



Dominic Perrottet
Treasurer

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW BUDGET 2018: IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Small businesses and individuals will be able to solve their legal problems more easily with more than \$22 million in funding for Community Legal Centres and a Civil Justice Strategy that will improve the way small businesses resolve legal disputes.

Attorney General Mark Speakman and Treasurer Dominic Perrottet announced today the NSW Liberals and Nationals Government has committed more than \$15 million for Community Legal Centres (CLCs) and more than \$7m for civil justice initiatives over the next four years.

“CLCs provide free legal help to more than 50,000 people a year at more than 30 locations across NSW to prevent simple legal problems snowballing into serious issues,” Mr Speakman said.

“This funding represents more funding certainty and significant increase in NSW Government funding for CLCs to continue that often life-changing work supporting small business and some of the most disadvantaged people in our community when their chips are down.”

More than \$15 million funding for CLCs will go towards implementation of the *Review into Community Legal Centre Services*. This funding includes \$3 million already committed last year after the NSW Government stepped in to save CLCs from an imminent funding crisis with a \$6 million funding boost over two years and is in addition to long term core NSW Government funding of approximately \$6.5 million every year.

The NSW Government is also investing \$7 million over four years to help small businesses and individuals resolve their disputes quickly, cheaply and fairly without setting foot in a courtroom.

“Access to justice is not simply about providing an accessible court and tribunal system. It’s about investing in technology, self-help tools and resources to enable people to sort out problems earlier, saving time, money and stress,” said Mr Speakman.

Mr Perrottet said providing this practical help to small businesses made economic sense and would help NSW continue its record of economic growth.

“If small business operators can resolve their legal disputes at the click of a mouse or a tap of a touch screen, less time will be spent fighting legal battles and there’ll be more time to concentrate on the bottom line,” Mr Perrottet said.

Detail about the Civil Justice Strategy, including funding for CLCs, will be announced in coming months.

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