



**Bronnie Taylor**

Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women

**Mark Speakman**

Attorney General

Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 25 November 2021

### **\$20 MILLION TO BOOST SUPPORT FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM-SURVIVORS**

More domestic violence victim-survivors will receive critical support with a \$20 million relief package for more than 180 NSW specialist frontline services being delivered, as an annual international violence prevention campaign kicks off today.

This is the first tranche of new Commonwealth funding under the Domestic and Family Violence National Partnership Agreement 2021-23. The new Commonwealth funding will complement existing investments from the NSW Government for domestic violence services.

The investment also comes amid the [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#), an annual international awareness campaign that begins today (25 November) – the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – and runs until World Human Rights Day on 10 December.

Attorney General and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence Mark Speakman said this package forms part of the additional \$140 million funding boost over two years from the NSW and Commonwealth Governments.

“Our frontline providers have been facing greater need for their life-saving services and support from women and children fleeing domestic abuse during and following lockdowns necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic,” Mr Speakman said.

“This flexible funding will help services retain highly-skilled staff and support their wellbeing, provide additional brokerage to assist victim-survivors with essentials such as furniture, and cover COVID-19 cleaning and interpreter costs.”

Federal Minister for Families and Social Services Anne Ruston thanked the dedicated service providers for their commitment to keeping women and children safe under the challenging circumstances of the pandemic.

“Women who are socially isolated often face extra barriers when trying to leave violent partners. This, combined with the financial and mental stressors of the pandemic has increased the complexity of many cases,” Senator Ruston said.

“This investment will better support victim-survivors who come forward to report abuse – both during lockdowns and now that restrictions have eased.”

The package provides extra funding for existing specialist domestic and family violence services, including:

- [Staying Home Leaving Violence](#) to reduce victim-survivor homelessness;
- Women's refuges to support women and children in need of crisis accommodation;
- The [Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services Program](#), to provide women and their children with the emotional and practical support they need to recover from domestic and family violence;
- Domestic Violence Response Enhancement to provide after-hours crisis support services for victim-survivors;
- [Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services](#) to help women and children escaping violence with their legal, social and welfare needs;
- Specialist workers to provide trauma-informed support for children and young people in 20 priority refuges;
- Men's Behaviour Change Programs and other perpetrator interventions; and
- Local Support Services for male victim-survivors.

Minister for Women Bronnie Taylor said addressing domestic and family violence requires many, varied responses, which is what this support package aims to deliver.

"Domestic and family violence needs to be addressed on multiple fronts – with immediate supports like crisis accommodation, housing and legal help, as well as preventative measures like men's behaviour change programs," Mrs Taylor said.

"The Government is also very pleased to be delivering further tailored support for children as part of this package, which will help ensure they're given the specialist care they need."

Delia Donovan, CEO of [Domestic Violence NSW](#), welcomed the funding, which she said is essential to helping women and children who found it harder to access support during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

"The danger of domestic abuse is heightened behind closed doors. If women are forced to stay at home, they have fewer chances to seek help," Ms Donovan said.

"We expect waitlists to rise again now that the NSW lockdown has lifted, and this support package will help ensure our member services can meet the ongoing demand and need."

The \$140 million funding boost is part of the 2021-22 NSW Budget, which committed a record \$687 million over four years (including \$80 million in Commonwealth funding) to improve victim safety and reduce family violence reoffending.

For confidential advice, support and referrals, contact: **1800 RESPECT** (1800 737 732), **The NSW Domestic Violence Line** (1800 65 64 63) or **Men's Referral Service** (1300 766 491).