

# PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first PCLS newsletter for 2020!

PCLS hopes everyone has had a good start to their year and everyone stayed safe during cyclone Damien!

We would like to advise everyone that the contact number for our Roebourne office has changed. Our new contact number is **(08) 6149 2031**.

2020 has seen some changes for our PCLS team. We have farewelled staff and welcomed new members.

PCLS would like to thank and farewell Sonia, Mabelle, Jessica, Sophia, Mal, Lynn and Rebecca. We wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

We would like to welcome to the team Sara, Kody and Melanie. PCLS is happy to have you on board and wish you all the best in your new roles.



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Pilbara Community Legal Service is a not for profit Government funded agency managed by a Board of Management and supported by a CEO and administrative staff. PCLS has four office locations, Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman, however our services are delivered throughout the Pilbara region to isolated communities which include: Talka Warra, Yandiyarra, Marble Bar, Nullagine and Jigalong with occasional visits to Onslow, Tom Price and Paraburadoo.

#### We assist in the areas of:

**Financial counselling**– provide financial service information, budgeting, advocacy and support services for the purposes of assisting individuals who are in financial difficulty due to circumstances such as debt, over-commitment, unemployment, sickness or family breakdown.

**Tenancy Support**– provide tenancy advocacy, education and support services to tenants facing difficulties maintaining their tenancy. We assist and support people who are experiencing homelessness and ensure they are linked with mainstream services.

**Legal**– provide free education to the community as well as legal advice, primarily in the areas of Family Law, Criminal Injuries Compensation, Wills and Deceased Estates (we do not provide criminal law advice).

**Domestic Violence**- Provide support and advocacy for victims of domestic violence/ at risk clients, promoting safety planning to help ensure client wellbeing whilst helping to resolve crisis. DV assists with access to other related services such as legal advice, accommodation, health, income support and financial counselling.

**Migrant Settlement Services**– provide one on one casework, support, information and linkages to other mainstream services to assist migrants. community development activities are undertaken which include the implementation of projects that aim to support and empower newly emerging community groups.

**Redress Support**- Our redress support workers are here to help survivors of institutional child sexual abuse understand the Scheme, talk about feelings and guide them through the whole application process.

#### To find out more about our service:

- Visit our website: [www.pcls.net.au](http://www.pcls.net.au)
- Located in Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman
- Open 8am – 4pm Monday– Friday



## FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

Susanne, Louise, Karen, and Jayne are the Financial Counsellors for PCLS. They can offer information, conduct assessments and provide options and support to assist clients, address identified problems and manage financial situations more effectively. To make an appointment please contact Susanne in Karratha on **(08) 9185 5899**, Louise/ Karen in Roebourne on **(08) 6149 2031** and Jayne in South Hedland on **(08) 9140 1613**. If you are located in Newman, please contact Jayne in South Hedland.

## NGO Forum

Hedland financial counsellor Jayne, represented Pilbara Community Legal Service at the Non Government Organisation (NGO) Forum.

The forum was held in Hedland on Friday 21st February. In attendance were workers from different community services around the Pilbara, as well as the honourable: Senator Louise Pratt, Stephen Dawson MLC and Kevin Michel MLA



Attendees discussed the challenges and the successes around different services in the Pilbara. There was encouragement for a more collaborative approach amongst the diversified services.

## No Interest Loans (NILS)

The No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) provides individuals and families on low incomes with access to safe, fair and affordable credit.

Loans are between \$300 and \$1,200 for essential goods and services such as fridges, washing machines and medical procedures. Repayments are set up at an affordable amount over 12 to 18 months.

To be eligible for NILS you must have a Health Care Card or earn less than \$45,000 a year (after tax). Loans cannot be used for cash, bond, rent arrears, debt consolidation, holidays or bills.

Loans are available for the purchase of essential goods and services. These can include:

- Household items such as; fridges, washing machines, stoves, dryers, freezers and furniture
- Some medical and dental services

- Education essentials such as computers and text books
- Some other items as requested

NILS cannot be used for:

- Rent or bond
- Bills
- Cash
- Holidays

To qualify for NILS you must:

- Have a health care card/ pension card
- Reside in your current premises for more than 3 months
- Show a willingness and capacity to repay

If you would like to apply for NILS or require anymore information about it please contact one of our 4 financial counsellors or visit the NILS website <http://nils.com.au/>



### TENANT ADVOCATE AND EDUCATION SERVICE

Kailene and Kelly are the Tenant Advocate and Education Service Workers. Their role is to advocate, support and educate tenants in relation to their rights and responsibilities in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). They cannot provide advice to landlords or commercial tenants. To make an appointment please contact Kailene in Karratha on **(08) 9185 5899** or contact Kelly in South Hedland on **(08) 9140 1613**

## Property Condition Reports

A property Condition Report (PCR) is a compulsory report that describes the condition of a property when moving in and out.

