



EDON Place Domestic and Family Violence Centre Incorporated – Bundaberg welcomes the opportunity to make a written submission on the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee of the Queensland Parliament.

EDON Place supports the objectives of the Bill, that is, to increase accountability of perpetrators of domestic and family violence, and to increase protection for victims of domestic and family violence. Although our submission does not address each and every clause of the Bill, it should be noted that we support the Bill in its entirety.

#### Clause 4

We support the proposed amendment to clarify that a wide range of behaviours can constitute domestic violence; specifically, when a victim has been threatened or fears for their safety or well being; and that courts can issue DVOs on this basis.

#### Clause 7

We support the proposed amendment requiring a court to consider additional DVO conditions to better tailor protection for a victim or other named persons, including children.

#### Clause 8

We support the proposed amendment making it mandatory for a respondent to comply with an Intervention Order (formerly a “Voluntary Intervention Order”). However, believe that respondents should be held accountable, by the Courts, for non-compliance with the Intervention Order.

#### Clause 11

We support the proposed amendment requiring the court to consider any family law orders in the making or varying of a DVO.

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### Clause 13

We support the proposed amendment requiring the court to ensure the parties understand the broad range and type of behaviours that constitute domestic and family violence.

### Clause 15

We support the proposed amendment to ensure a victim's access to protection does not depend on whether or not the respondent has complied with an intervention order.

### Clause 16

We support the proposed amendment to ensure that the safety, protection and well-being of people who fear or experience domestic and family violence, including children, are paramount.

### Clause 17

We support the proposed amendment that broadens the court's discretion to determine the length of a protection order, and that courts can only make orders that last for less than 5 years if satisfied there are reasons for doing so. We agree that the default period be 5 years. We agree with the rationale for this proposed amendment that is, increasing the court's ability to protect victims, for example where parents will have on-going contact with their children.

### Clause 19

We support the proposed amendments that expand the range of people able to be protected by a PPN including a child, other relative, or an associate of the aggrieved.

### Clause 23

We support the proposed amendments affording greater flexibility for police to issue a PPN on the basis they are satisfied that the grounds exist without necessarily needing to record the details within the PPN. This is not an issue as notes still need to be taken by Officer, i.e in their notebooks, bodycam, digital recording, etc. The requirement to seek approval of an 'authorising officer' is more concerning particularly in rural and remote areas where access to the requisite rank may result in unnecessary time delays or in officers not requesting the additional levels of protection. If oversight of police use of these additional powers is of concern, then doesn't that ultimately lie with the Courts before any final Order is issued.

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Clause 44

We support the proposed amendments which aim to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of victims and their families takes precedence over people's right to privacy.

The proposed amendments dealing with sharing of information are supported, however we would welcome the opportunity to have input into the "Guidelines for Sharing Information" that the Bill proposes be developed. We note that other Australian jurisdictions have different approaches in relation to information sharing.

Clauses 45 and 46

We support the proposed amendments that increase penalties for breaching PPNs and release conditions.

Clauses 51-57

We support the proposed amendments that facilitate the national recognition of DVOs and we support the implementation of national model laws that will support Queensland's participation in the National Domestic Violence Order Scheme.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a written submission to the Committee. While the Bill is supported by EDON Place, it cannot be emphasised enough that agencies must be resourced appropriately, to give effect to the provisions of the Bill.

Ken Hendrie  
President

Lyne Booth  
Service Director

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