STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT
BY LEGAL AID NSW AND COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES NSW INC

This Statement of Commitment is made on the 14th day of December 2015 between Legal Aid NSW and Community Legal Centres NSW Inc (CLCNSW).

PREAMBLE

Legal Aid NSW and CLCNSW both have a role in ensuring that the objectives of the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services 2015-2020 (NPA) are achieved, including improving coordination between service providers in the planning and delivery of services.

Legal Aid NSW recognises and respects the role of CLCNSW and its member Community Legal Centres as independent organisations that provide free legal advice and related services to people and communities facing economic, social or cultural disadvantage.

Legal Aid NSW and Community Legal Centres both have a role in providing legal assistance to disadvantaged communities across New South Wales.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

In carrying out their obligations Legal Aid NSW and the CLCNSW agree to work together to:

1. Deliver high quality accessible legal services to financially and socially disadvantaged and vulnerable people and communities
   
   • Provide high quality, culturally appropriate and innovative legal services.
   
   • Work cooperatively to implement the objectives set out in the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services 2015-20.
   
   • Align the evidence of legal need, the locations of services and the mix of services available.
   
   • Ensure that service delivery models are efficient and effective and that service responses are proportionate and appropriate to clients’ legal need and levels of capability.
   
   • Ensure that clients are informed of their legal options and the different services available to them.
   
   • Assist clients who are not eligible for Legal Aid NSW services to obtain legal assistance from other services including other Community Legal Centres (where applicable), Law Access NSW, the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) and pro bono legal services.
   
   • Ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children and women is given priority.
• Maintain protocols for the referral of criminal, family and civil law matters to help clients receive legal assistance from the most appropriate service for their needs.
• Use the expertise of Aboriginal Legal Access Officers and Aboriginal Field Officers and other specialist workers in making culturally appropriate referrals for clients.

2. **Work collaboratively and avoid duplication**

• Identify and address service planning, program design and service delivery issues.
• Participate in joint forums or committees, including but not limited to CLCNSW quarterlies (*by invitation*), Communities of Practice, Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (CLSD) meetings, the NSW Legal Assistance Forum, Partnership Meetings and Jurisdictional Collaborative Service Planning Meetings.
• Co-ordinate community legal education services.
• Share service delivery and organisational information and resources, legal practice precedent materials, community legal education resources and publications, staff training and information technology.
• Develop strategies to streamline services and reduce unnecessary duplication, such as:
  - Sharing service delivery and organisational information and resources
  - Sharing legal practice precedent materials
  - Sharing community legal education resources and publications
  - Providing access to staff training opportunities and material
  - Adapting service delivery approaches
  - Adjusting triage practices, and
  - Consolidating outreach services and/or locations.
• Consult and respond to emerging issues, and policy and law reform, particularly in the practice areas of family, civil and criminal law.
• Encourage and promote each other's services to clients and communities, and government and non-government agencies at all levels.

**RESOLVE DISPUTES BY NEGOTIATION**

Disputes arising from this Statement of Commitment should in the first instance be resolved locally by negotiation. If there is no resolution within one calendar month of notification of a dispute then the matter should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer Legal Aid NSW and the Director CLCNSW.

**REVIEW THE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

The parties agree to review the Statement of Commitment prior to 1 July 2018.

**VARIATIONS**

This Statement of Commitment may be varied in writing by mutual agreement between the parties.

**TERMINATION**
Either party may terminate this Statement of Commitment and the obligations it entails by giving the other party three months’ notice in writing without the necessity to give reasons for the termination.

OBLIGATIONS ARISING UNDER LAW

The parties agree that this Statement of Commitment does not give rise to any legal rights or obligations under law. The Statement of Commitment will not be relied upon as a legally enforceable instrument by either of the parties.

Signed for Legal Aid NSW

[Signature]
Bill Grant, Chief Executive Officer

Signed for Community Legal Centres NSW Inc

[Signature]
Alastair McEwin, Director