



# Pride in Law

## NSW CHAPTER

### FEATURE ARTICLE

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING LGBTQIA+ CLIENTS IN THE LEGAL REALM

Rebecca McLeod (she/her)

Imagine having your heart broken into a thousand pieces; your spouse of 15+ years tells you they are no longer in love with you and they're out. You've got 2 perfect kids together, aged 10 and 7, who are about to become the collateral to the 2 in 3 statistic, and you're terrified of how you'll cope financially, logistically and emotionally. A friend tells you to get your ducks in a row, "go see a lawyer." So you do.

As you walk into the lawyer's office you feel sick because this makes it 'real'. The lawyer walks into reception to greet you and in the flicker of an unguarded facial expression, you know you're not going to feel like they're in your corner, supporting you through one of the toughest things you'll ever go through, because your kids have 2 mums.



The uncertainty that separation brings is felt the same regardless of your sexual orientation, be it lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer (LGBTIQ+) or heterosexual. Anyone in that difficult situation, regardless of sexual orientation, has the right to feel empowered through empathetic, sound legal advice. Arguably, LGBTIQ+ people deserve it more as they've no doubt experienced some form of discrimination, prejudice, abuse and / or exclusion in one or more facets of their life and as a result, their trust in people and the system is understandably low.

Without legal support that is attuned to these unique challenges, LGBTIQ+ clients may face further marginalization. It is essential both on a professional and in my opinion, human level, that LGBTIQ+ clients have rapport, trust and confidence in

their legal advisors. The advice we give as Family Lawyers is only as accurate as the information provided so it's imperative LGBTIQ+ clients feel safe enough, psychologically, to share the inner workings of their relationship / family dynamics.

In essence, supporting LGBTIQ+ clients in the legal realm is not just about providing legal services; it's about ensuring clients feel supported and empowered, regardless of which team you each bat for.

## *Meet the author*

# Rebecca McLeod



Rebecca was admitted as a solicitor in 2008 and has practiced almost exclusively in Family Law since 2012.

She is conscious that the issues clients face following separation or entering into a new relationship are usually foreign and potentially overwhelming, and aims to aid that process and ease the burden by ensuring clients are empowered by sound, clear and efficient legal advice.

Rebecca McLeod is also acutely aware of acting in a commercially sensible manner, ensuring the costs are not disproportionate. She is always working towards reaching a time and cost effective resolution.

When faced with a challenging matter, Rebecca has no qualms in applying the tenacity, organisation, strategy and attention to detail that will successfully see the matter through, including advocating for her clients in Court if needed.

*Thank you Rebecca for your wonderful contribution to the Pride in Law NSW newsletter!*

*Want to write a piece?*

Send submissions to **[communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org](mailto:communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org)**





Pride in Law is proud to be supporting the LGBTIQ+ Leadership Summit 2025, a landmark event dedicated to empowering LGBTIQ+ leaders, driving workplace inclusion, and breaking down barriers across industries.

This year's summit features inspiring keynotes, honest conversations, and practical workshops that go beyond talk and into real change. Whether you're an established leader or just starting your journey, this is your chance to connect, learn, and grow alongside an incredible community of advocates and allies.

As a valued member of the Pride in Law network, you can receive 20% OFF your ticket using the code: **PRIDEINLAW**

 Use the code PRIDEINLAW at checkout for 20% off

 Sydney

 12-15 August 2025

Learn more and register now: <https://www.theleadershipinstitute.com.au/lgbtqa-leadership-summit/>

# *What's going on in Oz?*

## **What is the new Labor Government promising?**

By Miku Nakamura (she/they), NSW Advocacy Officer

### **CONTENT WARNING**

Following their re-election this year, the Australian Labor Party have reaffirmed their commitment to supporting LGBTQIA+ people across Australia.

### **\$10 Million for Inclusive LGBTQIA+ Healthcare**

The Labor Party has pledged a \$10 million investment to improve healthcare outcomes for LGBTQIA+ Australians. This investment will fund third-party training providers to educate healthcare workers in delivering inclusive and culturally safe care. It will also establish a voluntary accreditation program to publicly recognise clinics and professionals who meet best practice standards in LGBTQIA+ care.

