I felt overwhelmed and unsure, but she made me feel heard, supported, and empowered every step of the way. Her guidance, patience, and dedication helped me achieve the best possible outcome, and I truly couldn't have asked for better support. She went above and beyond to resolve my matter with care and expertise. I'll always be thankful for the difference she made in my life. Thank you so much.



## GOLDIE'S STORY

Goldie's daughter Kate was dropped to a Queensland hospital by an unknown person and later died there. It was unclear what led Kate to be two hours away from where she usually resides and how the individual had found her and taken her to hospital.

Goldie spent years writing to the Coroners Court requesting further investigations. Goldie was concerned that Kate's death and the investigation into the circumstances around her death were minimised because Kate had drugs in her system.

Caxton assisted Goldie through the inquest process by liaising with the Coroners Court in relation to her questions and concerns, by representing her in court and by providing emotional and practical support throughout the process.

Goldie wanted to know how and with whom Kate arrived at the hospital. We requested the brief of evidence, made submissions about the adequacy of police investigation, questioned witnesses and made submissions to the coroner at the conclusion of inquest about the findings that should be made about the circumstances of Kate's death.

Goldie was supported by a Caxton solicitor and social worker, and represented by a (pro bono) barrister during six days of court attendance. Meetings were held to ensure consistent messaging and submissions at court. Goldie indicated that this was invaluable as it reassured her that her questions and concerns would be advocated for in court.

We provided social work support to prepare Goldie for the emotional toll of the hearing. As rapport and trust was built, Goldie shared that she had been experiencing financial abuse in her relationship and was not emotionally supported by her partner. We arranged financial counselling for Goldie and referred her to another community legal centre to advise about property rights.

Goldie expressed that she felt surprisingly inspired by the coronial process after initially dreading the days in court. She has considered returning to study law or social work due to her experience.

Goldie gained details about the last day of her daughter's life. She now understands the extent of police investigation and how decisions were made. Goldie was supported to grieve and is now able to share her concerns about shame and stigma that surrounds death associated with drug use.

Goldie was given information in a way that allowed her to process, respond and participate fully in the legal processes of the Coroners Court. Goldie felt supported while going through the extremely difficult process of an inquest.

# Programs & services

## ENHANCED SERVICE ACCESS PROGRAM

The Enhanced Service Access Program brings together our Client Services, Evening Advice Service and Multicultural Legal and Advocacy Service. These services provide early legal help, information, advice, referrals and navigation support, while reducing cultural, linguistic and practical barriers that can prevent people from reaching the assistance they need. Together, they function as Caxton's front door, offering clear, low-barrier pathways into further legal assistance and social support, ensuring people receive the right help at the earliest opportunity.



### Client Services & Specialist Intake

This team provides client-centred, trauma-informed and culturally responsive intake, legal information and referrals to all community members who make contact with Caxton. Specialist intake for some programs enhances the quality of information provided and addresses complex service access needs.

## CLIENT SERVICES

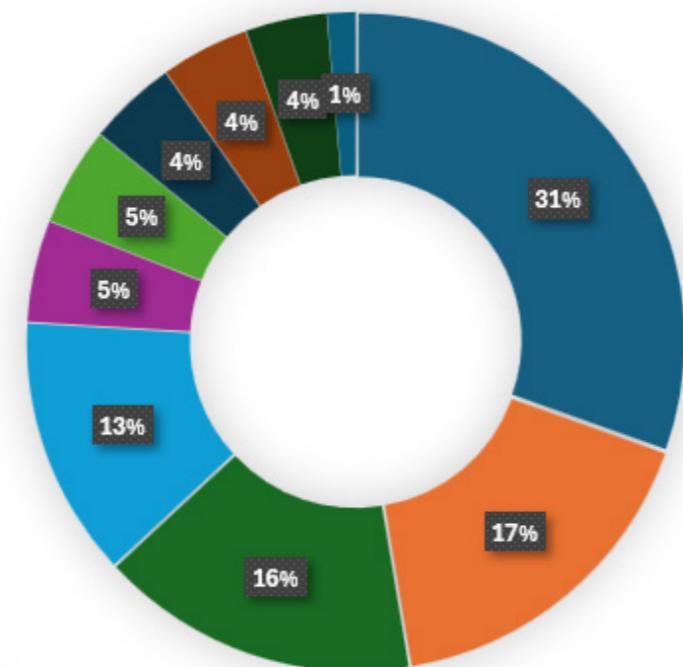
**23 094** enquiries managed through our phone line

