Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre

Annual Report 2024-25





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I am delighted to present the 2024-25 Annual Report for the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre.

Year in Review

This past year has been very busy and hugely successful. We have expanded our service significantly and continued to specialise in supporting our communities' most vulnerable and disadvantaged clients.



We have met our targets across programs as well as expanded our reach and successfully met all re-accreditation standards.

I would like to thank all staff for their commitment to the service and their support to our clients.

I would like to especially thank our Managers - Corrina Graham for your determination and leadership of the Vic/NSW funded programs and to Brendan Delahunty who has provided onsite management to our Far West NSW team since October 2025.

A huge thanks also to our Principal Solicitor, Leanne Bosman, who has provided unwavering guidance and support to our legal teams.

This Annual Report highlights some of our many achievements over the past year as well as the impact our work has in people's lives. We look forward to celebrating our 30th birthday next year.

Well done to all and thank you to both the Commonwealth and State Government funding bodies

Lisa-Maree Stevens
Executive General Manager

Community, Mental Health and Wellbeing Mallee Family Care

From the Managers and Principal Solicitor

In the 2024-25 Financial Year, the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) focused on expanding and strengthening our response to our communities.

Extending our services by opening a new office in Broken Hill in July 2024 has enabled the recruitment of a new manager, to oversee our operations in Far West New South Wales. This has proven to be a vital and valuable role within the new site.

Given the rural and remote location of our sites we have experienced ongoing challenges with recruitment of Solicitors. However, after engaging a recruitment service, the MFC CLC welcomed three new highly-skilled Solicitors. We are cognisant that staff retention in rural areas is commonly for short periods of time and continue to work on strategies to attract and retain our staff.

Our integrated practice framework was strengthened throughout the year with the inclusion of an additional Social Worker to assist clients within the Flood Support program. The integration of Social Workers and Financial Counsellors is a vital and essential element of MFC CLC's work. It offers a unique opportunity for professionals to collaborate and work holistically to provide better outcomes for our clients in a community legal centre setting. MFC CLC is very proud of the successful outcomes this framework has enabled, and we continue to streamline all processes to ensure our clients journeys are the focus.

The last year saw us transition from the CLASS client database system and implement Action Step. This has been a major challenge for all MFC CLC staff. However, given that the transition commenced in June 2025, the MFC CLC is still in the learning and development phase.

MFC CLC takes pride in the learning environment it has built and strengthened in the last year. With the inclusion of the Emerging Lawyers program (in partnership with Women's Legal Service) our commitment to offering a unique, supportive and professional training ground for new Solicitors has strengthened.

More than 1,600 people accessed the MFC CLC in the 2024-25 Financial Year and demand for community legal services continues to grow. Intakes to our Victorian/NSW offices increased by 25% with 1,899 completed in the 2024-25 FY compared to 1,517 in 2023-24FY. Our Far West offices completed 296 Intake. Assessments in their first 12 months of operation.

As a place-based service with staff who both live and work locally, we have a deep understanding of the unique challenges and strengths that define regional, rural and remote areas. Guided by the voices of our communities, we will continue to act as strong advocates and agents of positive change.

We look forward to the year ahead and remain committed to being a vital presence within our communities, responding to their diverse legal needs.



Corrina Graham Manager, Community Legal Centre Victoria/NSW



Brendan Delahunty Manager, Community Legal Centre Far West NSW



Leanne Bosman Principal Solicitor



Advice, advocacy and access to justice

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) is an integrated practice that delivers a holistic, wrap-around service to vulnerable people.

Our multi-disciplinary teams in Victoria and New South Wales stand beside people facing some of life's toughest challenges.

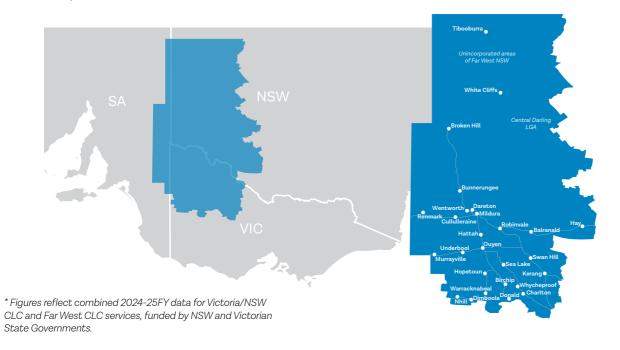
More than 1,600 people have accessed the MFC CLC in the past year. We assist clients with legal matters including:

- Family Law
- Family Violence
- · Intervention Order Support Service
- Welfare Rights

- Equal Opportunity
- Traffic Offences
- · Credit and Debt
- Consumer Problems
- Complaints
- Employment
 - · Motor Vehicle Accidents
 - · Victims Compensation
 - · Tenancy Issues

We also assist people with non-legal issues relating to family violence, mental health, cultural needs, disability and financial wellbeing.

We have offices in Mildura, Swan Hill and Broken Hill and regularly visit Robinvale, Kerang, Dareton, Wentworth, Menindee and Wilcannia.





Year in Review



(MFC CLC) now provides community legal services to more people than ever.

Led by Executive General Manager Lisa-Maree Stevens, the new centre extends our service coverage to include Far West New South Wales. Servicing an expansive catchment of 146,871 km², the Broken Hill-based MFC CLC supports some of the state's most isolated rural and remote communities.

Ms Stevens said the Far West MFC CLC was much needed, with the team completing almost 300 Intake Assessments in their first 12 months of operation.

"In remote communities, legal help has often been out of reach, both in distance and accessibility," Ms Stevens said.

"Establishing a Community Legal Centre in Broken Hill means people can get advice and support when they need it, without the long and costly journey away from their home, family and work."

During its first year, the Broken Hill centre was supported by a dedicated team including Leanne (Administration Officer), Lily Dumble (Paralegal), Phoebe Bloink-Hollier (Paralegal), Brendan Delahunty (Manager), and Justin Mitchell (Generalist Solicitor).

Together they've assisted clients with legal issues ranging from minor traffic matters to Family and Domestic Violence and Child Contact Orders.

"Our work goes well beyond legal advice. We help people navigate complex systems, connect with other vital services, and find pathways forward during some of the most challenging times in their lives."

MFC CLC has long championed the principles of Justice for All and Access to Justice. With our expansion into Far West NSW that mission continues to grow.

"Our cross-border experience positions us uniquely to deliver services in NSW and to strengthen our advocacy for these communities," Ms Stevens said.

"Our first twelve months have been a year of significant achievements, marked by both challenges and successes. We sincerely thank all staff for their commitment and outstanding

contributions throughout the year."

In June 2025, the agency received notification of an extension for another year of service provision in the Far West NSW region. This extension offers valuable continuity.

"Securing ongoing funding is critical for long-term planning, staff retention, and job security," Ms Stevens said.

"To ensure we can continue providing quality, accessible services to our community, a stable and sustainable funding model is critical".