A lessor must give you two copies of a PCR within 7 days of a tenant moving in and the tenant must return one copy

back to the lessor within 7 days of receiving it.

PCR's are important as they outline the conditions of the property when a tenant moves in. They can then be used as evidence if there are any disputes regarding maintenance and repairs or

the return of bond money between a lessor and tenant when the tenant moves out.



### HOUSING SUPPORT WORKER

Karla, Angie, Lisa, Anne and Tamara are the Housing Support workers. The Housing Support Workers assist people having difficulty securing or maintaining stable accommodation. The program is for people who are at risk of or are experiencing any type of homelessness issue. To make an appointment please contact Karla in Karratha on **(08) 9185 5899**, Angie in Roebourne **(08) 6149 2031**, Lisa or Anne in South Hedland on **(08) 9140 1613** or Tamara in Newman on **(08) 9175 0148**

Karratha housing support worker Karla conducted outreach this month to the Cheeditha Community.



## Working Together

Due to a family break down a Hedland community migrant service client was left homeless with their children.

The client had applied for multiple properties through different real estate agents in town with no success.

The client was directed to see our housing support workers (HSW) to try and help them obtain a rental. It was discussed that the issue with not being approved for a rental property may be a language barrier between the client and the real estate.

After our HSW spoke with the real estate on the clients behalf, a viewing was arranged for a property which the client and our HSW attended.

The next morning our HSW received an email to advise that the client had been approved for the property!

When we advised the client of the approval they were overjoyed and burst into tears.

It was very rewarding to be able to bring this family some joy during this difficult time.

**LEGAL TEAM**

Julie (Principal Solicitor), Carolyn and Sabrina are the solicitors for PCLS. Our solicitors offer free legal assistance and assist clients who are needing advice or help in the areas of family law, criminal injuries compensation, Wills and deceased estates. If you are needing assistance with any of the above please call Julie or Carolyn in our Karratha office on **(08) 9185 5899**, Sabrina in our South Hedland office on **(08) 9140 1613**.

# Family Law Factsheet 1: Parenting Arrangements

## NON-COURT BASED OPTION TO HELP RESOLVE FAMILY DISPUTES

The best interest of the child will always be the most important consideration. This is to ensure your child’s routine is kept the same, your child is safe and your child can enjoy a meaningful life with both parents.

### FAMILY COUNSELLING

Family Counselling is a process in which a family counsellor helps one or more persons to deal with personal issues in relation to marriage, separation or divorce. It helps people who are affected, or likely to be affected, by separation or divorce deal with personal and interpersonal issues relating to the care of children. It is different to Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) because FDR is specifically (but not exclusively) for those who intend on commencing legal proceedings.

### FAMILY DISPUTE RESOLUTION (FDR)

Family Dispute Resolution means trying to come to an agreement about your family arrangements without going to court. If you want to apply to the court for a parenting order, you must have made a genuine attempt to resolve your issues by Family Dispute Resolution. If there has been family violence then you may apply for an exemption. PCLS can assist you with a referral to an FDR service.

### A PARENTING PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE

- ✓ Who the child will live with
- ✓ Time the child will spend with each parent
- ✓ Time the child will spend with others (grandparents etc.)
- ✓ How the parents will share parental responsibility, such as deciding schools etc.
- ✓ How a child will communicate with the other parent or other people
- ✓ Arrangements for birthdays and holidays
- ✓ Process to change the plan or resolve disagreements about the plan
- ✓ Anything else the parents wish to include

## COURT BASED OPTION TO HELP RESOLVE FAMILY DISPUTES

### PARENTING ORDERS

A Parenting Order is made by the Court. It sets out parenting arrangements for the future, like who the child will live with. A Parenting Order is legally enforceable by the Court. The Court can make a Parenting Order based on an agreement between the parties or after a Court hearing. Either parent can apply for Parenting Orders, as can other relatives such as grandparents and extended family members therefore when referring to parents this essentially refers to the caregivers.

