

FOR QUALITY LEGAL HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Community Law Australia



MEDIA RELEASE

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Funding boost for online legal information a welcome step towards accessible legal help

Media Opportunity

Attorney-General the Hon Mark Dreyfus QC, MP will announce additional funding for the Law Handbook Online

10:30am, Wednesday 17 April 2013

Fitzroy Legal Service

124 Johnston Street, Fitzroy

Community Law Australia today welcomed the Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus' announcement of \$100,000 funding to continue the Law Handbook Online, but urged the Attorney-General to ensure people in all States and Territories have access to online legal help and can get further help if required.

"We need to provide legal help in ways that are most useful to ordinary people seeking answers to their legal problems. For many people, the Law Handbook Online is an effective way to help people resolve legal problems early before they become more serious and costly.

"However, some people will need help from a lawyer. Those who do not qualify for legal aid and can't afford a private lawyer need face-to-face services provided by community legal centres that are currently badly under-funded," said Carolyn Bond, national spokesperson for Community Law Australia.

She said the funding commitment to the Law Handbook Online was a welcome step that would ensure the continuation through 2014 of a vital online resource that provides Victorians with a plain language guide to the legal system summarising aspects of the law that most often affect people in everyday life.

"Community legal centres are working day-in-day-out to assist people with issues such as family law and domestic violence, employment law, consumer and debt matters, health and housing.

"Community legal centres help people who don't qualify for legal aid but can't afford a private lawyer. Their expertise is free, however their time and resources are extremely stretched by the high level of demand," Ms Bond concluded.

Community legal centres receive funding from State and Federal Governments. They provide free legal help in their local communities to people who cannot afford private lawyers.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact media officer Anaya Latter on 0432 121 636. www.communitylawaustralia.org.au