Most common legal matters

- · Minor traffic offences
- Illicit drug offences minor
- Family or domestic violence orders
- Parenting plans, divorce & other civil







Funded programs

- · National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP) Generalist Legal Service NSW
- · Critical Service Gaps (Duty Lawyer) NSW

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Our Team

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre's team of legal and non-legal professionals is committed to providing the best service, support and outcomes for all clients.

As a place-based service provider, our staff understand and appreciate the unique circumstances and needs of the communities we support.

Tessa Amatya

Solicitor

Peter Baker

Principal Solicitor

Worker - Legal

Christine Bishop *Mental Health Social*

Phoebe Bloink Hollier

Paralegal **Leanne Bosman**

Principal Solicitor

Natahlia Brown

Team Leader Family Violence Program CLC

Lachlan Cattonar
Administration Officer Legal

Allie Collyer

Community Legal Education Worker

Brendan Delahunty

Manager, Community Legal Centre NSW

Karen De Silva Generalist Solicitor **Lily Dumble**Paralegal

Corrina Graham

Manager, Community Services

Emily Graves

Generalist Solicitor

Hening Jiang

Solicitor

Tory McNabb Financial Counsellor

Sarah Merry

Intake and Assessment Officer

Justin Mitchell

Generalist Solicitor

Katie Mliswa

Generalist Solicitor

Blaine Mortensen

Intake and Assessment Officer

Katherine Myles

Social Worker - Family Violence

Tania Pearce

Community Engagement Worker

Kim Pedler

Specialist Family Violence Solicitor

Shivana Rajendran

Solicitor - Victims Legal Service

Colin Rawnsley

Financial Counsellor Legal and Generalist

Robyne Rundell

Intake and Assessment Coordinator - Legal

Samantha Stitt

Generalist Solicitor

Sarah Taha

Senior Social Worker - Specialist Family Violence

Louise Theodore

Social Worker - Flood Support

DebbieThompson *Administration Officer*

Jane Young

Generalist Solicitor







Some of our many events including, clockwise from left: Community Walk Against Family Violence, IDAHOBIT Day, 16 Days of Activism 2024, MFC CLC Broken Hill team.











Lachlan Cattonar
Administration Officer, NSW

How long have you worked at Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre?

I joined the team on 1st July 2024 when Mallee Family Care opened its Community Legal Centre in Broken Hill.

What does your usual work week look like?

My usual week consists of many different experiences. I am at Broken Hill Court twice a week where we provide a Duty Lawyer service. I will be the first point of contact for any potential clients. I provide information about our service and explain the process so clients understand what is involved.

I also conduct all the intakes for MFC CLC Far West, which involves gathering all required information and documents to help assist our Solicitors.

Mallee Family Care is also supporting me to study my Community Services Certificate IV, so if I have free time, I will dedicate a little time and effort to that course.

What is the best thing about your job?

Days and Gamble Aware Week.

The best part of my job is the amount of assistance I can provide to all our clients, whose matters and experiences vary.

Our service is so flexible and versatile, which expands my role further to help all types of people who require or may not have usually have access to legal services.

Having grown up in Broken Hill, I also really enjoy engaging with the community and introducing them to the services we provide in Far West NSW.

Is there a highlight or story that makes you proud?

Getting a great result at court is always a highlight for me in a work week. There is nothing better than aiding a client and helping them overcome the 'what seems' a daunting task of going before the court. With our reassurance and assistance, helping them get a result that they earned can make a difference in my day.

I also really enjoy the opportunity to be part of and support community events like NAIDOC Day and Youth Week. Representing MFC CLC at these events helps to promote our service, but it also highlights our commitment to the communities we serve.

Year in Review Year in Review

Who we support

Operating across a vast catchment, Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) supports people living in some of the most rural, regional and remote areas of Victoria and New South Wales.

We are committed to providing a safe, welcoming service for everyone and recognise that each client has a unique and individual set of circumstances and needs.

As a place-based service, our experience and presence in the region positions us well to not only deliver essential services but also to advocate for the legal rights of individuals living in some of Australia's most isolated communities.

The MFC CLC supported 1,655 clients in the 2024-25 Financial Year, which is an average of almost 39 people per month.



Most common legal matters

- Family or domestic violence order
- · Family or domestic violence
- Road traffic and motor vehicle regulatory offences
- · Other civil
- Victims compensation
- · Credit and debt
- · Child contact or contact orders
- · Illicit drug offences minor
- · Property / marriage
- · Consumer complaints

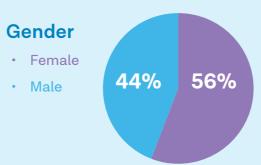
Cultural identity

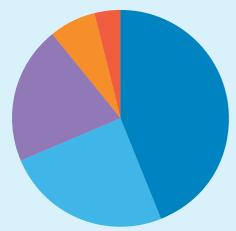
16.7% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

7.8% born outside of Australia

5.22% mainly speak a language other than English at home

2.5% utilised interpreter services



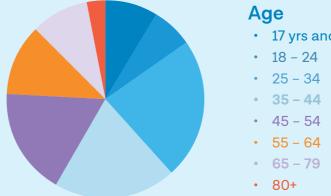


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Family circumstance

- Sole parent family with dependents 44%
- Boarder, share house, live alone, in hostel etc. **24.8%**
- Other **20.4%**
- Two parent family with dependents 7%
- Not stated 3.8%

Figures reflect combined 2024-25 FY data for Victoria/NSW MFC CLC and Far West MFC CLC services, funded by NSW and Victorian State Governments.



17 yrs and below
18 - 24
25 - 34
35 - 44
45 - 54
55 - 64
65 - 79
80+
8.8%
6.5%
23.8%
21%
17.3%
11.5%
9.3%
1.8%

Strengthening awareness through strategic communications

Over the past twelve months, the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) has significantly expanded its communications efforts to enhance awareness and understanding of the free legal services available across our region.

Recognising that many community members are unsure about when, how or even if they can access legal support, we set out to lift our visibility, break down misconceptions, and share more information about our services.

One of the most exciting developments has been the creation of a new animated explainer video. Designed to demystify who we are and what we do, the video breaks down complex information into a simple, welcoming format that speaks to all ages and backgrounds. The video has already become an invaluable tool for outreach, presentations, and digital engagement—helping people quickly understand both the scope of our work and how to access support when they need it.

Another focus was strengthening our presence on social media. We increased both the frequency and clarity of MFC CLC content to enhance awareness and visibility of the service. 26 posts featuring MFC CLC-related content appeared across the agency's LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram accounts in the 2024-25 FY. These generated 64,371 impressions and 7,127 interactions, ultimately helping to boost awareness of the service.

For the first time ever, we also invested in digital advertising on social media to reach a greater audience in our catchment. This was particularly important as we opened a new centre in Broken Hill, where there was limited prior public awareness about our services.

