

WELCOME TO THE ELEVENTH EDITION OF OUR

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

LGBTI LEGAL SERVICE INC



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE LGBTI LEGAL SERVICE

We would like to wish all of our clients, volunteers, staff and supporters a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! Our offices are closed from 17 December 2021 until 10 January 2022. We would also like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! Despite COVID lockdowns and ever-changing restrictions, the Service was still able to run efficiently throughout the year by providing legal advice sessions, legal representation and social worker assistance. Once again, we appreciate all the support we have received this year and we cannot wait to see the Service grow further in 2022!

Our Law Reform team is still hard at work in December

On 21 December 2021, the Service along with several other LGBTQIA+ organisations made a submission to the Federal Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights regarding the highly controversial Religious Discrimination Bill Package. The substance of the bills put religious identity in an elevated status over other protected attributes such as sexual orientation and disability, and further enshrines religious based exemptions allowing religious organisations to discriminate against employees, students, patients and potential customers if it is based on a genuinely held religious belief.

One section of the proposed laws describes that charities professing that a ‘traditional view of marriage’ is for a public benefit. While other parts of the Bills provide exemptions for a GP to refer to homosexuality as a sexual sin for example.

Despite gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex status existing as protected attributes. The Bills also aim to establish a Religious Discrimination Commissioner leaving the LGBTQIA+ community being the only group without a representative commissioner. Our submission focused on highlighting the imbalance caused by these potential new laws while stressing the disadvantages that the LGBTQIA+ community would face if these Bills were brought into law.

It is a principle of human rights law that a right to religious freedom should be carefully framed and reinforced by principles of non-discrimination and equality and the Service’s submission exemplified that this package of Bills was breaking from that obligation.

The Service is committed to assisting clients who have faced discrimination and will continue to advocate for legislative change to ensure that the current protections and equality that the community has endeavored to achieve remains protected.



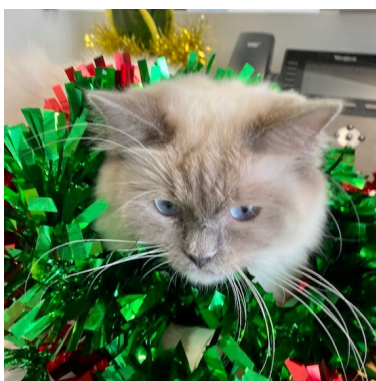
LGBTI Legal Service pay our deepest respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ Sistersgirls & Brotherboys community and recognise the ongoing battle for visibility and inclusivity.

We pay respect to Elders past present and emerging. We acknowledge the wisdom, strength and truth telling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In the spirit of reconciliation, we are committed to fostering a culture of shared knowledge and learnings with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing justice.



Happy Holidays from Belle

Belle will be taking some much needed time off work this summer. She plans on spending her days laying by the pool, playing with tinsel and snuggling up to her roommate, Evie. Belle has big plans for the Service in 2022 and she excited to share them with the team in the New Year!



This is me and Evie snuggling



Follow us on social media to keep updated on news and upcoming events

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