Legal Aid Queensland provides legal assistance to financially disadvantaged people throughout Queensland. Our services include community legal education and information.
Community legal education (CLE) is a recognised early intervention and prevention strategy to reach our clients and the broader community. It supports Commonwealth and Queensland Government legal assistance priorities which focus on:

- resolving legal problems early
- increasing preventative legal services like CLE that inform and build individual and community resilience.

**CLE equips people with the awareness, knowledge and skills needed to deal with legal problems encountered in everyday life.**
Our CLE Strategy is delivered through:

- CLE activities and engagement with priority groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities
- legal information sessions and webinars for community members and community, health and education workers
- collaborative projects that focus on increasing awareness of the law and our services within more hard-to-reach communities
- connecting with existing networks and establishing new networks through strong relationships
- participation in community events such as Homeless Connect
- web-based legal information and multimedia resources
- written materials including factsheets and legal information guides.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

Nelson Mandela

“Every person has the right to education; it allows people to understand the process of justice and, importantly, allows people to have meaningful engagements with the justice system. By empowering one person with your knowledge of legal rights, you could in fact be empowering an entire community.”

1 Nelson Mandela, ‘Lighting your way to a better future’ (Speech delivered at the Launch of Mindset Network, Planetarium, University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg South Africa, 16 July 2003).
Why CLE is important

- A legal system is less fair when people do not understand their legal rights and responsibilities. CLE aims to address this by informing and educating the community about the law and how to access services.
- Litigation is costly both financially and emotionally. Intervening early when legal problems first arise can help reduce costs in the justice system. Many legal problems can be resolved more easily and at less cost if they are addressed in the early stages.
- CLE helps people find out where they can get legal assistance when they need it. It helps to reduce barriers that stop vulnerable people from accessing legal help.

Relationships, community engagement and collaboration

- Legal Aid Queensland is only one piece of the access to justice puzzle. We recognise lawyers and non-legal professionals such as community, health and education workers play a crucial role in helping the most disadvantaged people access the justice system. This is why we engage and collaborate with other agencies to deliver coordinated joined-up services, projects and CLE.

We do this by:

- building relationships with partner agencies through service provider networks and forums across Queensland
- prioritising engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, services and communities
- making appropriate referrals to other community service agencies
- collaborating with other agencies and networks on CLE projects and policy issues.

These relationships help us to:

- reach priority clients whose vulnerabilities can prevent them accessing legal help
- avoid duplicating effort and services in a sector that has limited resources.
Community engagement values

- Build relationships and trust.
- Respect is central and has to be earned.
- Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are a diverse group of people and what works for one may not work for others.
- Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may be Legal Aid Queensland Board members, staff, legal advocates, volunteers, community partners and clients.
- Communicate with openness by taking the time to listen, learn, and incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input into how we work within our teams and across Legal Aid Queensland.

Achieving quality CLE practice

Our CLE team will support our staff to achieve quality practice in CLE. This means our activities will:

- be client focused, accessible to specific audiences and responsive to community needs
- have clearly defined goals and outcomes
- use resources wisely and be sustainable
- be collaborative
- be evaluated
- be informed by adult learning principles
- be innovative and creative.

Measuring our success

Our strategy will be assessed against performance indicators in Legal Aid Queensland’s operational plan. We use an action-learning process to review and evaluate CLE program activities. The information gathered will inform our annual plan and guide future project developments.
Our Community Legal Education priorities

**PLAN**

**Quality community legal education activities**
- Education and information sessions
- Events

**Raising awareness**
- Information resources and materials
- Social media
- Website
- Newsletters
- Media

**Relationships**
Community engagement and collaboration

**Community legal education program coordination**

**Community legal education projects**
Action plan priorities 2018–19

**Relationships, community engagement and collaboration**

- Encourage collaboration and coordination across the legal assistance sector by:
  - convening the CLE Legal Assistance Forum
  - administering the CLE Collaboration Fund
  - supporting and initiating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander network meetings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Service, Indigenous Lawyers Association etc.

- Develop and maintain community networks to strengthen referral relationships and identify opportunities for collaborative projects.