Digital advertising campaigns for the MFC CLC ran during February, March and April 2025, generating more than half a million impressions across Instagram and Facebook. In total, these ads were clicked on 2.953 times.

Introducing digital campaigns and utilising social media more to spread MFC CLC messages helped drive more traffic to our website. Views on the Legal page of the website grew by 25.7% compared to the year prior, while there was a 21.4% increase in active users. Average time spent on the page also jumped by 30%.

Together, these initiatives reflect our commitment to providing clear, accessible, and trustworthy information to the communities the MFC CLC serves. By investing in communication, we are ensuring that more people know their rights, understand their options, and feel confident reaching out for help.





Generalist Legal Program

(NSW Funded)

The Broken Hill-based Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre provides a range of free and confidential generalist legal services. In the 2024-25 Financial Year the most common legal matters we assisted with included providing Persons in Need of Protection (PINOPs) with advice, advocacy and sometimes representation at court regarding their police-initiated Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVOs), family law disputes, traffic and minor drug offences, tenancy and housing concerns, guardianship and wills, consumer and debt matters, and neighbourhood disputes.

2024-25 Client numbers

- Information 117
- · Referral 227
- · Legal advice 264
- · Legal task 120
- · Duty Lawyer 46
- · Court/tribunal services opened 20
- Stakeholder engagement 112
- Community Legal Education Worker resources 3
- Community Legal Education Worker activities 22
- Community Engagement Worker resources 6
- · Community Engagement Worker activities 9
- · Law & Legal service reform 10

Areas covered

We provide this service to people living in the Broken Hill and Central Darling local government areas and the Unincorporated Area of Far West NSW.

Duty Lawyer (NSW Funded)

Broken Hill-based Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre provides a duty lawyer service at the Broken Hill Local Court, offering support to clients facing illicit drug driving and other traffic-related charges. These matters remain among the most common legal issues in the region. Throughout the 2024-25 Financial Year, the Broken Hill office experienced significant growth in both the range and number of services delivered.

2024-25 Client numbers

- Information 35
- · Referral 94
- Legal advice 8
- · Legal task 2
- Duty Lawyer 174
- · Stakeholder engagement 78

- · Community Legal Education Worker resources 3
- · Community Legal Education Worker activities 6
- · Community Engagement Worker resources 6
- Community Engagement Worker activities 8
- · Law & Legal service reform 6

Areas covered

We provide this service to people living in the Broken Hill and Central Darling local government areas and the Unincorporated Area of Far West NSW.

Far West Outcomes

In 2024–25 Financial Year, the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre successfully established a fully operational centre in Broken Hill within two weeks of receiving the contract to deliver legal services across Far West New South Wales.

Since its launch, the service has provided legal support to priority groups, maintained a duty lawyer service for minor traffic matters at the Broken Hill Local Court, expanded support for people experiencing family and domestic violence, and achieved positive outcomes through strong collaboration with court registry staff, police, and agency partners.

Monthly outreach clinics in Wilcannia have improved access to justice for remote communities, while

community engagement and legal education activities have helped residents build confidence to advocate for themselves.

The main legal issues addressed by the Broken Hill office included apprehended violence orders, family law matters such as parenting disputes and property settlements, and traffic or minor drug offences.

The Broken Hill team will continue to work closely and collaboratively with our team in Mildura to ensure ongoing and effective service delivery.



Connecting Far West clients with specialist legal supports Case Study

A client self-referred after receiving notice that the NSW Reconstruction Authority intended to close his file, despite ongoing issues with defective flood-repair work at his Menindee home. Repairs completed two years earlier had failed, causing the house to deteriorate. The client repeatedly attempted to contact the contractor and the specialist Legal Aid disaster response service but could not reach either.

Our team helped the client reconnect with specialist legal support and acted as a trusted link between him and the lawyer, assisting him and other agencies involved. We organised three-way conversations to ensure the client's concerns were understood and encouraged agencies to shift away from texts and letters by directing important information through his lawyer.

With support from Legal Aid and a community sector barrister, we confirmed the contractor was unlicensed, the work was uninsured and the required foundation repairs had not been completed. After the contractor declared insolvency, the Reconstruction Authority agreed to engage a licensed builder to redo the repairs.



Intake and Assessment

(VIC Funded)

The intake service offers a comprehensive assessment of need and risk to people requesting legal assistance. This assessment enables accurate identification of legal needs and streamlines the appointment process.

In the 2024-25 Financial Year, 93% of clients were able to access legal assistance in a timely manner. The average time from initial contact to a scheduled appointment was 6.7 days, an improvement from the previous year's 8.4 days.

Number of Intakes

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025





Helping clients to help themselves

Case Study

A client sought assistance to access a divorce application and understand how to complete it.

She was caring for her own children and others in her household and had limited support from her estranged husband. There were no concerns regarding property or safety, although child support payments had been inconsistent and the other party had minimal engagement with the children.

The client did not have the digital skills needed to download forms or access online self-help resources, so we supported her through each step of preparing, filing and serving her divorce application.

We successfully filed the application and helped the client and the people assisting her to ensure proper service on the other party. The matter is listed for hearing in the coming weeks and is expected to progress without issue.

The process required careful planning due to the other party's unpredictable behaviour, financial pressures on the client and the need to navigate technical service requirements within strict timeframes.



Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities

(VIC Funded)

Over the past year, the Mabels program, a collaborative partnership of Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC), Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC), and Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC), has continued to make a meaningful impact. This philanthropic partnership brings together key local organisations to provide vital support to mothers and children in the community.

The heart of the Mabels program lies in its ability to foster collaboration among service providers, creating a holistic support system that addresses both legal and non-legal needs. By ensuring that mothers and children receive the care and guidance they deserve, Mabels is making a real difference in the lives of families who need it most.

Referrals to the program are seamlessly coordinated by the MFC CLC Mabels team, in close collaboration with MRCC. This ensures that each client receives the tailored support they need. Whether it's securing legal support or accessing social services, the Mabels solicitor and social support worker work hand-in-hand with clients to arrange appointments at locations that are most convenient and comfortable for them.

Through the Mabels program, families are not only empowered to navigate legal challenges, but they also gain access to a broader network of services, reinforcing the community's commitment to their wellbeing.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the Cybec Foundation for its ongoing support and funding of the Mabels program. Their generous commitment has played a pivotal role in ensuring that this vital initiative continues to make a positive impact on the lives of mothers and children in our community. With their backing, we are able to provide the comprehensive care and support that families need, empowering them to overcome challenges and thrive.

Generalist Legal Program (VIC Funded)

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) operates as a generalist service, delivering legal advice, information and representation for a diverse range of legal matters. These include assistance with consumer issues, credit and debt challenges, traffic offences and fines, employment disputes, family law matters and welfare rights.





Areas covered

We provide this service across the following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Buloke, Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh, Wentworth, Balranald and Hay.