**19.72 mins** average wait time

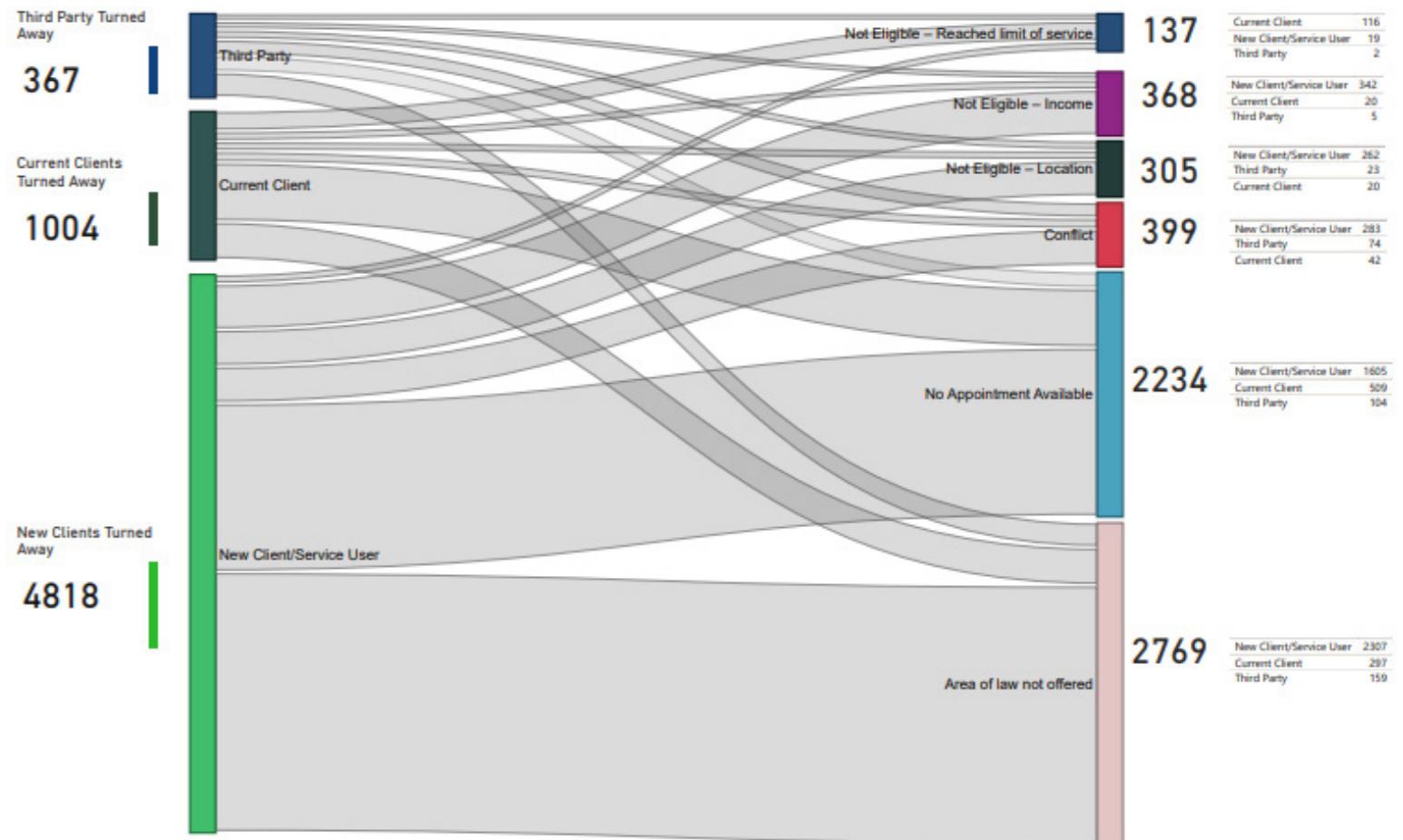
**3.27 hours** longest wait time

**9 mins** average call time

## TOP 10 AREAS OF ENQUIRY



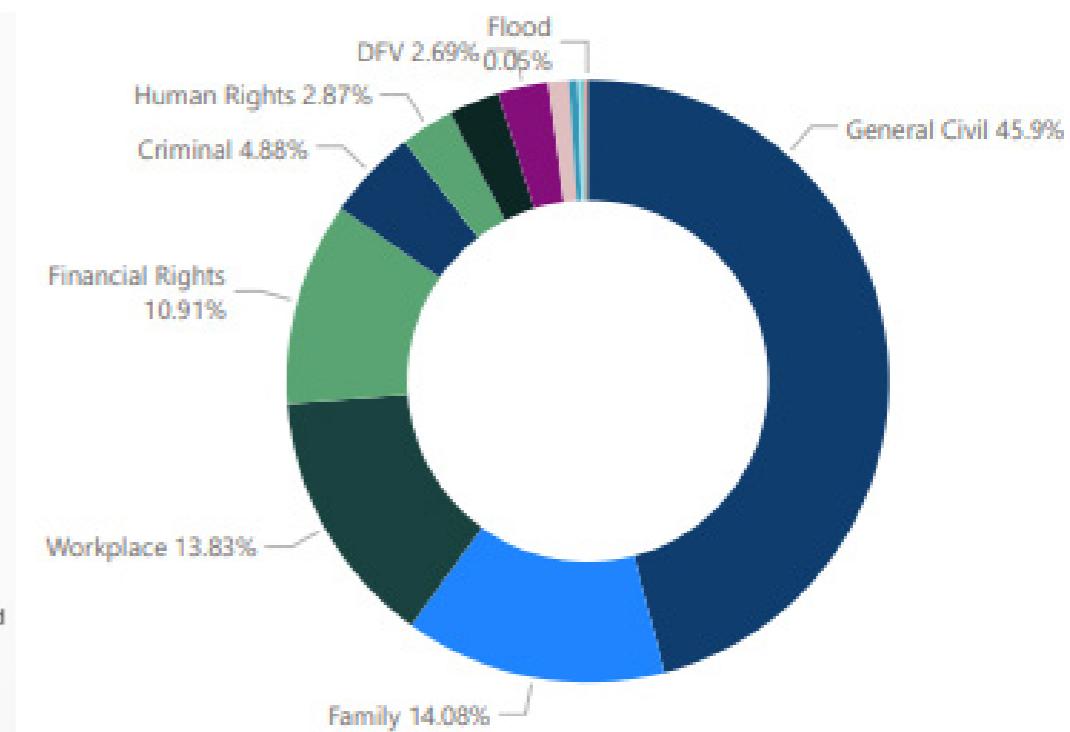
## TURN AWAYS—REASONS BY CALLER TYPE



Current Client	116
New Client/Service User	19
Third Party	2
New Client/Service User	342
Current Client	20
Third Party	5
New Client/Service User	262
Third Party	23
Current Client	20
New Client/Service User	283
Third Party	74
Current Client	42
New Client/Service User	1605
Current Client	509
Third Party	104
New Client/Service User	2307
Current Client	297
Third Party	159

## TURN AWAYS—LEGAL AREAS

General Civil
Family Law
Workplace
Financial Rights
Criminal
Domestic and Family Violence
Elder abuse
Human Rights
Retirement Villages and Manufactured homes parks
Coronial



# ENHANCED SERVICE ACCESS PROGRAM



## Evening Advice Service (EAS)

This service is how Caxton started and it still remains a volunteer-led advice service for the community who cannot afford legal advice about family, workplace, consumer credit and debt issues, criminal and policing decisions, guardianship and administration and other civil law issues.

### EVENING ADVICE SERVICE

Throughout the year, **148** dedicated **volunteers** provided **2111** legal services across a range of areas including family law, criminal law, civil law and employment law.

Since our commencement in 1976, Caxton's Evening Advice Service has provided free legal services to members of the community who would otherwise be unable to access legal assistance outside of business hours.

The service operates three nights per week and is delivered by volunteer legal practitioners under the supervision of Caxton's Evening Advice Service team.

The service plays a vital role in improving access to justice by harnessing the expertise of our volunteers to expand our capacity to see more clients and connecting them with ongoing legal assistance, social support and financial counselling where needed.

The Evening Advice Service continues to strengthen its operations through improved coordination, volunteer engagement and integration with Caxton's specialist legal and social support programs. With the ongoing generosity and commitment of our volunteer lawyers, barristers, students and pro bono partner firms, the service remains a cornerstone of Caxton's work to increase accessibility to high-quality legal advice for individuals when they need it the most.



Caxton's Volunteer Party 2025



## Mental Health

### Multicultural Advocacy and Legal Service (MALS)

A health justice partnership with World Wellness Group bringing together a lawyer, multicultural advocates and peer support workers to overcome the access to justice barriers faced by people with a multicultural background who have a mental health issue.

### MULTICULTURAL ADVOCACY AND LEGAL SERVICE

**165** legal advices

**116** information services

**225** referrals

**60** legal tasks

**221** advocacy supports

**60** secondary consultations

Our co-located lawyer at World Wellness Group (WWG) increases access to legal services for communities facing multiple barriers.

Clients presented with issues such as domestic violence, family law, employment, debt, human rights and discrimination.