The Court will aim to ensure that the parents have meaningful involvement in the children’s lives, children are protected from physical and mental harm, the children receive adequate and proper care and that the parents fulfil their duties and meet responsibilities

### WHEN TO APPLY FOR A PARENTING ORDER

- ✓ Parents cannot agree on arrangements for the children
- ✓ A parent’s situation is changing, and this will affect an existing parenting order
- ✓ There is an emergency and you or the children are at risk
- ✓ There is family violence
- ✓ You need to prevent children from being removed from you

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT WORKERS**

Sara, Melanie and Kody are our domestic violence team at PCLS. Their role involves providing support to victims of family and domestic violence through safety and crisis intervention planning, informal counselling, support planning, advocacy, court support, assistance with Violence Restraining Order applications and education. To make an appointment please call Sara in Karratha on **(08) 91855899** or Melanie and Kody in South Hedland on **(08) 9140 1613**.

## Ochre Ribbon Day High Tea



Aboriginal Family Law Services



Ochre Ribbon Week occurs annually between the 12th– 19th February. It is a National Campaign aimed to raise awareness to reduce violence in Aboriginal communities and its devastating impacts on our Men, Women and Children.

PCLS Hedland staff attended an Ochre Ribbon Day high tea held by Aboriginal Family Law Service (AFLS) on 26 February.

AFLS have been encouraged by their fellow National Family Violence Legal Prevention Services Forum commitment to holding Ochre Ribbon events in their local communities throughout the year, to maintain a year round focus on family violence. Prevention is the key to ensuring safety for our children and their mothers, for keep families connected and protecting our culture.

**REDRESS SUPPORT WORKERS**

Tracey, Karla and Melanie are our Redress support team at PCLS. Our redress support workers are here to help survivors of sexual abuse understand the Scheme, talk about feelings and guide them through the whole application process. To make an appointment please call Karla in Karratha on **(08) 91855899**, Tracey in Roebourne on **(08) 6149 2031** or Melanie in South Hedland on **(08) 9140 1613**.

## Tracey to the Rescue



Tracey, our Redress worker

in Roebourne arrived to work one morning to find two green wheelie bins broken and discarded in Hampton street.

Two amazing young Yindjibarndi ladies from Ganilil offered to help Tracey clean up the mess!



City of Karratha Waste Management team arrived shortly after Tracey to attend to the clean up.

Tracey spoke with Raj from the Ranger Services to report the mess and advised that they had attended to the

clean up themselves.

Raj has now intervened and stopped the City of Karratha Waste Management team coming from Karratha to Roebourne when it is not necessary.

**GOOD NEWS STORY!**

One of our long term PCLS legal clients was awarded the maximum award of \$75,000 for criminal injuries sustained by them from a criminal assault. It was very rewarding to be able to assist them through this difficult time in their life

## Roebourne Office Schedule

Our Karratha team does weekly outreach to the Roebourne office so that all our services are available to the Roebourne, Wickham and Point Samson community. Please take note of below days for the certain services provided. Please note financial counselling and Redress Support is out there Monday-Friday 8:00am until 4:00pm.

### SERVICES AVAILABLE

#### EVERYDAY

**Financial Counsellor Karen( Tues– Thurs/ Louise (Mon and Fri)**

Helping individuals and families who are experiencing financial difficulties

**Redress Support Tracey**

Helping survivors of sexual abuse understand the Scheme, talk about feelings and guide them through the whole application process.

#### MONDAY

**Family and Domestic Violence Worker Sara**

Information, referrals and assistance in a secure and confidential setting where you are safe to tell your story

#### TUESDAY

**Tenancy Advocate and Education Service Kailene**

Advocate, support and educate tenants in relation to their rights and responsibilities

#### WEDNESDAY

**Housing Support Worker Karla**

Support to help people find secure, stable and long-term accommodation

#### THURSDAY

**Solicitor Carolyn**

Legal advice and information relating to family law, wills and estates and criminal injury compensation

## Milk From Majun

Pilbara Community Legal Service would like to say a big thankyou to Majun Construction!

Majun donated several cartons of long life UHT milk to PCLS which we were able to share with the elderly clients in Roebourne.

Tracey and Karla collected the milk and distributed it out to the community.

Roebourne and Ngurrawaana received the milk, along with several cartons being left at Ganinili for Yindjibarndi elders.