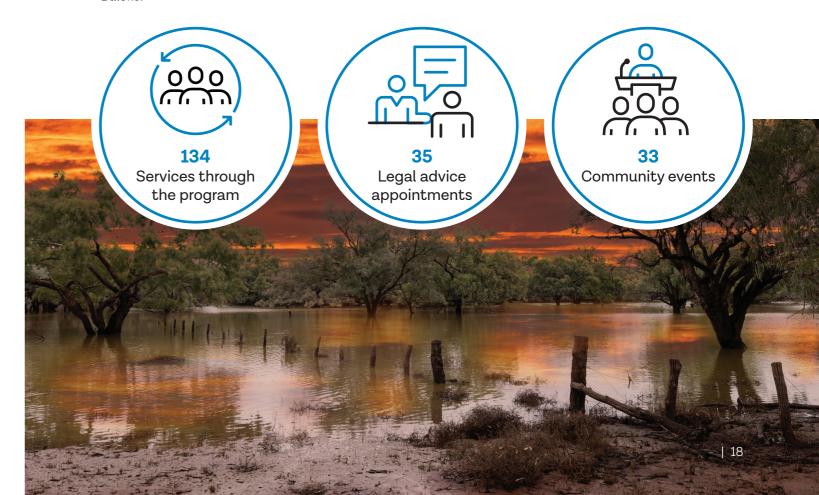
Flood Support

(VIC Funded)

Our Flood Support program assists community members affected by the 2022 floods, providing both legal and non-legal support. Our Solicitor and Social Worker work together to address clients' needs in a holistic and targeted way. The program also runs community events to promote preparedness, raise awareness, and support future planning.

Areas covered

We provide this service across the following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra and Buloke.



Domestic Violence Unit/Health Justice Partnership Mental Health

(VIC Funded)

The Domestic Violence Unit/Health Justice Partnership Mental Health service operates using an integrated practice model, in which the Solicitor and Social Worker work collaboratively with clients on their legal matters. In some cases, clients may choose to meet with the social worker before the legal appointment to help reduce anxiety or emotional distress.



65 legal advice appointments





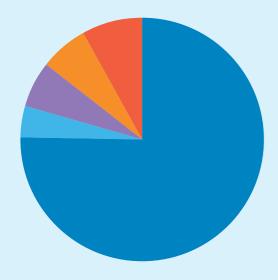
31 Social Worker services

Areas covered

We provide this service across the following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Buloke, Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh, Wentworth, Balranald and Hay.

Family Advocacy and Support Services (VIC Funded)

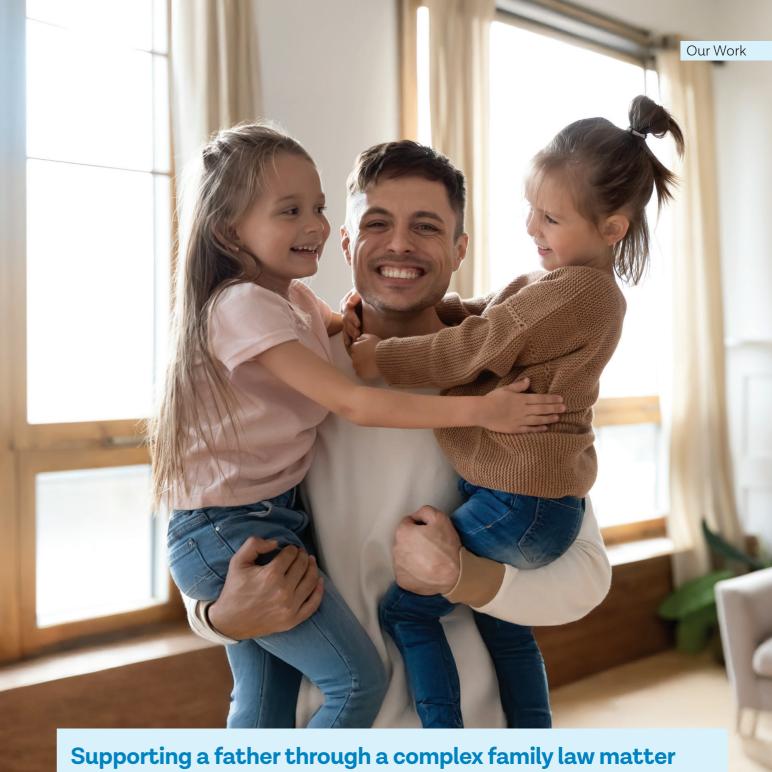
Family Advocacy and Support Services (FASS) provides an integrated Duty Lawyer and Social Worker who support individuals impacted by domestic and family violence, currently dealing with family law matters in court. FASS is also available to extended family members, including carers.



Services delivered

•	Legal advice	75.5%
•	Legal Task	4.1%
•	Dispute Resolution	6.2%
•	Court/tribunal	6.2%
•	Duty Lawyer	8%

We provide this service across the following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Buloke, Yarriambiack. Hindmarsh and Loddon.



Case Study

In early 2025, a father of two sought help from the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) after the children's mother denied him access, despite parenting orders made in 2023. The mother applied to the court to change the orders, seeking sole parental responsibility and supervised contact for the father.

Unable to secure legal aid, the father was supported by the MFC CLC Duty Lawyer service. The lawyer appeared at the first hearing, assisted with filing the father's response, and ensured his voice was represented throughout the proceedings.

The court made key orders, including a review of the 2023 arrangements, a child impact report, and the appointment of an Independent Children's Lawyer.

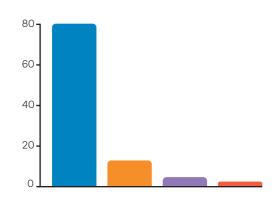
The father's remote location and mental health challenges, including previous psychiatric admissions, have complicated engagement. With additional support from social workers and mental health services, the MFC CLC continues to work with him to ensure his case progresses and the best interests of the children remain central.

Our Work

Intervention Order Support Service

(VIC Funded)

The Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) Intervention Order Support Service (IOSS) supports individuals from diverse communities who are experiencing family violence and are applying for a family violence intervention order in court. The service provides assistance on a duty basis at the Mildura, Kerang, Robinvale, and Swan Hill Magistrates' Courts. In the 2024-25 Financial Year, we delivered 172 services to 154 clients.



MFC CLC provided advice before court, appeared on

the client's behalf, and debriefed her afterward.

Locations of clients

Mildura

80%

• Swan Hill

15%

Kerang

4%

Robinvale

1%

affective disorder, a physical disability, and a child

living with autism, were considered throughout the

Areas covered

We provide this service across the following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Buloke, Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh and Wentworth.



process.



How long have you worked at Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre?

12 years.

What does your usual work week look like?

I don't think I have a usual week and that's what I love. Generally, my time is split between working in the office and delivering presentations or attending community events.