# ENHANCED SERVICE ACCESS PROGRAM

## MULTICULTURAL ADVOCACY AND LEGAL SERVICE cont.

### OUR CLIENTS

**90%** experienced financial disadvantage

**70%** spoke a language other than English

**55%** reported a disability

**41%** required interpretation

Capacity building is a core feature of the partnership. WWG staff accessed

**60** **secondary consultations** (professional guidance on deidentified matters) with the MALS lawyer, strengthening their ability to identify legal issues early and connect clients to the right support.

We also delivered

**12** **community legal education sessions** and produced

**13** **resources** for multicultural communities and frontline workers.

Engagement remained strong, with

**28** **stakeholder activities** and ongoing warm referral pathways with the Refugee and Immigration Legal Service, the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture

and Trauma, the Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre, Multicultural Australia and Caxton's broader health-justice partnerships.

Mid-term outcomes show growing trust and reliance on the service, with clients reporting improved understanding of their rights and greater confidence navigating legal systems. Many have accessed Caxton's specialist programs for further assistance, demonstrating the role MALS plays in bridging service gaps for people who would otherwise miss out on legal help.

The partnership continues to strengthen through a formal MOU and shared values between Caxton and WWG. Early lessons highlight how primary health settings create greater visibility, fewer co-location barriers and stronger relationships with communities.

This service has also contributed to statewide collaboration through the Queensland Health Justice Partnership Network, supporting greater integration across legal, health and mental-health services.

### ASHWIN'S STORY

Ashwin, an Indian man in his early thirties, experienced serious domestic violence from his Australian-born spouse who had sponsored his partner visa. As a male victim from a CALD background, he faced cultural stigma, isolation and threats of visa cancellation, all of which made seeking help difficult. His wife used physical violence, coercive control, financial abuse and surveillance, and her substance dependency created further instability. Ashwin developed depression and sleep issues affecting his daily functioning. After a violent incident during cyclone Alfred, he left the home and became homeless. Although he later reported the abuse to police, his complaint was not taken seriously and no protection was offered.

Ashwin was referred to MALS by his psychologist at World Wellness Group. We arranged appointments alongside his health visits due to ongoing safety risks. At our first meeting, Ashwin had not fully recognised his experiences as domestic and family violence. We provided trauma-informed, culturally responsive legal advice, including information about his rights under domestic violence legislation and the family violence provisions of the Migration Act. We made a warm referral to RAILS, who supported him to apply for permanent residency. We also assisted with emergency financial support, explored safe accommodation options, and advised him of his rights as a victim of violence.

With coordinated health and legal support, Ashwin came to understand the abuse was unlawful and that protection was available. He obtained permanent residency in mid 2025, providing safety, stability and the ability to rebuild his life.

This outcome reflects the key strengths of the MALS model: integrated, trauma-informed and culturally safe support; strong collaboration between health and legal services; and improved engagement with the justice system where other mechanisms had failed.

Ashwin will continue to receive support through Caxton's programs, including financial rights assistance and ongoing mental-health support through WWG. He has expressed deep gratitude, noting he now feels confident about where to seek help.



Caxton staff at WWG's house-warming event February 2025



# Law reform

Advocating for reform of unfair laws, policies and systems is a key part of Caxton's purpose in promoting and protecting human rights through access to justice. This year we

participated in more than **45** law reform activities. We contributed submissions to various inquiries and/or draft bills relating to anti-discrimination, domestic and family violence, victims' rights, insurers' response to the 2022 flood claims, elder abuse, workers' rights and consumer protection. Mainly we concentrated on eight significant law reform agendas.

## 1 Anti-discrimination

On 10 September, the most significant changes to Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act, since its introduction over 30 years ago, were passed by state parliament. This is important for Caxton because it means that most of the main structural recommendations we were agitating for from the publication of the ten-point plan in 2021 onwards were implemented.

Key reforms included:

- intersectional discrimination: individuals can combine attributes (e.g. disability plus gender)
- revised test for indirect discrimination: simplified to a 'disadvantage' test
- revised test for direct discrimination: changed from 'less favourable' to 'unfavourable' treatment, removing the need for a comparator
- extended time limit: complaint time limit extended to two years
- Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) powers for systemic investigations: commission empowered to probe broader systemic breaches (not only sex discrimination)
- partially reversed onus-of-proof and reporting requirements, and mandated that the QHRC issue guidelines on positive duties and other elements
- addition (or amendment) of new protected attributes such as victim-survivors of domestic or family violence, people experiencing homelessness, irrelevant criminal record, irrelevant medical record, physical appearance and expunged convictions.

Although the reforms were scheduled to commence on 1 July 2025, in March 2025 the newly elected Queensland government

announced a pause on the implementation to allow further consultation. No new commencement timetable is yet confirmed.

## 2 Domestic and family violence

From 1 January 2026, police will be able to issue on-the-spot police protection directions (PPD) lasting up to 12 months. These directions have the same effect as a court-ordered domestic violence order.

As part of our submissions on the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which introduced PPDs, we expressed grave concerns about the impact of giving time-poor police expanded discretion to decide safety outcomes based on a rapid assessment at the scene and without court oversight. This new framework may result in fewer people accessing support services, including safety planning, housing, and drug, alcohol and behaviour change programs that are currently available when they attend court in person.

We continue to advocate for safeguards that protect rights, ensure fairness and uphold the safety and dignity of all people affected by domestic and family violence.

## 3 Elder abuse

Caxton is regarded as being a national leader in preventing and responding to elder abuse. We have developed innovative models and strategies, such as our multidisciplinary social support and legal service delivery, to respond to elder abuse.

This year has been a particularly active one for Caxton in contributing to law reform in this area.

We have fed into the speaking points of Elder Abuse Action Australia (EAAA) who attended the Australian Human Rights Commission's roundtable on the Human Rights of Older Persons in November 2024.

We attended the Parliamentary Friends of Seniors event held at Parliament House to persuade government to make elder abuse a priority issue and increase funding to services that respond to elder abuse across Australia.

We have made a substantial contribution to the State Government's Elder Abuse Data Governance Strategy as well as making a submission to the draft National Plan to end the Abuse of Older Persons, along with engaging in two consultations about that with EAAA and the Attorney-General's Department.

In April, we submitted 55 recommendations to the Inquiry into Elder Abuse in Queensland. Caxton had the opportunity to address the committee at a hearing in August 2025.

## 4 Litigation guardians and access to justice

Fairer laws and systems are needed for people with impaired decision-making capacity to get legal help. According to 2016 estimates, one in forty Queenslanders have impaired decision-making capacity, although this is likely to be much higher with population ageing and growth. Their right to bring or defend legal proceedings, equal to people with decision-making capacity, is substantially impacted by unfair laws and systems that do not provide a structure for supported decision making nor, when that is insufficient, a working litigation guardianship role.

People with impaired decision-making capacity are presented with a double-whammy. They are often unable to get a lawyer to act for them and not allowed to represent themselves in court. Rules set up to protect them are acting against them and contravene rights under the Human Rights Act for equal recognition and protection of the law. Urgent reform is needed in this area.

