



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW BILL TO BETTER PROTECT OUR FRONTLINE EMERGENCY WORKERS

Legislation with new offences with tough penalties for offenders who assault frontline health and emergency services workers has been introduced to Parliament by the NSW Government.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said every person should be able to feel safe in their workplace, including health and emergency services workers who perform an essential public service for our community, in difficult circumstances and often at personal risk.

“Acts of violence on emergency services and frontline workers in the course of their duties are unacceptable,” Mr Speakman said.

“Those who perpetrate disgraceful acts of violence on these dedicated individuals should face serious criminal punishment. That is why the NSW Government is committed to strengthening criminal law protections for frontline workers as distinct, grave offences through this bill.

“The [Crimes Legislation Amendment \(Assaults on Frontline Emergency and Health Workers\) Bill 2022](#) contains a suite of important reforms for the better protection of health and emergency services workers who commit their working lives to keeping our community safe.

“The new offences recognise that acts of violence against these workers merit express and distinct recognition, and higher penalties than currently available under the general assault provisions in the *Crimes Act 1900*. The new offences align with existing penalties for assaulting NSW police officers and other law enforcement officers.

“This bill underscores the NSW Government’s strong commitment to strengthening criminal law protections for frontline health and emergency workers.

“This bill is part of the [NSW Government’s response](#) to the NSW Sentencing Council’s report *Assaults on Emergency Services Workers*.”

The NSW Government is supporting, in full or in principle, all of the recommendations in that report.

In addition, the NSW Government's amendments go further by ensuring that firefighters from the NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, pharmacy staff, community health workers, NSW State Emergency Service frontline workers and other specified emergency workers will also be covered by the new offences.

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