I deliver around 100 presentations a year both locally and throughout our extensive catchment area and this involves a lot of time in the car, where I often do my best thinking.

What is the best thing about your job?

I love engaging with people of all ages and diverse backgrounds and empowering them with legal information while promoting our services. The variety of my role is so enjoyable; I can be talking to a group of seniors in one of our larger towns one day and teenagers in a remote school the next.

The warmth, generosity and resilience of the people I meet along the way, especially those experiencing many hardships is very humbling and I consider it a privilege to be able to call this my job.

I also love working with colleagues that are very passionate about helping people, it is very rewarding to know that your work makes a difference in people's lives.

What is something that challenges you?

Working with teens is both challenging and delightful.

Generally, they are really engaged and are appreciative of the inclusive and clear delivery of the important messaging around affirmative consent and sharing of sexual images. Having a challenging Year 9 class tell me my presentation was 10/10 was very gratifying.

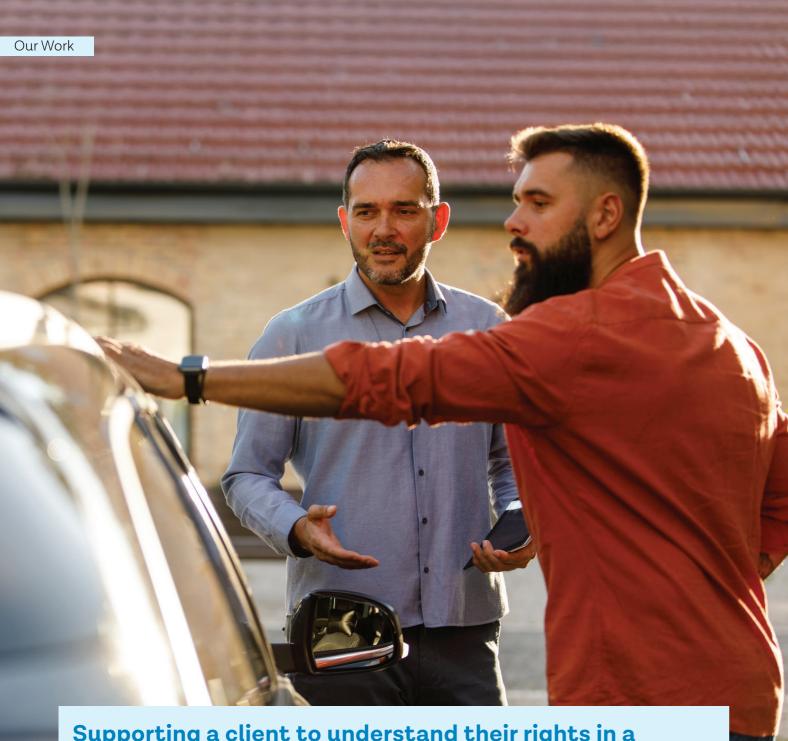
Is there a highlight or story that makes you proud?

I remember arriving to a community day where the venue had been vandalised with tomato sauce thrown everywhere and the people organising the BBQ didn't turn up. The day had the potential to be a disaster so I helped to clean up the room and then I got the BBQ fired up.

I was able to speak to more people this way and everyone was so impressed that MFC CLC was happy to jump in and help. This to me is what we are all about – meeting people where they are and showing that we are approachable and friendly and that we really are here to help.

I'm also really proud of the connections that I have made throughout the community, schools and with other stakeholders. I have worked with some schools every year since I started and it is really rewarding knowing that they value my work and ask me back year after year.

I'm also very proud of the fact that after all this time, my love for the job has never waned.



Supporting a client to understand their rights in a consumer matter

Case Study

A client with an acquired brain injury purchased a car from a private seller, expecting it to include a roadworthy certificate (RWC). When the car failed the RWC and the seller refused to cover the cost or provide a refund, the client was left out of pocket, including paying \$500 to a mechanic.

The Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) assisted the client to negotiate with the seller and address breaches under the Australian Consumer Law regarding the mechanic's conduct.

Given the verbal nature of the contract and the client's vulnerabilities, including financial hardship and communication challenges, the matter required careful, detailed guidance.

As a result, the matter with the car seller was successfully resolved, while the claim regarding the mechanic remains ongoing. The client gained a clearer understanding of their rights and options, and the support provided helped ensure a timely resolution in a complex legal and practical situation.

Victims Legal Service

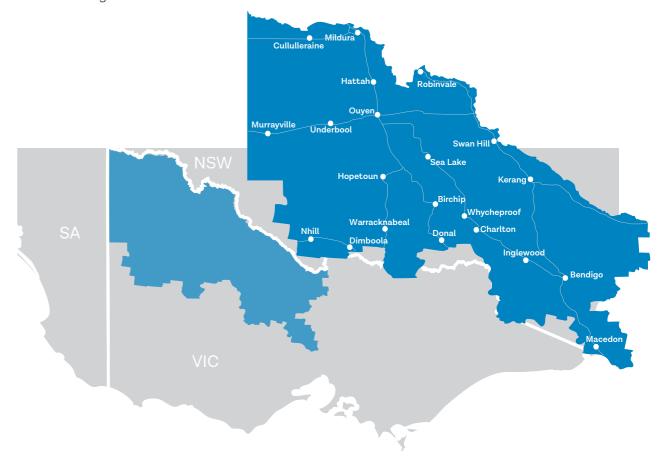
(VIC Funded)

The Victims Legal Service (VLS) provides legal advice, casework, and referrals for the Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS). This scheme allows victims more time to apply, provides financial support, and recognises harm through victim recognition statements. In the 2024-25 Financial Year, we delivered 100 services to 92 clients, across a catchment area of 74,313km².



Areas covered

We provide this service following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Buloke, Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh, Loddon, Campaspe, Greater Bendigo, Central Goldfields, Mount Alexander, Macedon Ranges amd Hume.



Domestic Violence Unit/ Health Justice Partnership

(VIC Funded)

The Domestic Violence Unit/Health Justice Partnership (DVU/HJP) program offers a comprehensive approach to supporting victim survivors of family violence within an integrated practice framework. This specialist team includes a Family Violence Solicitor, Family Violence Social Worker, and Family Violence Financial Counsellor.

Areas covered

We provide this service across the following local government areas: Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Buloke, Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh, Wentworth, Balranald and Hay.



Case Study

A 52-vear-old woman was referred to the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) by the Mallee Domestic Violence Service (MDVS) for support with family violence, property, children, and victims of crime issues. She was experiencing complex challenges, including financial hardship, physical disabilities, and ongoing control from a former partner.

The client received integrated support from the Family Violence Solicitor, Social Worker, and Financial Counsellor. Legal advice covered intervention order conditions, property recovery, and Victims of Crime applications.

Emotional support, safety planning, and education about family violence were provided, while the Financial Counsellor liaised with agencies to advocate on her behalf.