This seeks to reduce discrimination, stigma, and barriers to healthcare access for gender- and sexuality-diverse Australians, while building on existing initiatives such as the LGBTQIA+ Health Action Plan, mental health support programs, efforts to reduce HIV transmission, and inclusive access to IVF. Health Minister Mark Butler confirmed that the program will be developed in consultation with the community, and Assistant Health Minister Ged Kearney noted the funding aims to “break down the barriers that prevent too many LGBTQIA+ Australians from getting the care they need.”

### **\$78,000 Investment in LGBTQIA+ Media**

In response to exclusion from previous media funding programs, Labor has committed \$78,000 in one-off funding to support independent LGBTQIA+ media outlets, allocating \$26,000 to Star Observer, OUTinPerth, and QNews.

This pledge was the result of a lobbying campaign led by the Star Observer and aims to support LGBTQIA+ journalism amidst growing financial challenges, including rising print costs and reduced digital visibility due to social media algorithm changes and AI-generated content.

Labor MPs Tanya Plibersek, Patrick Gorman, Renee Coffey, and Madonna Jarrett announced the investment, noting the essential role these media outlets play in promoting LGBTQIA+ visibility, community connection, and advocacy.

### **Final Thoughts**

Labor's re-election promises this year mark a continued effort to advance equality, inclusion, and wellbeing for LGBTQIA+ Australians. With dedicated funding for both healthcare and media representation, the party has taken tangible steps to address systemic barriers and affirm the voices and needs of gender- and sexuality-diverse communities. However, while these commitments are promising, real progress depends on consistent implementation, ongoing community consultation, and transparency. As we celebrate these wins, it's equally important to remain vigilant and engaged - ensuring promises are fulfilled, needs are met, and no one is left behind.

Remember: Representation matters. Funding for inclusive services and affirming spaces saves lives. Let's keep holding our leaders accountable.



# *What's going on in Oz?*

## **Making sure you do it right: Surrogacy in New South Wales**

By Lauren Devine (she/her), NSW Advocacy Officer

In Australia, surrogacy is heavily regulated by law and each state is responsible for its own surrogacy legislation.

In NSW, the *Surrogacy Act 2010* (NSW) governs all arrangements, prioritising the child's best interests and prohibiting commercial surrogacy. The *Act* also sets out several procedures and stages that need to be complied with for any Surrogacy Agreement and Parentage Application to be successful.

The case of *Re N* [2025] NSWSC 409 recently came before the NSW Supreme Court. The intended parents were a same-sex male couple and the birth mother is the sister of one of the husbands. Both parties to the Application fully supported the child remaining with the intended parents and a Parentage Order being made.

Although all involved were in agreement, the Court still has the authority to make a determination with respect to the legitimacy and legality of the Surrogacy Agreement and Parentage Order Application.

His Honour Judge Parker considered the role of the "independent counsellor" as required by s 35(2) and s 17 of the *Act* and concluded that the counsellor in question was not sufficiently independent to meet the requirements of s 17. As such, His Honour refused the Application for a Parentage Order.

This case serves as a reminder not only to the LGBTQIA+ community but any person wishing to become a parent or surrogate that strict compliance with the legislation is necessary to effect an Application for a Parentage Order.