Improvement could come through two mechanisms. Firstly, the number of instances where a lawyer could assist a person with impaired decision-making capacity can be increased with better training and awareness for lawyers to support their clients to give instructions and receive legal assistance. This can include learning communication techniques, how to optimise the environment, and being inclusive of the person's supportive arrangements. Secondly, changes to the laws, along with adequate funding for those changes to be implemented, are needed to increase the number and ways in which a litigation guardian can be made available.

We have worked with the Public Advocate to bring this matter to the fore. Firstly, we commissioned an Issues Paper provided to the Public Advocate. Secondly, on 29 November 2024, the Public Advocate hosted a roundtable with various stakeholders to discuss problems with the operation of litigation guardianship and to identify potential solutions. The results of that discussion and the recommendations for reform are on the Public Advocate's website.

# Law reform

## 5 Advocacy for gender-affirming care

Caxton has signed a public letter to the Queensland Premier organised by Equality Australia objecting to a directive by Queensland Health to suspend gender-affirming care for young people.

Our support of this letter is on the grounds that the directive is contrary to what is required to be considered for it to be compatible with human rights under our *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*.

## 6 Consumer protections

Caxton provided submissions on the amendments to the manufactured homes and retirement villages Regulations. We also provided feedback on registration and comparison forms, and contracts and sales implementation under the *Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003 (Qld)*. We also made submissions on the Scams Prevention Framework exposure draft and the Australian Financial Complaints Authority's approach to the duty of care not to make a misrepresentation in relation to general insurance. We also provided feedback to the Office of Fair Trading on what their priorities should be for 2025-2026. We were invited to discuss our recommendations in greater detail with the Director of Complaint and Program Coordination.

## 7 Disasters

In 2023, Caxton provided a submission to the Inquiry into Insurers' Responses to 2022 Major Floods Claims. The report was released in October. Caxton's submission and contribution to the roundtable held in April 2024 were referenced extensively in the report by name, with quotations included in relation to several of the points made. This

has been a great piece of advocacy for our clients and, if the report's recommendations are adopted, will make disaster-related claims fairer and more transparent, particularly for vulnerable claimants.

## 8 Workers' rights

The Workers' Rights team continued to play an active role in both state and national communities of practice. The team contributed to important discussions on best-practice service delivery and emerging trends in workplace rights. They also participated in several reference groups, including the Fair Work Ombudsman's reference group, where they provided input on the ombudsman's policies and practices. Through these networks, the team was engaged in the Workplace Justice Visa Pilot and successfully completed the onboarding process. The pilot seeks to enable accredited third parties to assist migrant workers to remain in Australia while their workplace issues are being resolved. Although the minister has decided not to expand the accredited third-party list at this stage, the team continues to advocate for this reform as an important access-to-justice issue.

 It has been an absolute pleasure to support you both in this role and I'm grateful to have been given this opportunity to grow & develop in my career. 

# Work-integrated learning

### 6 Paralegals

Students are immersed in everyday legal work and assist practice teams in part-time paralegal roles.

### 6 Student Clinics

Each semester law students learn practical skills while they assist real-world clients in a variety of practice areas.

### 322 Days

An intensive 80-day hands-on practical legal training program is offered within particular practice teams.

### 2500 Hours

Placements of 500 hours each are offered twice a year to students undertaking degrees in social work.

**Social-work students** experienced a variety of tasks including direct intake and client work (in the office, at home or community visits and at courts), attendance at community events, client feedback surveys, running meetings and taking minutes or specific research to support Caxton's work.

**Our student clinics** were offered in conjunction with the University of Queensland (two clinics) and Griffith University (four clinics). Legal clinics are provided in various areas of practice. With guidance and supervision from senior lawyers, students assisted with client interviews, took instructions, carried out legal research, drafted letters, assisted the duty lawyer and received additional helpful training in our multidisciplinary approach from social workers.

Our Seniors Legal and Advice Service profited from two paralegal roles, while the other paralegals worked in the Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Service, the Queensland Retirement Village and Park Advice Service, the Human Rights and Civil Law Practice and Families and Domestic Violence team. Students were immersed in everyday legal work and provide much needed assistance to our legal teams.

We invested time to ensure students and paralegals have appropriate tasks and are well supervised, and we appreciated their much needed assistance and many contributions.



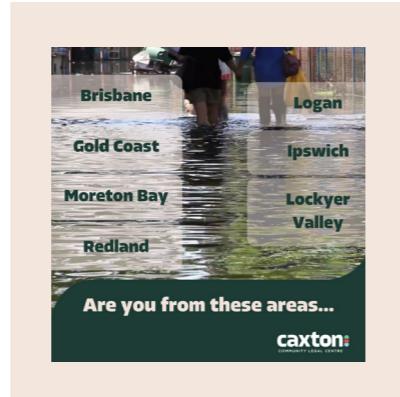
# Community engagement

We were involved in **748** community education, engagement and stakeholder activities.

A snippet of our activities:

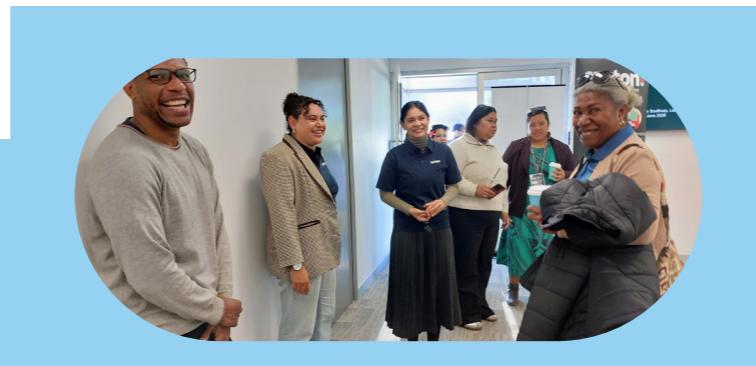
## Cyclone Alfred rapid response

In anticipation of ex-tropical cyclone Alfred's landfall, we opened a disaster legal helpline to assist people in our local government areas with 'same-day' legal advice and social supports. Days before the cyclone's landfall, we launched a social media campaign to raise awareness of the possible legal consequences of natural disasters and of people's rights in the aftermath. Our ten-second video series on social media was viewed over 44 500 times.



## Caxton supports Salvos' First Nations programs and multicultural clients

We provided legal education sessions on employment and financial rights to Salvos' First Nations and multicultural clients.



## Caxton's online engagement and digital reach

Caxton saw unprecedented increase in online engagement and digital reach, with its disaster-related socials campaign driving high traffic to its social media channels, website and the *Queensland Law Handbook*.

On Facebook, retirement living and elder abuse-related content were the key drivers, whilst employment and volunteer opportunities were the most popular content on LinkedIn.

We also noticed a surge in traffic from chatgpt.com to the *Queensland Law Handbook*. From modest numbers of

**68** users in December 2024, the number grew to **554** users in May 2025.

This indicates that ChatGPT is increasingly directing users to both caxton.org.au and the law handbook, reinforcing Caxton's position as a trusted source of legal information in Queensland.

