

Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

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Submitted by:	Mayor Tom Tate, City of Gold Coast
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Office of the Mayor

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Committee Secretariat
Education, Arts and Communities Committee

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Dear Committee Secretariat

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2025 – SUBMISSION DUE – 5PM, FRIDAY 30 MAY 2025.

The City of Gold Coast (the City) appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, conducted by the Queensland Parliament's Education, Arts and Communities Committee.

The City is committed to being a safe and liveable city and works closely with the State Government and local services to prevent and raise awareness of domestic and family violence.

The City acknowledges that domestic and family violence is an issue that affects not only individuals but the broader community. It causes significant physical, emotional, psychological and financial harm, and tragically, can be fatal. The City is saddened by the impacts of domestic and family violence and recognises that preventing it requires a whole-of-the-community effort.

The City is aware that each year the number of domestic and family violence incidents reported to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) increases, with a report made every three minutes. Domestic and family violence places a significant burden on police resources across Queensland, including the Gold Coast.

The issue is further highlighted by the pressure on support services, with DVConnect receiving a call for help every five minutes. The Southport Magistrates Court continues to receive the second highest number of domestic violence applications in Queensland, second only to Beenleigh, which is located just north of the Gold Coast. Domestic and family violence also remains one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and young people.

The Gold Coast's population continues to increase, with an estimated population of 681,389 as of June 2024 - an increase of 2.29% since 2023. With this growth, it is likely that domestic and family violence incidents will continue to increase unless prevention measures are effectively embedded.

In the City's 2024 Safe City Survey, a 3-yearly survey introduced in 2021, 61% of respondents reported feeling safe in their neighbourhood. This was a decrease of 11.7% compared to the 2021 Survey. In both surveys, domestic and family violence was communicated by respondents as a safety concern.

Reducing the prevalence of domestic and family violence requires a whole-of-community integrated approach, coordinated and led by key domestic and family violence agencies. The City acknowledges that the State Government is the lead agency for domestic and family violence response and prevention in Queensland. The City recognises its supporting role in prevention, which includes community partnerships, raising awareness and providing education, as well as its responsibilities as an employer of over 5,000 staff.

The City delivers a range of initiatives to support the prevention and reduction of domestic and family violence. Community safety initiatives are delivered through the City's 2028 Community Safety Program (the Program), which provides a strategic framework to guide City-led initiatives and programs to strengthen community safety outcomes and increase both actual and perceived safety in the community. One of the Program's four key focus areas is *Supporting a reduction in domestic and family violence*.

Among several other City initiatives, the City leads the Mayoral Safer Suburbs Forum, which facilitates communication between key community safety partners including the QPS and the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. This interagency partnership addresses current and emerging safety issues and determines coordinated actions. Domestic and family violence is a key topic discussed at the Forum. The City also attends domestic and family violence sector network meetings and partners closely with services, including the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre, which leads the integrated service response in the Gold Coast.

The City acknowledges the significant prevalence and impact of domestic and family violence in our neighbourhoods and supports measures that aim to strengthen the domestic and family violence sector, improve victim-survivor support and enhance police capacity and efficiencies. The City encourages continued engagement with the domestic and family violence sector and sufficient training for those responsible for implementing the amendments, including the use of the Police Protection Directions (PPDs).

The City acknowledges the Video Recorded Evidence-in-Chief (VREC) framework is currently in place at the Southport Magistrates Court, enabling victim-survivors to provide their evidence through a video recorded statement taken by a police officer. This approach has many benefits, including assisting to reduce the trauma experienced by victim-survivors when re-telling their experiences in court and providing a trauma-informed, victim-centric response to support them through the criminal justice system. Acknowledging support from the QPS and the domestic and family violence sector, the City also supports its continued use, and further application in civil proceedings. In addition, the City is supportive of continued investment in and improvements to approved intervention programs and counselling.

The City will continue to support lead agencies and community groups in the prevention and reduction of domestic and family violence in the Gold Coast.



Should you require additional information, please contact Matt Werner, Manager Public Safety Compliance on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

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**TOM TATE
MAYOR**



City of Gold Coast