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# Community Law Australia



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Peninsula CLC urges candidates to reveal their plans to address legal crisis

Peninsula community legal centre has written to its local candidates in the seat of Dunkley to ask them to outline their plans to address the access to justice crisis.

As the local community legal centre, Peninsula CLC provides vital legal help to residents across the Dunkley electorate and is concerned that access to justice has not yet been addressed in the local area.

Community Law Australia commended Peninsula CLC and said that despite recent increases in funding to individual centres, there was still huge unmet demand for free legal help among Australians who can't afford to pay for a private lawyer.

Community Law Australia spokesperson Carolyn Bond said: "Access to justice is a major issue for people in the local area, which is why each candidate is being contacted to ensure that they make their position known to local residents.

Peninsula CLC said that the top legal issues they encountered ranged from family law problems, family violence, tenancy, credit and debt problems and motor vehicle issues.

Last year Peninsula CLC provided over 7,000 free legal advices, with ongoing assistance given in over 2,000 matters.

Jackie Galloway CEO of Peninsula CLC, said that even with substantial volunteer and pro bono support, they can only partially meet demand for free legal help.

"Sometimes clients are waiting for over a month for an appointment, and less than one in three clients are provided with ongoing assistance," Ms Galloway said.

Community Law Australia Spokesperson Carolyn Bond said: "Without proper access to justice, people may miss out on legal help when they need it most.

"Unresolved legal problems can often escalate, causing financial, social and health problems. CLCs can help people address these problems before it's too late.

"It saves money overall to provide access to legal help for Australians who can't afford a lawyer. It's also vital in ensuring that everyone is equal under the law.

"Legal problems can crop up at any time – but access to quality legal help shouldn't depend on your bank balance or where you live. This is why we are encouraging local candidates to make their commitment to access to justice known so that local residents can make an informed choice on Election Day," Ms Bond said.

*Community legal centres provide free legal help to people who can't afford a private lawyer. They assist with problems such as housing, employment, consumer issues, debt and family violence, and are often a source of early advice and assistance to help prevent problems from escalating.*

**MEDIA: Spokespeople include: Carolyn Bond on 0412 032 987 and Peninsula CEO Jackie Galloway on 0448 056 296. For media inquiries, contact Anaya Latter: 0432 121 636**