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VICTORIA'S FIRST LGBTIQ LEGAL NEEDS ANALYSIS

Free Online Launch Event - Friday 17 July, 3:00pm until 4:30pm

The [LGBTIQ Legal Service](#), Victoria's first and only specialist community legal service for LGBTIQ communities and a health-justice partnership between [St Kilda Legal Service](#) and [Thorne Harbour Health](#), will be launching its **Reflections on LGBTIQ Legal Need** report this month.

Two years in the making, the report is a legal needs analysis that highlights the particular legal needs experienced by the Victorian LGBTIQ population to support policy makers in better understanding and meeting these specific and varied needs. The report is informed by the experiences of the LGBTIQ Legal Service and its clients, key literature relevant to LGBTIQ legal need and disadvantage, and the knowledge and experiences of other services and organisations the LGBTIQ Legal Service has worked with over the course of the two-year pilot.

The LGBTIQ Legal Service will be celebrating the release of the report via a free virtual launch event on **Friday 17 July at 3pm**, hosted by the [Victoria Law Foundation](#), which funded the establishment of the Service and the development of the report. The **Minister for Equality, the Hon. Martin Foley**, will be attending as a special guest.

The report delves into the complex ways LGBTIQ communities disproportionately experience discrimination, harassment, violence and social exclusion, which contribute to risk factors that increase disadvantage, such as poorer mental health and homelessness. In turn, these risk factors heighten the likelihood of legal issues arising for members of LGBTIQ communities, and often impact on the complexity and severity of legal need these communities experience.

The report also addresses the compounded barriers LGBTIQ communities face in accessing adequate legal support, including a deep mistrust of the justice system, lack of community-specific services and lack of information about available services.

The top ten legal issues experienced by LGBTIQ Legal Service clients and explored in the report are: discrimination, employment law, family violence, residential tenancy, consumer law, social security, criminal law, infringements, health complaints and victims of crime.

Discrimination is the leading legal issue experienced by LGBTIQ Legal Service clients and, as outlined in the report, the majority of enquiries related to gender identity, sexual orientation and disability, including:

- Trans and gender diverse clients regarding access to health services and issues in prison
- Cisgender gay males experiencing employment discrimination related to sexual orientation and sexual harassment in the workplace
- LGBTIQ disability discrimination at bars and private transport services

As part of the report, a qualitative Legal Needs Survey was conducted by the LGBTIQ Legal Service to further support findings from client experiences. The Survey found:

- 80% of respondents would prefer to get legal help from a specialist LGBTIQ legal service

- 65% of respondents reported experiencing one or more legal issues in the last five years
- 35% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed to feeling confident that their local police station would assist them if they had to report a crime where they were the victim
- 35% of respondents reported experiencing an employment law issue in the last five years
- 31% of respondents reported experiencing a discrimination law issue in the last five years
- 21% of respondents reported experiencing a tenancy law issue in the last five years
- 6.5% of respondents reported experiencing an immigration law issue in the last five years

While the report acknowledges the limitations of the LGBTIQ Legal Services resources and capacity to further capture and measure legal need across LGBTIQ communities more comprehensively, **the report delivers important findings and recommendations to the Victorian legal system in meeting the complex needs of LGBTIQ communities.**

At the launch event, the LGBTIQ Legal Service will also announce that it will continue to provide vital legal services established under the two-year pilot to LGBTIQ people across the state, thanks to additional funding provided by the Victorian state government.

The Hon. Martin Foley commented, *"the important work of the LGBTIQ Legal Service over the past two years has provided valuable insights into the legal needs of Victoria's LGBTIQ communities. This report is another reminder that too many LGBTIQ Victorians still face discrimination just for being who they are."*

"The Victorian Government is proud to be providing more than \$540,000 in funding to help the St Kilda Legal Service continue offering specialist support to LGBTIQ communities, particularly as they face the risk of increased legal needs during the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Reflections on LGBTIQ Legal Need report will be available to download at lgbtiqlegal.org.au this month.

LAUNCH EVENT DETAILS

When: Friday 17 July, 3:00pm until 4:30pm

Where: Zoom (meeting details provided upon registration)

Registration: [LGBTIQ Legal Needs: Analysis and reflections from a two year pilot program](#)

Facebook event: [LGBTIQ Legal Needs: Analysis and reflections from a two year pilot program](#)

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