## Caxton's CEO leads call to action

Cybèle Koning delivered the keynote speech at the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day sector event *Unite for Change* to highlight the critical role of collaboration in responding and preventing mistreatment of older people.



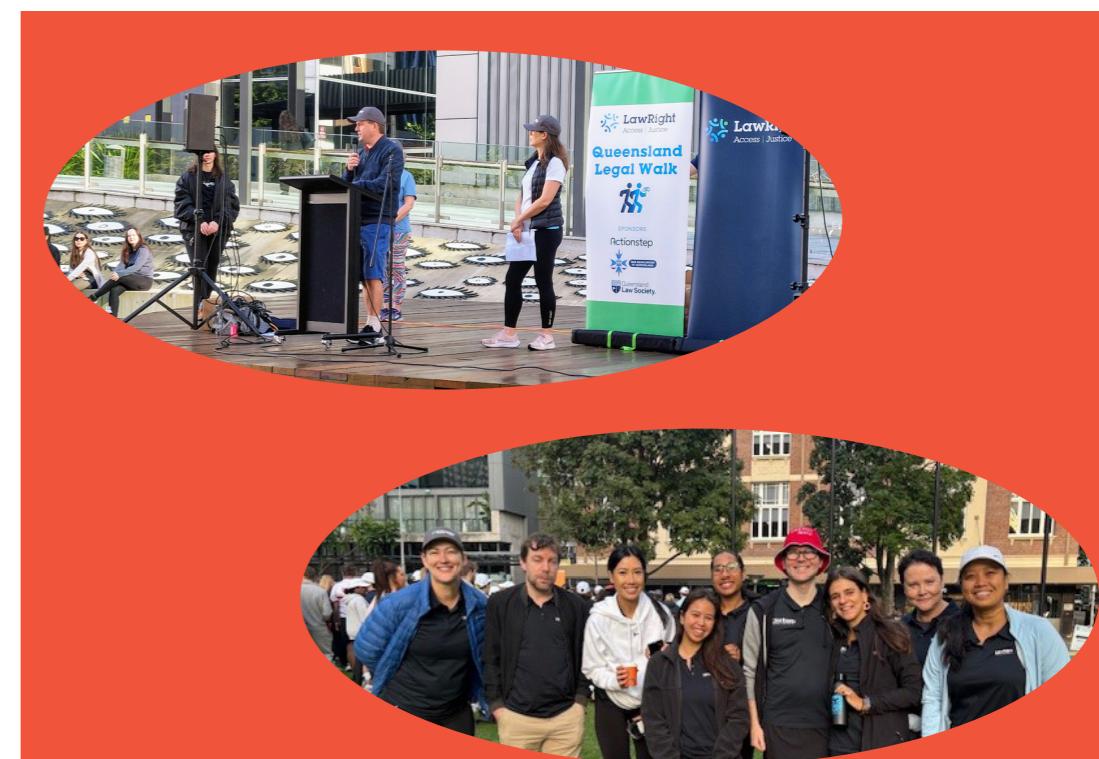
## First Nations staff leads conversation on Closing the Gap

First Nations lawyer Hannah Marai highlighted the challenges of building intergenerational wealth within Indigenous families and the importance of cultural capability in engaging with First Nations clients in two online articles, published in the May 2025 edition of Queensland Law Society's Proctor. She also drew attention to the 47% First Nations Australians who had completed tertiary education but remain lagging behind the rest of Australia despite their drive and ambition to succeed.



## Caxton staff supports LawRight

Caxton staff walked to support LawRight Queensland's Legal Walk to raise funds and spotlight the ever-growing need for better access to justice in Queensland. Hundreds of legal practitioners, social workers and social justice advocates took to the streets of Brisbane's CBD on 4 June, raising over \$130 000.



# The value of volunteering

Our volunteers very generously contribute their time and expertise to support Caxton in many different ways and, with that, so many clients who, without our volunteers, would not receive assistance.

They contributed **11000 hours** to the value of **\$2.2 million<sup>1</sup>**

and provided **2111 legal services.**

**Management Committee**  
provides governance and risk support.

**Pro Bono Law Firms**  
assist with representation, organisational support and legal research.

**Pro Bono Barristers**  
assist with client representation.

**Volunteer Lawyers**  
assist with free advice sessions.

**Other Volunteers**  
assist with daily client services and admin tasks.

**Graduate Lawyers**  
as secondees assist our clients to navigate the legal process.

**SECTOR:** **55%** are solicitors in private practice with the remaining mainly being barristers, government lawyers and students.

**ROLE AT CAXTON:** **68%** volunteer in the evening advice program, **30%** in our daytime volunteer clinic and **9%** have provided pro bono representation.

**CONTRIBUTION TYPE:** **64%** perform their role in their 'own time', **25%** as part of their firm's pro bono work and **11%** as both.

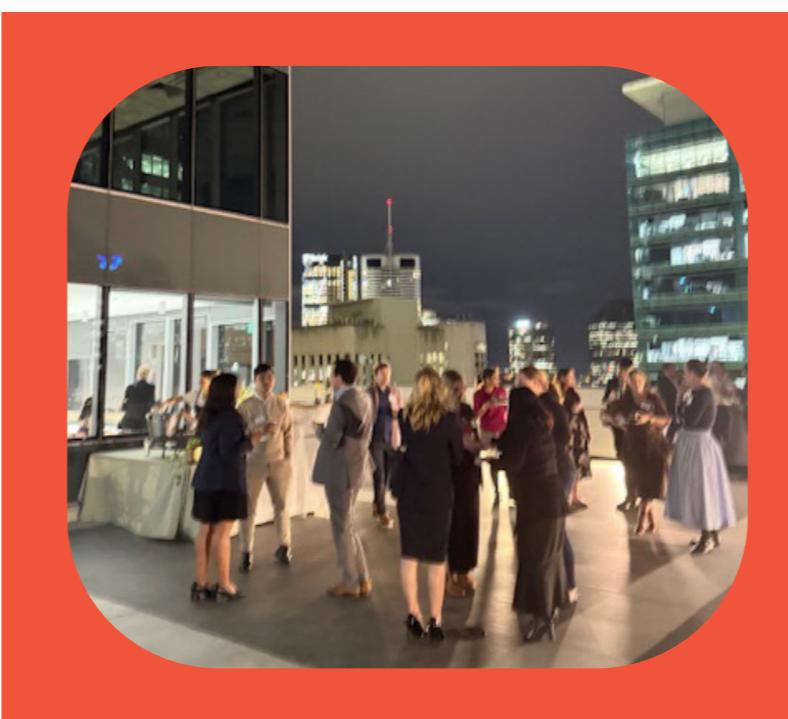
**RETENTION:** **94%** of volunteers intend to continue volunteering with Caxton in the next six to twelve months.

**MOTIVATION:** Volunteers are mostly motivated by 'making a positive impact', 'supporting a cause I believe in' and 'improving skills'.