As a result, the client left the relationship permanently, had two outstanding debts waived, accessed a Financial Assistance Scheme application, and established a manageable medical payment plan. Collaboration with the MDVS ensured continuity of support, helping the client address both legal and non-legal needs in a safe and informed manner.

Our Impact

Empowering our clients to confidently navigate the legal system and make informed decisions that improve their lives is at the heart of the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC). We believe it's essential to understand how our services are truly impacting those we support, ensuring we are responding effectively to community needs.

We do this by gathering client feedback through surveys and interviews, helping us measure outcomes, celebrate successes, and identify opportunities for growth.

In the 2024-25 Financial Year, the MFC CLC reported majority of clients felt heard, understood, and supported by our team. Two-thirds of clients (67%) experienced reduced stress and anxiety after receiving our support, with practitioners observing similar outcomes in 82% of cases. Additionally, 68% of clients say they feel better equipped to plan for the future after receiving support from our team, demonstrating that our services not only resolve issues but also help people feel more informed and in control of their legal situations.



How long have you worked at Mallee Family Care **Community Legal Centre?**

I commenced my employment with Mallee Family Care as a Generalist Solicitor in March 2021. I then moved into my current role as Specialist Family Violence Solicitor within a Health Justic Partnership Program involving Mallee Sexual Assault Unit and Domestic Violence Services and The Orange Door.

What does your usual work week look like?

No week ever looks the same due to the varied nature of my role. One day I might be in the Mildura office having client appointments or conducting outreach to our local family violence services. The next day I could be in court assisting with Family Violence Intervention Order matters or Family Law proceedings. Other days I could be in Swan Hill completing our monthly outreach or assisting with policy development through various working groups.

What is the best thing about your job?

The best part of my job is working as part of an integrated practice with Sarah Taha and Tori McNabb, our program's Social Worker and Financial Counsellor. It's incredibly rewarding to see the empowerment that comes from clients after being supported by a wraparound service.

Is there a highlight or story that makes you

A highlight for me is hearing clients consistently say that they feel they have more choices after meeting with us. Empowering women experiencing family violence with knowledge - and seeing the change in their demeanour before and after receiving legal and non-legal support - is incredibly meaningful. The power of knowledge shows them that they have options and that they don't have to go through this alone.

25 | 1 26

Community Legal Education and Engagement

(VIC Funded)

Supporting our community with clear, accessible legal information is central to our work at the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC). We know the legal system can be overwhelming, so we focus on giving people the knowledge they need to feel confident and understand their rights.

Our legal education and engagement activities connect community members, organisations and services with practical tools and trusted guidance. By raising awareness early, we help prevent issues from escalating, reduce stress and strengthen community wellbeing.

This year, our Community Legal Education Worker and Community Engagement Worker reached almost 10,000 people – more than ever before.

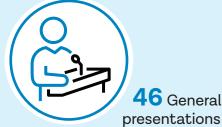
Strong partnerships across the Mallee region helped us share vital information, promote our services and break down barriers to access.



34 Youth presentations



26 Community events



(% %)

13 Stakeholder presentations





Showing up in our communities

Reaching people where they are

Attending community events is a great way to showcase Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre's (MFC CLC) commitment to the regions we serve.

Having a visible presence at events enables us to provide legal information to potential clients and offers excellent networking opportunities with other stakeholders and service providers. For example, four community legal education sessions were booked after attending a Dementia Australia Brain Hub event.

For the first time, this year the MFC CLC partnered with Ballarat and Grampians Community Legal Service's (BGCLS) Horsham office to host a stall at the Wimmera Machinery Field Days in Longerenong.

By sharing information and resources, and discussing opportunities for sharing warm and/or conflicted referrals this event enhanced our connections with BGCLS. It also allowed MFC CLC to engage with people in the southern parts of our catchment.

57 legal health checks were completed at the event, with the top three legal issues including Affected by floods, fire or other disaster, Understanding consent laws such as the sharing of intimate images, and Insurance claim problems. MFC CLC had 12 informal stakeholder engagements during the Field Days, resulting in CLE workplace information sessions and referrals to our service.





Towns we visited

- Birchip
- Broken Hill
- Charlton
- Dareton
- Daneton
- Kerang
- Longerenong
- Mildura
- Murrayville
- Nhill
- Ouyen
- Robinvale
- Speed
- Swan Hill
- Wedderburn
- Wentworth
- Wycheproof

Community events attended

- · Community Health Awareness Day Ouyen
- Community House Open Day Mildura
- · Dementia Australia Brain Hub Mildura
- Elder Abuse Expos Mildura & Swan Hill
- Emergency Services Expo Mildura
- · IDAHOBIT Day Mildura
- · Just a Farmer film screenings Kerang & Robinvale
- · NAIDOC Week events Mildura, Swan Hill & Dareton
- · National Reconciliation Week events Mildura
- Ochre Ribbon Week event Mildura
- · Seniors Expos Mildura & Swan Hill
- · Sisters Day Out Buronga
- · Speed Field Days Speed
- Walk Against Family Violence Mildura
- Wimmera Machinery Field Days Longerenong





Buloke Shire Roadshow

Introducing more communities to our services

The MCF CLC partnered with Buloke Shire Council to facilitate a series of community drop-in sessions across the Buloke LGA.

Designed to inform, support, and connect local residents with the wide range of essential services available to them, events were held in Wycheproof, Birchip, Donald and Charlton.

Each event had a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, with morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, or dinner provided courtesy of Mallee Family Care.

The events were well attended, with participants expressing appreciation for the informative presentations, one-on-one conversations, and the

opportunity to ask questions in a friendly, informal setting. Many attendees remarked on discovering services they hadn't known were available to them.

Networking with eight other service providers during the Buloke Roadshow resulted in CLC referrals and bookings for CLE workplace information and community sessions.

Feedback from the community highlighted how beneficial and reassuring it was to connect with the real people behind the services and learn about the holistic, local support systems available in times of

Where Law Meets Life

Victorian Law Week 2025

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre (MFC CLC) hosted a community expo in Mildura's Langtree Mall during Victorian Law Week.

Building on the statewide campaign theme of 'Where Law Meets Life', this event successfully brought together a broad range of legal and community services to engage directly with members of the public. With strong promotion to local networks, community groups and senior school students, around 200 attendees accessed information about their rights, available legal supports and local services available.

Forty-four legal health checks were completed during the event, resulting in 18 follow-up appointment requests across legal, financial counselling and tenancy services. Feedback from stallholders was overwhelmingly positive, noting the strong turnout, valuable networking opportunities and well-organised layout of the event.

The event also strengthened relationships between local law firms, legal assistance organisations and community support services while boosting visibility of the MFC CLC.

The combination of extensive targeted promotion efforts, student participation and a community-friendly atmosphere ensured the event not only met, but exceeded its aim of helping people understand how everyday problems can have legal solutions and where to access help in Mildura.





