

MEDIA RELEASE

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Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS) welcomes the decision by the Northern Territory Court of Appeal that public housing tenants in the Northern Territory are entitled to 'reasonable comfort'.

Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) residents have experienced years of hardship, waiting for basic repairs to their homes.

DCLS recognise the courage and endurance of the people of Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) who, in collaboration with Australian Lawyers for Remote Indigenous Rights, have been arguing for the right to reasonable comfort since 2016. DCLS also specifically acknowledges members of the community who were central to the litigation, Mr Dan Kelly who led the legal team from Australian Lawyers for Remote Indigenous Rights and the Grata Fund who provided the financial backing for the litigation.

The Court decision means the culture of denial about the rights of remote public housing tenants has been resoundingly called out. Community Lawyer, Phil Andrews, from the Tenants' Advice Service (TAS) at DCLS said, "it is encouraging to see the acknowledgement of a right we long believed existed. The decision will bring about a more equitable rental system, especially for remote public housing tenants."

DCLS believes the outcomes of this case will have positive impacts on all tenants, especially those in public housing in remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory.

DCLS looks forward to a brighter future and to helping Territorian tenants ensure their right to reasonable comfort is respected, protected, and fulfilled.

"TAS are excited by this development and look forward to reaching out to our clients in East Arnhem Land and other parts of the NT to discuss how it may be utilised to address their housing needs." Phil said.

The DCLS Tenants Advice Service ('TAS') is a free service and more information is available on the DCLS web site, by free call 1800 812 953 or email info@dcls.org.au.

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