

Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

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Submitted by:	Respect Inc
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Submitter Comments:	



www.respectqld.org.au

info@respectqld.org.au

ABN 47 552 535 661

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28 May, 2025

Committee Secretary
Education, Arts and Communities Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Re: Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 ('the Bill')

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to this process. Please accept our comments below in response to the introduction of the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This submission is informed by the lived experiences of sex workers in Queensland who have informed our work in this area, including the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce processes, the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence, Consent and Coercive Control Legislation Review, the Rape and Sexual Assault Sentencing Review and Police Business Unit Reviews.

Respect Inc is the state-wide sex worker organisation in Queensland that provides a comprehensive health promotion and peer education program for sex workers. Our organisation has a wide range of projects including a DFSV program. Respect Inc has offices and sex worker drop-in spaces in Cairns, Brisbane and the Gold Coast and provides regional outreach in other locations in Queensland.

Police Protection Directions (PPDs)

We recognise the intent of the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 to strengthen responses to domestic and family violence (DFV) and to improve the response to DFV by frontline police officers. However, we do not support the expanded police powers - particularly the ability to issue immediate year long Police Protection Directions (PPDs), without judicial oversight. These measures risk exacerbating the already high rates of misidentification of victim/survivors as people using violence, especially among sex workers and other stigmatised and marginalised groups.

Police-issued PPDs may be based on flawed or biased assessments, especially in the context of complex power dynamics where victim/survivors may use defensive force, or where coercive control is present but not immediately visible. Sex workers, particularly those who are migrants or trans, may be at heightened risk of being misidentified as people using violence based on profiling, language barriers, or systemic prejudice. The absence of judicial oversight removes an essential safeguard, allowing life-altering legal instruments to be applied without adequate review or recourse.

Meanjin
Brisbane Mon-Th
1/76 Wickham St
Fortitude Valley 4006
07 38351111

Rural Regional
Central + Nth Qld
Outreach
0416 987 011
0476 213 885

Gimuy
Cairns Tue-Th
7/24 Florence St
Cairns City Q 4870
07 40515009

Yugambah & Kombumerri Country
Gold Coast Tue-Fri
Level 1, 3 Davenport St
Southport Q 4215
07 55640929, 0401 969 223

Sex workers have historically been excluded from or criminalised by systems that are meant to provide protection. Without adequate community consultation and safeguards, this legislation risks continuing that pattern.

A member of our community - a trans woman of colour and a sex worker - shared the following experience with Respect Inc. Her story highlights exactly how the types of unchecked police powers proposed in this Bill can result in systemic harm:

She called police multiple times when her partner became violent. Each time, police misgendered her, despite her clearly presenting as a woman. Her male partner told the officers she was "a male that dresses up like a woman." The police accepted his narrative.

Although she often had visible injuries, including bruises and swelling, she was repeatedly misidentified as the aggressor. On one occasion, police told her she had to leave her own home. With nowhere to go, she spent the night on the street.

After several incidents, neighbours called the police again. This time, she was found hiding in a shed with a head injury. Police finally recognised her as the person experiencing violence, and a Domestic Violence Order (DVO) was put in place. Her partner was charged.

When the matter went to court, a Respect Inc staff member attended with her. Despite the violence-related charges, she was made to wait in the same public area as her ex-partner. Only after a formal complaint was she moved to a safer, separate waiting space.

This case underscores the dangers of enabling police to issue protection orders without court oversight. While the Bill provides that a police officer will be required to seek approval from a supervising officer and includes conditions whereby a PPD cannot be used, we remain concerned that there are not sufficient checks and balances. Without strong protections marginalised victims are more likely to be disbelieved, misidentified, and re-traumatised.

It is clear to Respect Inc that sex workers, particularly those who are trans, migrant, or Aboriginal, face stigma, discrimination and systemic bias from police and courts.

For those without stable housing or legal support, being misidentified as the perpetrator can lead to criminalisation, loss of custody of children, loss of income, and even homelessness - as our case study illustrates.

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The Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Board¹ has previously warned that misidentification can have fatal consequences, particularly when victims stop seeking help due to fear of being criminalised themselves.

Sex workers and marginalized people must not be further endangered by laws that give unchecked powers to police. While the need for timely responses to DFV is urgent, any measures must be rooted in justice, safety, and accountability. Respect Inc. urges the Committee to reconsider the provisions that grant police expanded authority without adequate oversight and to ensure the legislation protects all communities equally - especially those most at risk of state violence and systemic neglect.

Expansion of VREC framework

Respect Inc supports the expansion of the VREC framework to all Magistrates Courts in Queensland to support victim survivors of DFV when giving evidence. We hope that this simplification and expansion will result in less retraumatisation for victim/survivors while recognising their need for a degree of separation from the offender through the court process.

We note that the Bill removes the requirement for a trained police officer to take a VREC statement and at present a 'trained police officer' is one who has successfully completed a DFV training course. Respect Inc does not support this change. In our experience this training should be a minimum requirement for all police undertaking this action and would recommend instead that more police be required to undertake the training.

Thank you for considering our feedback. If you require further information please contact me on

[REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

Carly Nichol,
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, Collaborative responses to risk, safety, and dangerousness Annual Report 2021-22
<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Tabled-Papers/docs/5722t1788/5722t1788-c2f8.pdf>

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