Empowering vulnerable communities SCHS Daybreak program partnership

As part of our commitment to accessible legal education, MFC CLC provideds tailored information sessions to participants in the Daybreak program—a structured, non-residential initiative supporting people experiencing alcohol and other drug (AOD) dependencies.

Delivered by Sunraysia Community Health Service, the program's focus on life skills, counselling and wellbeing offered a valuable platform to help participants better understand their legal rights and options.

The MFC CLE team has been presenting general service information, budgeting and scams sessions to Daybreak program participants for two years. The Community Legal Education and Community Legal

Engagement Workers collaborate closely with the Daybreak program facilitators to ensure content is suitable and to evaluate each session.

Engagement and feedback from clients has been positive, with participants indicating they get a lot out of these sessions. One participant stated they "always enjoy Allie's presentations and the legal information was helpful," and another said they "learned a lot of things I was not aware of, and I will be using this knowledge in the future."

As a result of these information sessions, Daybreak program participants have self-referred to MFC CLC, demonstrating how meaningful collaborations can help overcome perceived barriers to accessing legal advice and support.



Board of Directors and Audit, Finance & Risk Committee



Ross Lake OAM Chair



Jenna Yetman Deputy Chair



Christine Cottrell
Chair Audit, Finance & Risk
Committee



Geoff Dea
Director



Dr Suriya Hariprakash



Belinda Hudak Director



Dr Chelsea Todd



Eelco Vugs Director (resigned 2025)



Anthony Venneri Independent Member, Audit, Finance & Risk Committee



Don WallIndependent Member,
Audit, Finance & Risk
Committee



7Audit, Finance & Risk
Committee Meetings

10Board Meetings

Financial Report - VIC

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATION

Name of Organisation: Mallee Family Care Ltd

Financial Year Period: 01/07/2024. to 30/06/2025

I hereby certify that:

- I am not a principal, member, shareholder, officer, employee or accountant of the Organisation or of a related body corporate as defined in section 9 of the Corporations Act 2001
- b. In my opinion, the attached financial statements which comprise a Statement of Financial Position, a Statement of Comprehensive Income (previously known as a Statement of Financial Performance) and Notes to the Financial Statements of the above-mentioned Organisation ('the Organisation'), and, if general purpose reports are provided, a Statement of Cash Flows, for the stated Financial Year Period are:
 - based on proper accounts and present a true and fair view of the Organisation's financial position and financial performance in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and
 - ii. in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement Commonwealth of Australia, Victoria Legal Aid and Mallee Family Care dated 23/07/2020 a copy of which has been made available to me, in relation to the provision of community legal services.
- The final, full year, Funds Report, containing details of the Organisations transactions for the financial year, including audit adjustments, and the Organisation's grant position at the beginning and end of the financial year is provided in respect of funds provided in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement referred to in b.ii. above for all Funding Categories.

This is a unqualified audit report.

Unless written under separate cover, I hereby further certify that, in my opinion, there is no conflict of interest between myself and the Organisation or its Management Committee.

AUDITOR DETAILS

Full Name: Grant Martinella

Name of Company (if applicable): William Buck (SA)

ACN or ABN Number: 38 280 203 274

Registered Auditor: If Yes:

Yes No Registration No: 339060

Signature:

Date: 26/08/2025

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre Consolidated Income and Expenditure Report For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025\$	2024\$
Consolidated		
Surplus/Deficit From Previous Year		
Surplus/Deficit from previous year	769,898	201,438
Approved Expenditure from Surplus	-	-
Net Surplus Deficit from previous year	769,898	201,438
CLSP Income		
Commonwealth	1,536,176	1,351,038
State	615,689	1,169,432
Service Generated Income	103,948	1,145
Total CLSP Income	2,255,813	2,521,615
CLSP General Purpose Income (Total CLSP Income plus Net Surplus /Deficit)	3,025,711	2,723,053
CLSP Expenses		
Salaries	1,584,540	1,191,452
Superannuation	200,336	147,199
On Costs	260,706	222,518
Rent	72,023	75,571
Repairs and Maintenance	2,294	4,374
Other Premises Costs	57,109	47,445
Staff Training	26,819	26,463
Staff Recruitment	73,719	29,696
Communications	-	-
Office Overheads	13,015	7,460
Insurance	-	-
Finance, Audit & Accounting Fees	-	-
Library, Resources & Subscriptions	10,189	11,561
Travel	65,691	69,329
Programming and Planning	226,191	236,896
Client Disbursements	-	-
Leases	7,568	12,446
Minor Equipment	-	133
Auspicing or Management Fee	142,316	142,805
Salary and Related Expenses	2,045,582	1,561,169
Total Operating Expenses	696,934	664,179
Total CLSP Expenses	2,742,516	2,225,348
Surplus/Deficit for Current Year	(486,703)	296,267
Other Income (Not to be added to CLSP Funds Surplus/Deficit)		
Total Funds received from Other Bodies	492,769	272,193
Less Actual Capital Expenditure in Current Year	-	-
Surplus / Deficit for Next Year	775,964	769,898

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024\$
Current Assets	2020 \$	20240
National Australia Bank Operating Account	178,271	593,415
·		
Total Current Assets	178,271	593,415
Total Assets	178,271	593,415
Current Liabilities		
Creditors		
- Accrued Wages	45,588	27,072
Employee Entitlements		
- Annual Leave	81,344	40,380
- Long Service Leave	24,149	19,156
Total Current Liabilities	151,082	86,608
Non-Current Liabilities		
Employee Entitlements		
- Long Service Leave	11,310	4,225
	11,010	.,
Total Non-Current Liabilities	11,310	4,225
Total Liabilities	162,392	90,833
Net Assets	15,879	502,582
Accumulated Funds		
Retained Surplus/(deficit) at Beginning of Year	502,582	206,315
Surplus/(deficit) for Year	(486,703)	296,267
Total Accumulated Funds	15,879	502,582

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre Cashflow Statement For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

		2025 \$ Inflows (Outflows)	2024 \$ Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Operating grants from Government		2,367,052	2,772,517
Other income		114,343	1,260
		2,481,394	2,773,777
Payments			
Payments to employees		(1,974,023)	(1,593,894)
Payments to suppliers and providers		(766,627)	(730,597)
GST paid		(155,888)	(185,744)
		(2,896,538)	(2,510,235)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(a)	(415,144)	263,542
Net increase (decrease) in cash for the year		(415,144)	263,542
Cash at beginning of financial year		593,415	329,873
Cash at end of financial year		178,271	593,415
(a) Reconciliation of net cash from operating activities to surplus from operating activities:			
Net (deficit) surplus for the year		(486,703)	296,267
Add (Less):			
Increase (Decrease) in employee provisions		53,043	(32,134)
Increase (Decrease) in creditors		18,516	(591)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities		(415,144)	263,542

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2025

NOTE 1: BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

Income in these Income and Expenditure Reports is recognised on a cash basis, while expenses are recognised on an accrual basis.

