



Mark Speakman
Attorney General
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

MEDIA RELEASE

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DOGGOS BACK ON COURT DUTY AFTER BRIEF PAWS

Helpful hounds are once again bringing comfort and a sense of calm to NSW court users with the Canine Court Companion Program (CCCP) back in action.

Attorney General Mark Speakman today announced that after a year-long hiatus due to COVID-19, therapy dogs have returned to courthouses in Manly, Campbelltown, Burwood, Sutherland, Gosford, Goulburn, Nowra, Lismore, Orange and Wagga Wagga.

“It took some dogged determination, but we are so glad these loveable Labradors are back on the beat,” Mr Speakman said.

“The therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers play an important role by easing the stress of attending court for children, vulnerable witnesses and victims of domestic violence.”

The CCCP is a partnership initiative led by Victims Services and Court Services, with each placid pooch receiving up to two years of intensive training with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

Member for Manly James Griffin said a trial of therapy dogs at Manly Courthouse set tongues wagging in 2017, and kick-started a rollout across the state.

“This lab-tested therapy is a win for victims, witnesses and other court users so I’m thrilled to see the program return to Manly Courthouse this week,” Mr Griffin said.

“There is also [growing evidence](#) to support the use of therapy dogs to alleviate symptoms associated with trauma, including stress and anxiety.”

Studies also show that animal-assisted intervention provides additional physiological benefits such as lowered heart rate, increased speech and memory functions and heightened mental clarity.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Chief Executive Dale Cleaver said the Court Companion dogs and volunteer handlers have been patiently waiting to make a difference in the community once again.

“We’re excited our beautiful dogs will have their day in court, providing comfort to people in need,” Mr Cleaver said.