# What's going on in Oz?

## Queer adults 30+ invited to apply for \$17,500 in study grants

By Lauren Devine (she/her), NSW Advocacy Officer

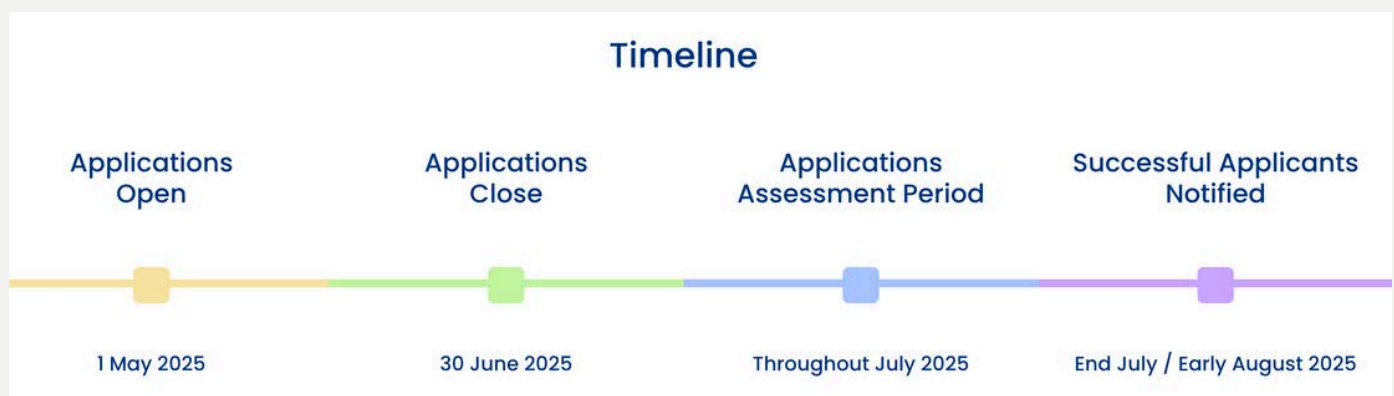
The Pride Business Association (formerly the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Business Association) has created an education fund to empower LGBTQIA+ people over the age of 30 to change the trajectory of their lives through the power of education.

The Fund provides a financial grant annually to LGBTQIA+ individuals who want to undertake a formal learning & development program in order to create positive change in their own lives, or through them, the lives of others in our community.

To be eligible for the grant, Applicants must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Self-identify as LGBTQIA+
- Be over the age of 30 years as at the date of application
- Be an Australian Citizen or Permanent Resident
- Reside in NSW

Want to learn more? Check out <https://pba.org.au/education-fund/>



# *What's going on in Oz?*

## **Hate Crimes Review on LGBTQIA+ Protections announced**

By Lauren Devine (she/her), NSW Advocacy Officer

Alex Greenwich, the independent Member for Sydney, has secured and welcomed a six-month review of hate crime laws and protections for vulnerable groups including the LGBTQIA+ community.

Mr Greenwich called for this review during debate on hate crime laws aimed at protecting the Jewish community from anti-semitism, to also protect LGBTQIA+ people and other groups under attack.

The NSW Government announced today that the review will be led by former Supreme Court Judge John Sackar, who was also the Commissioner of the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crime deaths between 1970 and 2010.

Mr Greenwich said the appointment of Justice Sackar will give the LGBTQIA+ community great confidence in the process of the review.

“Justice Sackar did an exemplary job understanding the experience of LGBTQIA+ hate crimes victims and challenging the NSW Police Force during the special commission of inquiry, and our community will welcome his appointment.

“Sadly today, we are again seeing a rise in hate targeting the LGBTQIA+ community, especially the trans community, and it’s important our laws are strengthened to be fit for purpose and deliver protection and justice.

“The Attorney General has indicated the review could lead to further legislative reforms, and I will be advocating for that to include specific protections for LGBTQIA+ people from the incitement of hate, as Victoria has recently done,” Mr Greenwich said.



# RESEARCH INTO LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE'S TRUST & CONFIDENCE IN POLICE

**We invite people living in Australia who identify as LGBTIQ+ to participate in an anonymous survey about LGBTIQ+ Australians' trust and confidence in local, specialist, and institutional branches of policing organisations.**

**The findings will be used to guide collaboration with police and LGBTIQ+ communities to develop enhanced engagement strategies to prevent crime and better understand the impact of LGBTIQ+ victimisation on trust and confidence in police.**

**For further information about the research, and to undertake the survey, please access via <https://tinyurl.com/LBGTIQAPoliceLegit> or QR code.**



**This research has been approved by the University of Newcastle and University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committees: H-2025-0019.**

LGBTIQ+ people 16 years and over living in Australia are invited to participate in an anonymous survey on research about trust and confidence in police being conducted by Dr Justin Ellis at the University of Newcastle, and Professor Nicole Asquith and Associate Professor Angela Dwyer of the University of Tasmania. All questions are optional [HREC ethics protocol H-2025-0019].