**SUPPORT:** **89%** feel well supervised and supported.

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE:** **87%** feel like their contribution has made an impact on improving access to justice.

**VALUED:** **85%** feel their contribution is valued and acknowledged by Caxton.



Our valued volunteers at our volunteer appreciation party 2025

**Meeting people from various backgrounds in the law.**

**I value the support and supervision provided by Caxton's subject-matter experts and the fact that clients can receive multidisciplinary support from professionals such as social workers and financial counsellors.**

**Being able to give back to the community. Also learning about different areas of law.**

<sup>1</sup> This conservative estimate is based on data we collect about the number of pro bono/volunteer hours cross-checked with volunteer survey data. We calculate this to be 11268 hours. It is likely to be between 12000 and 13000 hours if we added in pro bono barrister time. The value of these hours has been calculated by applying a conservative rate of \$200 per hour.

# Thank you volunteers

You donate your time, expertise and energy expecting nothing in return. You are always so respectful and kind to the people we serve, and we know you made an enormous difference in their lives with your advice and encouraging words. You absolutely represent our values here at Caxton Community Legal Centre.

You truly need to know how grateful we are for your contributions. With your help, we were able to ensure justice where it was needed most. We truly could not have done it without you.

A special thank you must go to the members of the Bar who selflessly assisted with a number of matters in court and achieved many positive outcomes that undeniably changed our clients' lives.

Our unreserved **Thank You** goes to:

## Law Firms

Allens  
Barry Nilsson  
Clayton Utz  
DWF Lawyers  
Hall & Wilcox  
Herbert Smith Freehills  
Hopgood Ganim  
Maurice Blackburn  
McInnes Wilson  
Minter Ellison  
Wotton & Kearney

## Barristers

Aidan Bryant  
Angus Scott KC  
Anna Crawford  
Ben McGlade  
Ben Taylor  
Bianca Mendelson  
Bianca Stringer  
Bridget O'Brien  
Charlotte Yellowlees  
Damien Payard  
Duncan Marckwald  
Dylan Kerr  
Edmund Robinson  
Emily Lewsey  
Emma Fitzgerald  
Felicity Nagorcka  
Grant Thomas  
Harold Rafter  
Holli Edwards  
Jack Kennedy  
Jayleigh Sargent  
Joshua Liddle  
Jozef Borja-Erece  
Julia Braddick  
Kara Thomson  
Kayla Milana  
Kristin Duff  
Lara Soldi  
Laura Dawson  
Matt Jackson  
Matthew Jones KC  
Mitch Rawlings  
Mitchell Duncan  
Patrick Wilson KC  
Peta Willoughby  
Rachel Varshney  
Reimen Hii  
Robert Gallo  
Ryan Nattrass  
Sarah Lane  
Scott Carter  
Sean Lamb  
Stephen Colditz

## Lawyers

Alexander Stewart  
Anita Marie Hall  
Aurora Ihalainen  
Bhavna Sahai Balyan  
Bradley Ellacott  
Brianna Kerwin  
Bridget Barford  
Brigid Kelly  
Brittany Anderson  
Bronte Jackson  
Cameron Niven  
Ciara Furlong  
Daniel Clare  
Daniel Song  
Danyon Jacobs  
Daryl Choong  
Dermot Peverill  
Duncan Marckwald  
Eashwar Alagappan  
Elena Marchetti  
Eliana Lozano  
Elizabeth Harvey  
Ellie Conroy  
Emily Trompf  
Emma Davidson  
Emma Kirkby  
Erica Wilkinson  
Ferdinand Kaptich  
Graeme Haas  
Hayley Feakes  
Hazel Vickers  
Isaac Douglas  
Jack Crittenden  
Jack Holmes  
Jack McDonald  
Jane Kam  
Jasmin Graves  
Jay Tseng  
Jessica Grumelart  
Jessie Browne  
Joanne de Jesus  
Jonathan Law  
Julian Walsh

## Kara Batchelor Stephanie Dunell

Kelvin Lee  
Ken Mackenzie  
Kimia Zarei  
Kylie Bell  
Levanna Lam  
Lilian Zhou  
Lily Porceddu  
Linda Cho  
Lisa Walker  
Luke De Michele  
Madeleine Behne  
Manh Nguyen  
Marcela Salgado Mar  
Margot Gladstone  
Maria Clemente  
Marina Misikic  
Mark Moorhead  
Marnie Hillis  
Matthew Proctor  
Melanie Karibasic  
Michelle Cowan  
Nathan Chalmers  
Nicola Bowes  
Nicole Smith  
Patricija Grigutyte  
Paul Lucas  
Penny Williams  
Peter Wrigley  
Phil Hall  
Quintessa Denniz  
Rachel Carson  
Rachel Li  
Rachna Nagesh  
Sakshi Bhati  
Samantha Ramsay  
Sarah Pascoe  
Sarmad Aljassim  
Scott Thompson  
Sean Mei  
Shannon Chen  
Shaun Chng  
Shivendren Reddy  
Stacey Ward

## Students

Alex Gehrke  
Amelia Vanderstoep  
Anastasia Jackson  
Angelique Shaw  
Archer Sulivan  
Cameron Bowie  
Campbell Garrett  
Charlotte Noonan  
Christina McKay  
Claire Reid  
Dee Gouden  
Delou Uwayo  
Diana Methu  
Dushyant Kumar  
Emma Cooney  
Eno-Obong Akpan  
Erin Shutter  
Farah Tarzi  
Fatima Damarda  
Heath Huelin  
Holly Sangster  
Hussain Ismail  
Isabella Altof  
Jack Qi  
James Arthur  
Jamie Mohr  
Jamie Singh  
Janet McKeon  
Jim Yoo  
Jonathan May  
Julia Harvey  
Keira Peirce  
Kim Hong  
Leah Murrie  
Leesa Martin  
Madison Bishop  
Mia Cusack  
Michelle Annette  
Nathaniel Audley  
Noah Conlan  
Olivia Nilsson  
Patrick Leahy  
Raweena Raval

## Ryan Xu Sandhya Byrnes Seongeun Choi Shri Murali Siobhan Callum Sofia Miu Sophie Blatcher Sophie Dew Stefanee Lynagh Stella Dziov Stephanie Weibe Thando Gwuan Tyra Zacka William Torto Zane Wechon Zoe Fraser



Our valued volunteers at our  
volunteer appreciation party 2025

# Safe and sustainable Caxton

**200 hours** of external support provided to staff

**20%** of staff are mental-health first-aid trained

This year Caxton, with the support of Jobs Queensland via their Queensland Care Consortium program, launched a *Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy* focused on preventing harm, promoting health and safety, supporting diversity and inclusion, and establishing safe systems of work.

Dubbed 'Safe and Sustainable Caxton', this program was designed to provide all staff with external training and supervision, and stronger frameworks and supports to manage psychosocial hazards and vicarious trauma, and promote the importance of employee wellbeing within the workplace.

