



Safe and Sound – Family Violence Reforms in Victoria and Tasmania

Issued April 2025

Christian belief and practice are centred on an understanding of God as love. That love is seen expressly in Jesus Christ, whose life, death and resurrection form the core of Christian belief. Connected with God's love are concepts such as justice and righteousness, which are opposites of oppression, injustice and sin. An outworking of justice is peace (shalom) and salvation (i.e. being saved from oppression, injustice, sin, etc). Any mistreatment of those with less power is an injustice.

Domestic and family violence (sometimes referred to as “domestic abuse”) is a form of oppression that breaks the human spirit and relationships, preys on people in their vulnerability, violates the safety of home life and attacks a person's most basic human values of trust, love, hope and self-worth.

Parliamentary Committee Report into Family Violence Orders

In February 2025, the Federal House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs released its report from an inquiry into family violence orders. The report noted that Australia has been tackling gendered violence and reviewing and updating the laws and responses that are intended to keep women and children safe. There have been 1,733 female victims of intimate partner homicide in Australia between July 1989 and December 2024, including 35 women who were murdered by their current or former partners in 2024. The Committee stated, “Despite legislative reforms and other measures, the system we have is failing these women and their children.”

The recommendations made by the Committee relevant to state governments are included in the bullet points for the letters at the end of this action.

Children's experience of family violence

The Victorian Commissioner for Children and Young People, Liana Buchanan, in late February 2025, publicly raised concern that children experiencing family violence in Victoria remain largely invisible to a family violence system designed by and for adults. In her report, *Lost, not Forgotten*, she examined the suicide of 35 children in Victoria between 2007 and 2019 who were known to child protection services. In all but one case, the children's lives had been marred by family violence before their deaths.

Children have told the Commissioner they feel invisible in the system that is supposed to support survivors of family and domestic violence. They are usually responded to as a mere extension of their protective parent instead of being recognised as survivors in their own right.

The Commissioner has raised concerns that currently, there are minimal, if any, crisis intervention and accommodation services designed specifically for young people who are survivors of family and domestic violence. As a result, young people escaping family violence risk homelessness and encounter government-funded systems that are ill-equipped to meet their needs.

What You Can Do

If in Victoria, write polite and respectful letters or emails to:

The Hon Natalie Hutchins
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
121 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Salutation: Dear Minister

E-mail: minofficehutchins@ecodev.vic.gov.au



Points to make in your letters or e-mails:

- Welcome the efforts the Victorian Government has made to address family violence.
- Despite these efforts, note that further reforms and resources are needed.
- Ask that the Victorian Government implement the relevant recommendations from the February 2025 Federal House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs report from an inquiry into family violence orders, including:
 - Allowing children and young people to apply for family violence orders (FVOs) and to be named as protected persons on FVOs.
 - Ensuring the police have an obligation to assist victim-survivors of family and domestic violence to obtain FVOs and respond to breaches of FVOs in matters involving children where the statutory basis is met.
 - Allow police to make own-motion FVOs.
 - Ensure information, application forms and court proceedings are accessible for First Nations people and culturally and linguistically diverse people, those with poor online access or who are living with a disability.
 - Allow all applicants for FVOs to participate in court hearings remotely if they wish.
 - Ensure that courts hearing applications for FVOs have safe entrances and waiting areas, as well as safety protocols in all courts for applications in family, domestic, and sexual violence matters.
- Ask that the Victorian Government invest in crisis and accommodation services designed specifically for young people who are survivors of family violence, as recommended by the Victorian Commissioner for Children and Young People.

If in Tasmania, write polite and respectful letters or e-mails to:

The Hon Guy Barnett MP

Attorney-General
Minister for Justice
GPO Box 123
Hobart, TAS, 7001

Salutation: Dear Minister

E-mail:
Barnett.correspondence@dpac.tas.gov.au

The Honourable Jo Palmer MLC

Minister for Women and the Prevention of
Family Violence
Level 9, 15 Murray Street
Hobart, TAS, 7000

Salutation: Dear Minister

E-mail: jo.palmer@parliament.tas.gov.au

Points to make in your letters or e-mails:

- Thank the Tasmanian Government for its constructive submissions to the Federal House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into family violence orders.
- Ask that the Tasmanian Government implement the relevant recommendations from the inquiry, including:
 - Allowing children and young people to apply for family violence orders (FVOs) and to be named as protected persons on FVOs.
 - Ensuring the police have an obligation to assist victim-survivors of family and domestic violence to obtain FVOs and respond to breaches of FVOs in matters involving children where the statutory basis is met.
 - Allow police to make own-motion FVOs.
 - Ensure information, application forms and court proceedings are accessible for First Nations people and culturally and linguistically diverse people, those with poor online access or who are living with a disability.
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