Completing all survey questions will take 5-30 minutes, depending on your relationship with police. In addition to demographic questions about sexual orientation and gender identity, we will ask you about your experiences and perceptions of police. The aim of the research is to help us better understand the factors that shape experiences and perceptions of policing in Australia. If you are interested in participating in the research, more information about the survey can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/LBGTIQAPoliceLegit> (or by using the QR code).

# New Sponsors!

## HFW Australia



The NSW Chapter of Pride in Law offers a warm welcome to HFW on behalf of the Pride in Law community. HFW is a global law firm with offices in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney

HFW offers legal advice in several areas including Aerospace, Commodities, Construction, Energy, Insurance & Reinsurance, and Shipping.

We can't wait to work with HFW to promote inclusion, legal education, and advocacy with and for LGBTQIA+ community members and legal professionals.

## Sparke Helmore Lawyers



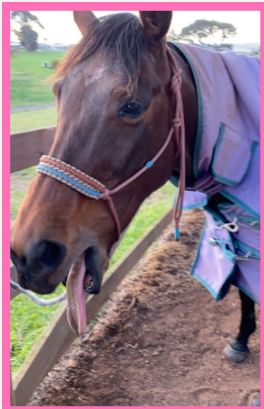
The NSW Chapter of Pride in Law is thrilled to announce Sparke Helmore Lawyers will be joining the Pride in Law community and extends a warm welcome to them.

Sparke Helmore is an Australian law firm that specialises in Commercial Insurance, Corporate & Commercial Law, Government, Statutory Lines Insurance, Property, Environment & Finance Law, and Workplace & Employment Law.

The NSW Chapter of Pride in Law is extremely excited to continue to promote the protection and rights of LGBTQIA+ peoples with Sparke Helmore and collaborate on events in the future!

# Proud Pets

*With paws, purrs and pride... Pride in Law NSW is embracing diversity in our furry, feathered and scaly friends!*



INTRODUCING...

## LOLLY, CALLIE, WHYATT AND JENNA

**Paw-rent:** Grace Johnson  
(she/her)

These allegedly “sophisticated donkeys” spend their days devouring every blade of grass, breaking fences (or gates, Callie doesn’t discriminate), and occasionally pretending to be weel-trained polocross horses.

More often, though, they’re spotted expertly dodging halters, bolting through open gates, and sending their humans sprinting (crocs and all!) through the neighbours freshly plowed paddock.

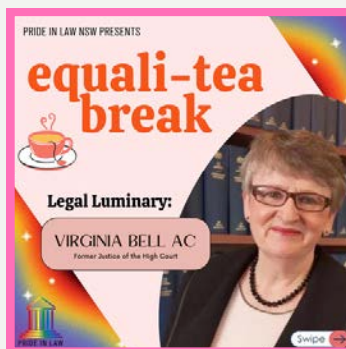
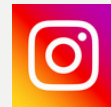
Majestic? Questionable. Menaces? Absolutely. But hey, at least they’re consistent.

*Do you have a Proud Pet (or two)? Introduce them to us with some photos and fun facts! Send submissions to [communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org](mailto:communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org)*



# Want more Pride in Law?

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OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE: <https://www.prideinlaw.org/>

## Write for us!

This newsletter is a place for you, our members and sponsors! We accept all kinds of submissions, including:

- Feature articles about LGBTIQ+ news or issues
- Spotlight on legal professionals, students or organisations doing great things for LGBTIQ+ people
- Letters from our sponsors or members, about your work, aspirations or journey
- Proud Pets (incl. photos!)
- Any other ideas you might have!

Send submissions to [communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org](mailto:communications.nsw@prideinlaw.org)