

Riverina CLSD Program Meeting

5 March 2026 | 10am - 12pm | Online

MINUTES

Present: Ruth **Brooks-Clarke** (NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages) Patrick **Undy** (Services Australia), Tracy **Wood** (Youth Justice), Deb **Randich** (Disability Advocacy), Geraldine **Higgins** (Intereach), Navinesh **Nand** (Legal Aid NSW), Justine **O'Reilly** (Legal Aid NSW), Natalie **Chwah** (LawAccess), Shannon **Daley** (Anglicare Ashmont), Kyle **Burgess** (Legal Aid NSW), Dannielle **Falzon**, Melissa **Jozwiak** (Macarthur Legal Centre), Nicole **Hall** (Legal Aid NSW), Danielle **Plumb** (Legal Aid NSW), Judy **Solomon** (Anglicare), Alison **Seidel** (Legal Aid NSW), Emile **Thomas** (Legal Aid NSW), Melissa **Van Lierop** (Intereach/CLSD Coordinator), Simone **Murphy** (Intereach), Karen **Davy** (CEO LALC Leeton), Paris **Jennings** (Community Corrections)

Apologies: Jasmine **Woodland** (Anglicare, Wagga), Jacqueline **Jennings** (Service Australia), Craig **Maxwell** (Directions Health), Caroline **Wilson** (Services NSW), Jacinta **Ryen** (Verto)

Agenda item	Discussion	Action/Outcome
1. Opening and purpose	<p>Melissa Van Lierop acknowledged facilitating the meeting from Wiradjuri Country.</p> <p>Meeting Purpose:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Legal outreach report2. Introduce new CLSD Program Manager – Justine O'Reilly3. Guest Speakers – Legal Aid NSW Workplace Rights Service and NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM)4. Using NSW BDM Fee Waiver Policy	
2. Legal Outreach	<p>September 2025 – Narrandera</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In partnership with Gundyarri Aboriginal Corporation over 4 days.• Solicitors attended from Macarthur Legal Service and Legal Aid NSW.• Macarthur Legal Service drafted a will, power of attorney and enduring guardianship documents for 12 clients.	

CLSD Program Regional Coordinator: Melissa Van Lierop
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Webpage: [Riverina CLSD Program](#)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 birth certificate applications, 11 additional legal advices and 22 people received help from Services Australia. <p>November 2025 – Junee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Day event. • Staff attended from Revenue NSW, Intereach, Legal Aid NSW, Services Australia and Anglicare (financial counselling) • 29 birth certificate applications, 9 legal consultations, 8 partial write-offs for fines, 10 people assisted with Medicare and Centrelink. <p>Discussion re locations for 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to hold 2 outreach events. • There is support for another event in Wagga Wagga. Tumut and Griffith are also locations with high need. • Nicole Hall noted that some elders missed out on the previous wills event in Wagga Wagga. Interested in organising a wills workshop for this group specifically. • Macarthur Legal Centre isn't funded to cover Wagga Wagga but do have experience holding Indigenous identified wills days. The CLSD Program Unit could approach pro-bono legal services about a partnership. 	
<p>3. Guest Speakers</p>	<p>Alison Seidel – Workplace Rights Service, Legal Aid NSW workplacerrights@legalaid.nsw.gov.au and direct is alison.seidel@legalaid.nsw.gov.au Tel: 02 69 21 6588</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team of 10 solicitors, some located in regional towns (Newcastle/Coffs Harbour/South Coast). • Last year the team recovered over \$1,000,000 in underpaid entitlements (wages/super) for workers in NSW. <p>The lawyers in this team can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Underpayment of wages and entitlements ○ Job loss (unfair dismissal and general protections) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discrimination in the workplace (sex, disability, race, age) ○ Sexual harassment ○ Breaches of awards (National Employment Standards and Fair Work Act) <p>The lawyers in this team cannot help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workplace injury, ○ Work visas (have a strong referral relationship with the Immigration Advice and Rights Centre), ○ Bullying, ○ Advice for employers, ○ Disputes about professional licenses e.g. trade security. <p>Eligibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People are generally eligible for advice if they earn less than 80K/annum. ● For advice re job loss generally need to have been in the job for over 12 months. ● Can and will exercise discretion for really vulnerable clients. ● Please contact Alison directly if you have a client that doesn't neatly fit within the guidelines. <p>Other important information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Always keep some weekly advice sessions open for urgent matters like loss of job which is very time sensitive; people have 21 days to lodge the correct application. ● Urgent matters will be allocated to a lawyer with vacancy, but ongoing local matters will be allocated to Alison. ● Lawyers provide advice, casework (appearing before court or tribunal), law reform submissions, and community legal education. ● The Employment Rights Legal Service run by Redfern Legal Centre is another statewide service that may be able to help: https://rlc.org.au/what-we-do/our-services/employment-rights-legal-service ● Trust of community services in legal services is really important in facilitating referrals from migrant workers who may have distrust of government services, especially if their visa has expired or their work contract has ended. 	
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Ruth Brooks-Clark, NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages

Email: ruth.tolton1@customerservice.nsw.gov.au

- The births of 24,138 children born in NSW between 2016 and the end of 2025 haven't been registered.
- There are many reasons why this happens. Many people assume that their children are registered if they receive support from Centrelink for them and they have been added to their Medicare card. People are unaware of separate jurisdictions and equate the newborn child declaration form with registration.
- Services Australia uses the newborn child declaration to initiate payments and link people with Medicare.
- In the past 10 years 415 children born in Wagga Wagga hospital haven't been registered.
- **The Registry is conducting outreach to Wagga Wagga and surrounding areas in the week starting 29 June 2026.**
- Take a targeted approach by aligning outreach locations with the suburbs showing the lowest registration rates and writing to every person beforehand. Relevant suburbs are Tolland, Mount Austin, Wagga and Ashmont.
- Encouraging registration at the hospital isn't necessarily the solution because people haven't always chosen a name at this point, they don't always have adequate ID, the father might not be present and hospital staff don't have capacity to provide administrative support.

NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages – General Fee Waiver Policy

- The NSW Policy applies to **all** products and services issues by the Registry, however for applications to change a name to gender, only the cost of the certificate is eligible for a fee waiver, from the total administrative cost.
- The CLSD Program Unit has made a factsheet, [available to download here](#), that explains the fee-waiver policy of every Australian Registry.
- The factsheet includes a letter template that services can use to write support letters for clients. Transfer the template to your service letterhead.
- You can visit the NSW Service Centre if you have questions and for help to:
 - Print application forms
 - Photocopy ID, and
 - Submit applications to the Registry.

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	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>Eligibility People experiencing financial hardship and who are vulnerable in one of the following ways may be eligible for a certificate fee waiver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A member of the Stolen Generations ○ A person who is currently a victim of or directly impacted by family and domestic violence ○ A person who is sleeping rough or homeless ○ A child under 18 living below the poverty lines or experiencing significant disadvantage ○ A person suffering from a long term chronic debilitating illness ○ A person who has experienced a personal disaster (eg. House fire resulting in total loss of property) within the last 6 months ○ A person incarcerated or being released from a correctional facility. <p>This list is not exhaustive, and the Registry policy says that other factors may be considered.</p>	
<p>4. Service updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Services Australia mobile service centres are travelling the region throughout March! ○ 9 July 2026 NAIDOC event at Ashmont Community Centre 	
<p>5. Next meeting</p>	<p>Qtr.2 - 7 May (legal services meeting) F2F Wagga</p>	