- Maintain the Queensland Legal Assistance Forum website, which provides a one-stop-shop for information about free legal services across Queensland, and access to CLE resources and publications.

- Work within the legal assistance sector and community, health and education sectors to identify options for delivering CLE to priority groups including:
  - people from non-English-speaking backgrounds
  - Australian South Sea Islanders
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
  - young people
  - people with disabilities and low literacy
  - people in regional, rural and remote locations.

- Coordinate with the National Legal Aid CLE network to progress national projects.

- Educate internal and external stakeholders about Legal Aid Queensland services and resources like *What’s the law? Australian law for new arrivals* and the *Cyber bullying, Sexting and Facebook* booklet.
Raising awareness via information materials, social media and website

- Liaise with key community, health and education and government agencies across Queensland to increase awareness and distribution of our resources (eg courts and libraries).
- Contribute to Legal Aid Queensland’s e-newsletter Head Note to promote new and updated CLE activities and resources to stakeholders.
- Release new and updated publications, including factsheets and guides to provide valuable legal information to the community.
- Review and update Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander publications and resources that will engage the communities and people who seek legal information.
- Work towards all information, resources and publications to be culturally accessible – using appropriate stakeholders consultation processes.
- Integrate our web information with our legal information publications to reduce duplicated legal information and improve accessibility where possible.
- Promote the Legal Aid Queensland website, including the dedicated community workers and carers page, to key stakeholders and create communication opportunities through social media.
- Investigate using the National Indigenous Media Service to promote Legal Aid Queensland services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.
- Continue to explore using social and multimedia to broaden public access to information videos and other CLE resources.
- Maintain Legal Aid Queensland’s YouTube channel and increase the number of online video resources.
Community legal education activities

- Continue to deliver well planned, quality CLE information sessions face-to-face and by webinar for community, education and health workers and other community organisations.
- Coordinate CLE forums for community, health and education workers in partnership with key community stakeholders and peak bodies.
- Continue our participation in events including:
  - Homeless Connect
  - NAIDOC Week
  - community expos.
- Build capacity and provide training to Legal Aid Queensland staff presenting CLE information sessions face-to-face and by webinar.
- Help Legal Aid Queensland regional offices to extend their networks with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, services and communities.
## Coordinating and evaluating the CLE program

- Maintain strategic networks to inform CLE activities, including:
  - participating in National Legal Aid CLE network meetings
  - facilitating and supporting CLE Legal Assistance Forum meetings and workshops
  - engaging with key community, health and education stakeholders and peak bodies to connect with networks.
- Administer the CLE Collaboration Fund round and report on projects funded.
- Plan and coordinate the CLE webinar program for community workers and Legal Aid Queensland staff.
- Provide advice on engaging your audience for CLE and develop an introduction to CLE toolkit for Legal Aid Queensland staff delivering CLE sessions on common legal problems such as money and debt, relationships and separation, and domestic and family violence.
- Analyse, evaluate and report on CLE program activities.
- Improve CLE booking system and calendar coordination of CLE events, education and information sessions.
- Build CLE team capacity to enable quality CLE responses and project development.
- Develop CLE quality practice policy and provide training to LAQ staff delivering CLE activities.
- Ensure all CLE activities, resources and stakeholder engagement are recorded for National Partnership Agreement reporting purposes.
Community legal education projects

• Engage with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community networks by building relationships with elders, communities and community service providers across Queensland to help communicate key messages and raise awareness about our services, including increasing access to our child protection services.

• Support and encourage our regional offices to participate in NAIDOC Week 2019 and develop networks with Indigenous organisations in their region.

• Facilitate a Yarning Circles project to increase cross-cultural understanding at Legal Aid Queensland and build connections and trust with Indigenous organisations/networks.

• Contribute to National Legal Aid CLE network project development, eg ‘Doing CLE: a practical training program’.

• Explore other CLE projects in response to legal needs, eg young people and the legal system, consumer protection, natural disasters.
Organisational relationships

- Legal Aid Queensland strategic plan
- External Communication and Engagement strategy
- First Nations Advisory Committee strategy