This strategy is built on four pillars:

- culture
- leadership
- people
- systems.

It includes comprehensive training programs such as Mental Health First Aid, leadership training, trauma-informed legal assistance, de-escalation training, cultural supervision and managing psychosocial hazards.



[Caxton's external support] was professional, highly intuitive and gave me practical advice that I was able to immediately apply.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to receive supports from someone of her calibre and experience.

Staff engagement was strong, with positive feedback on cultural check-ins, wellness workshops and external supervision.

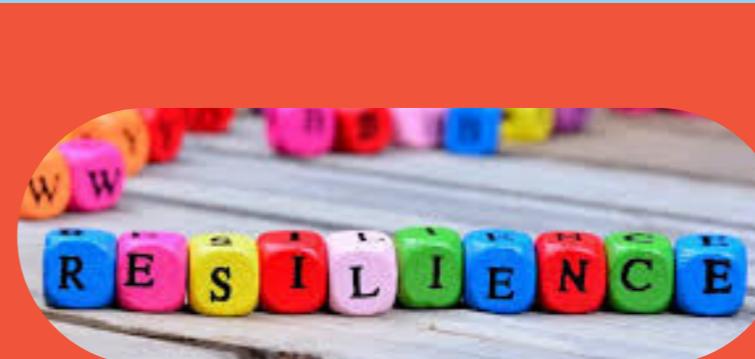
Almost 20% of our staff received training on mental-health first aid, and our new initiatives, such as an internal wellness newsletter and tailored support for neurodiverse team members, have helped foster resilience and inclusion.

Inclusivity remains a strong focus for Caxton, with inclusion training focusing on First Nations, cultural diversity, gender equity, LGBTIQA+ and generational diversity. We were able to provide staff with paid leave to attend LGBTIQA+ events.

This funding enabled us to both improve overall wellbeing for our staff and better manage psychosocial hazards.

Retention rates for staff, which can often be challenging in this sector, have continued to improve. Our employees have a clearer understanding of their obligations surrounding managing vicarious trauma, and the initiatives we have undertaken, and will continue to undertake, to enhance their wellbeing and create a sustainable workplace.

We celebrated cultural connections, diversity and inclusion with solidarity, commemoration and awareness



## Resilience-building tips to bounce back stronger:

- embrace the power of perspective: shifting your perspective can reduce stress and help you focus on solutions instead of problems
- build your support network: surround yourself with people who uplift and support you. Connection is a powerful tool for bouncing back
- practice mindful breathing to calm your nervous system and bring you back to the present moment



## CLOSING THE GAP DAY

### Workplace mental health for employees and for leaders

- self-paced e-learning modules for all staff
- let's work together to build a more inclusive, informed, respectful and mentally healthy workplace for all



# Report from the Treasurer



Our Treasurer  
Bernard Curran

Caxton completed the 2024-2025 financial year by hitting a significant milestone—for the first time in our history we have exceeded \$10 million in revenue. This pleasing result has come from a significant increase in our core Commonwealth and state funding as well as further revenue diversification from investment income and donations.

Revenue increased by almost 20% year-on-year to \$11.8 million, while employee expenses increased by 17.2%. To support our commitment to our staff, Caxton invested more than ever in staff training and development, but also in the right leadership and support staff to manage the growth Caxton has experienced and to continue to provide exceptional client service.

We finished the year with a surplus of \$213 521, which includes investment income and donations. All major funding agreements have been fully financially acquitted. This surplus, added to our strong cash position, which increased by \$580 000 year-on-year, and places Caxton well as we look to our *Towards 2032 Strategic Plan* in line with the Brisbane Olympics.

Net equity at the end of the financial year was \$5.5 million, continuing our year-on-year trend of strengthening our balance sheet while continuing to provide high-quality outcomes for clients and meeting our deliverables across our funded programs.

In the 2024-2025 financial year, we received a significant boost to our core National Legal Assistance Partnership funding from the state and Commonwealth. This funding, which was initially intended as one-off funding for the current financial year but has since been extended through to 2030, enabled us to implement workforce planning and remuneration structures to increase our staff retention rates and recruitment, and enhance wellbeing and reduce psychosocial hazards in the workplace. This funding enabled us to complete our ongoing remuneration strategy to ensure that all professional staff had a clear promotion pathway from paralegal or social work graduate through to senior lawyer or social worker. More than 50% of our staff received a direct increase to their pay, and 100% of staff received both an increase to their superannuation and enhanced employment conditions including greater access to more and varied leave, external supervision and support.

As we look to the 2025-2026 financial year we have partnered with an investment manager to steward the funds received from the sale of our building in 2022. These funds are prudently invested in an ethically responsibly manner in line with the Caxton Way, and are intended to grow alongside our ordinary operations in order to ensure Caxton's ongoing financial stability and strategic agility. We are well placed to take advantage of ongoing global market growth while retaining sufficient financial flexibility to be able to deploy funds to meet strategic needs that may arise.

# Our management committee

**President:** Kristin Ramsey

**Secretary:** Leanne Collingburn

**Treasurer:** Bernard Curran

**General members:**

Alf Davis

Amanda Alford

Dan Rogers (retired)

Josh Mennen

Lana Godfrey

Mark Thomas (retired)

Mitch Redford

Nicola Doumany

## Funding sources

We gratefully acknowledge the state and national bodies who funded our various programs across our practices that deliver frontline services for vulnerable Queenslanders. In particular, we acknowledge the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and the Department of Justice, the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, and the Department of Housing and Public Works.



Australian Government

Funded by



Queensland Government

## Partnerships

Caxton works closely with community organisations and groups, government departments and key individuals to improve the coordination and delivery of legal and social support services across the justice system.