NOTE 2: Scope of Reporting

The term consolidated is used in the Income and Expenditure Report to indicate that the report includes income and expenses for all programs and projects funded by Victorian Legal Aid.

ORGANISATION'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that:

- 1. These financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre as at 30 June 2025 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Notes 1 and 2.
- 2. The financial statements are in accordance with the funding agreement, applicable Australian Accounting standards and are based on proper accounts and records.
- 3. The Organisation has maintained complete and proper accounting records in respect of the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre.
- 4. The funds received by Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre from Victoria Legal Aid under the funding agreement have been properly spent in accordance with the funding agreement.

NATALIE MORGAN

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

4/08/2025

Financial Report - NSW

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATION

Name of Organisation: Mallee Family Care Ltd

Financial Year Period: 01/07/2024. to 30/06/2025

I hereby certify that:

- a. I am not a principal, member, shareholder, officer, employee or accountant of the Organisation or of a related body corporate as defined in section 9 of the Corporations Act 2001
- b. In my opinion, the attached financial statements which comprise a Statement of Financial Position, a Statement of Comprehensive Income (previously known as a Statement of Financial Performance) and Notes to the Financial Statements of the above-mentioned Organisation ('the Organisation'), and, if general purpose reports are provided, a Statement of Cash Flows, for the stated Financial Year Period are:
 - based on proper accounts and present a true and fair view of the Organisation's financial
 position and financial performance in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and
 other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and
 - ii. in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement Legal Aid NSW and Mallee Family Care dated 27 June 2024 a copy of which has been made available to me, in relation to the provision of community legal services.
- The final, full year, Funds Report, containing details of the Organisations transactions for the financial year, including audit adjustments, and the Organisation's grant position at the beginning and end of the financial year is provided in respect of funds provided in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement referred to in b.ii. above for all Funding Categories.

This is a unqualified audit report.

Unless written under separate cover, I hereby further certify that, in my opinion, there is no conflict of interest between myself and the Organisation or its Management Committee.

AUDITOR DETAILS

Full Name:	Grant Martinella
Name of Company (if applicable):	William Buck (SA)
ACN or ABN Number:	38 280 203 274
Registered Auditor:	If Yes:
Yes ☑ No	Registration No: 339060
Signature:	a Math

Date: 16/10/2025

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre NSW Consolidated Income and Expenditure Report For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2005 Å	00040
Consolidated	2025\$	2024\$
Surplus/Deficit From Previous Year		
Surplus/Deficit from previous year		
	_	
Approved Expenditure from Surplus	-	
Net Surplus Deficit from previous year	-	
CLSP Income	001.004	
Commonwealth	691,284	
State	362,084	
Service Generated Income	3,304	
Total CLSP Income	1,056,672	
CLSP General Purpose Income (Total CLSP Income plus Net Surplus /Deficit)	1,056,672	
CLSP Expenses	,,.	
Salaries	405,953	
Superannuation	48,955	
On Costs	55,987	
Advertising and Promotion	8,324	
Auspicing Fees	67,194	
Board/Governance Expenses	33,597	
Client Support Services	1,158	
Computer Expenses	50,426	
Employment Support and Supervision Costs	33,597	
Meeting Expenses	1,661	
Membership Fees Paid	3,091	
Motor Vehicle Expenses	5,693	
Printing and Stationery	9,154	
Publications and Information Resources	454	
Rent	31,828	
Telephone and Internet	2,440	
Training and Development	9,060	
Travel and Accommodation	18,089	
Utilities	10,052	
Other	-	
Salary and Related Expenses	510,895	
Total Operating Expenses	285,818	
Total CLSP Expenses	796,713	
Surplus/Deficit for Current Year	259,959	
Other Income (Not to be added to CLSP Funds Surplus/Deficit)	,,,,	
Total Funds received from Other Bodies	_	
Less Actual Capital Expenditure in Current Year	_	
Surplus / Deficit for Next Year	259,959	

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre NSW Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2025

	2025\$	2024 \$
Current Assets		
National Australia Bank Operating Account	291,093	
Total Current Assets	291,093	
Total Assets	291,093	
Current Liabilities		
Creditors		
- Accrued Wages	13,759	
Employee Entitlements		
- Annual Leave	16,580	
- Long Service Leave	-	
Total Current Liabilities	30,339	
Non-Current Liabilities		
Employee Entitlements		
- Long Service Leave	795	
Total Non-Current Liabilities	795	
Total Liabilities	31,134	
Net Assets	259,959	
Accumulated Funds		
Retained Surplus/(deficit) at Beginning of Year	050.050	
Surplus/(deficit) for Year	259,959	
Total Accumulated Funds	050.050	
iotal Accumulated Funds	259,959	

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre NSW Cashflow Statement For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

		2025 \$ Inflows (Outflows)	2024 \$ Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Operating grants from Government		1,158,705	
Other income		3,634	
		1,162,339	
Payments			
Payments to employees		(479,761)	
Payments to suppliers and providers		(314,400)	
GST paid		(77,085)	
		(871,246)	
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(a)	291,093	
Net increase (decrease) in cash for the year		291,093	
Cash at beginning of financial year		-	
Cash at end of financial year		291,093	
(a) Reconciliation of net cash from operating activities to surplus from operating activities:			
Net (deficit) surplus for the year		259,959	
Add (Less):			
Increase (Decrease) in employee provisions		17,375	
Increase (Decrease) in creditors		13,759	
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities		291,093	

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre NSW Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2025

NOTE 1: BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

Income in these Income and Expenditure Reports is recognised on a cash basis, while expenses are recognised on an accrual basis.

NOTE 2: Scope of Reporting

The term consolidated is used in the Income and Expenditure Report to indicate that the report includes income and expenses for all programs and projects funded by New South Wales Legal Aid.

ORGANISATION'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that:

- 1. These financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre NSW as at 30 June 2025 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Notes 1 and 2.
- 2. The financial statements are in accordance with the funding agreement, applicable Australian Accounting standards and are based on proper accounts and records.
- 3. The Organisation has maintained complete and proper accounting records in respect of the Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre NSW.
- 4. The funds received by Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre from Legal Aid NSW under the funding agreement have been properly spent in accordance with the funding agreement.

NATALIE MORGAN

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER 16/10/2025

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre Mildura Office

122 Ninth Street, Mildura VIC 3500 1800 243 002 clc@malleefamilycare.com.au mfclegalcentre.com.au

Mallee Family Care Community Legal Centre **Broken Hill Office**

Ground Floor, 32 Sulphide Street, Broken Hill NSW 2880 1800 300 036 clcfarwest@malleefamilycare.com.au mfclegalcentre.com.au

Image credits: Robert Klarich, Samuel Zappia, David Sickerdick, Martin Hogan, Darren Seiler and Brendan Delahunty.













