

Inquiry Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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8 January 2025

Committee Secretary
State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Committee,

Inquiry into the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Women's Legal Service Queensland (WLSQ) is a community legal centre providing state-wide specialist, free legal information, advice, representation and integrated supports to women. We provide legal assistance with matters involving domestic and family violence, sexual violence, family law, child protection, and financial abuse. Our work is informed by feminist values, and we advocate for law reform and changes to the justice system to improve access to justice, safety and equality for women and children.

WLSQ is supportive of any measures designed to assist women, especially women who have experienced domestic violence. In our submission, the proposed reform of sections 153 and 154 of the Duties Act provides an opportunity to offer greater protection to women who have experienced violence.

Domestic and family violence (DFV) is the leading cause of homelessness for women, with 45% of all women and girls seeking homelessness assistance identifying family and domestic violence as a cause¹. Within the current context of the legislation, there is no express consideration of a person fleeing a domestically violent situation, or a requirement for this to inform the consideration of the Commissioner in any reassessment process.

The current structure of the 12-month occupancy rule makes it more likely that women who are non-compliant with the occupancy rule as a consequence of leaving a domestically violent relationship will also fail to come under the jurisdiction for an exemption from a duty in the federal jurisdiction².

Given this context, it would be appropriate to insert an express provision in the Bill to require consideration of those fleeing DFV in the reassessment process, or alternatively consider an expansion of the definition of "intervening event" to include circumstances where a person is escaping domestic and family violence, either expressly in the provision or through prescription under a regulation.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback,
Yours sincerely,



Nadia Bromley
CEO
Women's Legal Service Queensland

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report, 2022-23, Table: Clients 21

² Given the general requirement for a relationship to exist for a minimum of 2 years for the court to make an order under Part VIII of the *Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)*