IUIH  
institute for  
urban indigenous health



Griffith  
UNIVERSITY



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA



UnitingCare



TOWNSVILLE  
COMMUNITY  
LAW



Legal Aid  
QUEENSLAND



World  
Wellness  
Group



Working Women  
QUEENSLAND



Metro South  
Health



Queensland  
Government



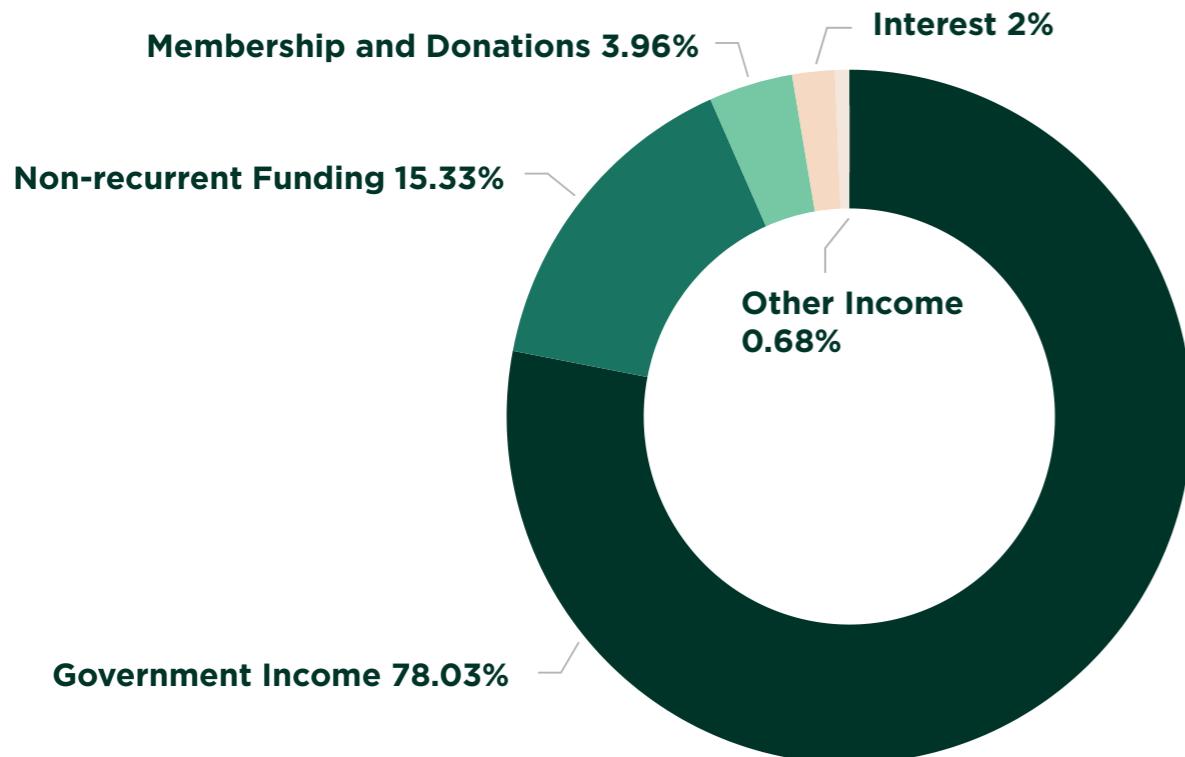
Metro North  
Health



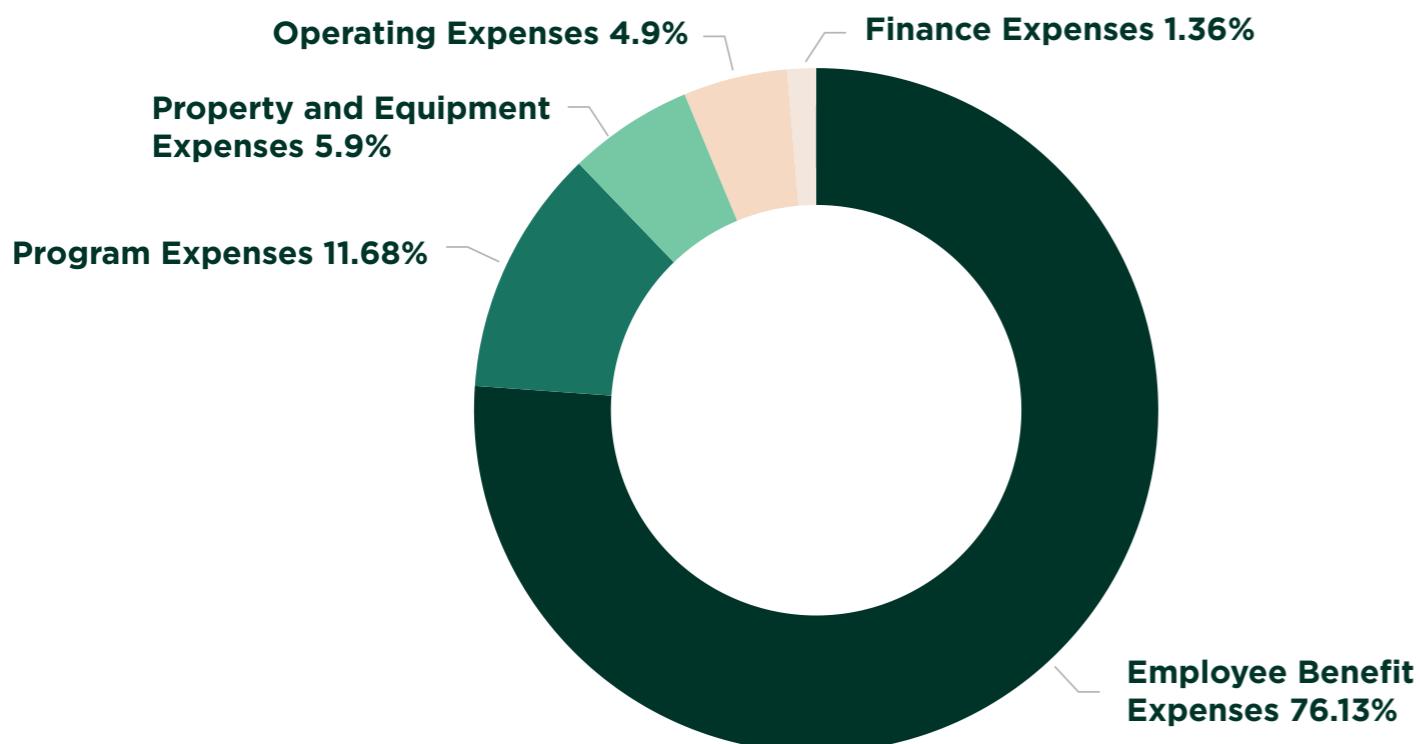
Queensland  
Government

# Financial report

## INCOME 2024-2025



## EXPENSES 2024-2025



## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	2025	2024
<b>Revenue</b>	11,563,723.72	9,660,090.26
<b>Finance Income</b>	235,877.55	262,650.05
<b>Employee Benefits Expenses</b>	8,820,864.23	7,436,884.64
<b>Property and Equipment Expenses</b>	685,017.53	802,962.28
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	569,270.87	377,012.46
<b>Program Expenses</b>	1,352,835.88	1,049,189.82
<b>Finance Expenses</b>	158,108.94	10,991.05
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>213,521.82</b>	<b>245,700.06</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

	2025	2024
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets	7,279,049.81	6,800,850.31
Non-current Assets	2,993,326.72	3,539,626.75
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>10,272,376.53</b>	<b>10,340,477.06</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities	1,438,907.42	1,344,936.20
Non-current Liabilities	3,276,422.21	3,652,015.78
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>4,715,329.63</b>	<b>4,996,951.98</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>5,557,046.90</b>	<b>5,343,525.08</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Accumulated Surplus	5,557,046.90	5,343,525.08
<b>Total Members' Fund</b>	<b>5,557,046.90</b>	<b>5,343,525.08</b>

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## **Caxton Community Legal Centre**

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Level 23  
179 Turbot Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

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**F** (07) 3846 7483

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 [instagram.com/caxtonclc](https://instagram.com/caxtonclc)

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