




Speech By
Hon. Amanda Camm

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025

**DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

Second Reading

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (8.01 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

In April of this year, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 was introduced into the Legislative Assembly. The bill progresses legislative amendments primarily to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 and the Evidence Act 1977. It also makes consequential amendments to other acts.

The bill includes three key reforms. The first is to establish police protection directions, PPDs, to provide a new tool for police responding to domestic and family violence. The bill also supports the Crisafulli government's election commitment to establish an electronic monitoring pilot for high-risk perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Thirdly, the bill simplifies, streamlines and expands the videorecorded evidence-in-chief framework and clarifies that a videorecorded statement can be used in civil proceedings under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act. Finally, the bill makes technical amendments to the approved provider list to improve the maintenance of the list.

Following its introduction, the bill was referred to the Education, Arts and Communities Committee, and I thank the committee for its thorough consideration of the bill. The committee received a total of 75 submissions. I extend my thanks to those stakeholders, organisations and individuals who made submissions and took part in public hearings in Mackay, Cairns and Brisbane. They provided valuable input for the committee's consideration. I especially thank the victim-survivors who shared their own experiences of domestic and family violence, and I acknowledge and am grateful for their courage in sharing their stories.

I am also pleased to inform the House that on 20 June 2025 the committee tabled its report on the bill. The committee made seven recommendations including that the bill be passed. In addition to recommending passage, the committee's other recommendations covered: one, the development of guidelines to assist police officers in administering police protection directions, PPDs; two, a further amendment to ensure PPDs are provided to the Family Responsibilities Commission; three, the statutory review proposed in the bill to consider whether proposed safeguards against misidentification are effective; four, considered implementation and fulsome and meaningful evaluation of the electronic monitoring pilot; five, embedding more detail in the primary legislation if the scheme is to be extended or made permanent following the pilot; and, six, Queensland Police Service domestic and family violence training materials to be co-designed with domestic and family violence specialist providers

being regularly reviewed and for police officers to take refresher training. I would like to take this opportunity to table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Education, Arts and Communities Committee: Report No. 5, 58th Parliament—Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, government response [1139](#).

I am pleased to advise the House that the Crisafulli government supports or supports in principle all of the committee's recommendations. I foreshadow that during consideration in detail I will move amendments concerning the PPD framework. Broadly, these amendments will: respond to recommendation 3 of the committee's report; support the Queensland Police Service to operationalise the PPD framework; support courts to have visibility of PPDs; and clarify the court review process for PPDs. I will now provide a detailed overview of the bill, starting with the PPD framework.

Currently, Queensland police officers can issue police protection notices providing victim-survivors with short-term protection until the matter can be heard before a court. The court can then make a protection order for up to five years. PPDs will provide a new tool for police officers responding to domestic and family violence. This will enable frontline officers to offer immediate 12-month protection for victim-survivors without the need for the matter to go through the courts.

PPDs may contain standard conditions in addition to no-contact, ouster, return and cool-down conditions. To issue a PPD, a police officer must seek the approval of a supervising police officer. The supervising officer must be a rank of sergeant or senior sergeant, depending on the conditions of the PPD. If a supervising officer believes it would be more appropriate for the matter to go before a court, they will be able to approve a police protection notice in place of a PPD. PPDs will only be used where a police officer, having investigated, considers it appropriate for a matter not to proceed to court. This will remove the necessity for operational police officers to prepare for and attend court.

Police may issue a PPD if they reasonably believe the respondent has committed domestic violence, a PPD is necessary or desirable to protect the aggrieved from domestic violence and it would not be more appropriate to apply for a protection order on the victim's behalf. Before issuing a PPD, police officers will have to consider several matters including any views or wishes expressed by the aggrieved and the criminal and domestic violence history of the parties.

The bill provides for circumstances where a police officer will be unable to issue a PPD, which I will refer to as exclusions. One exclusion is where the respondent has been convicted of a domestic and family violence offence within the previous two years. Another exclusion is where either the respondent or the aggrieved is a child. Broadly, the exclusions are intended to safeguard against PPDs being used in circumstances where court consideration of a matter would be more appropriate.

I understand that misidentification of the person most in need of protection was raised as a concern during the committee process, and I acknowledge the severity of consequences if a PPD wrongly identifies the person most in need of protection. The bill includes several safeguards intended to protect against misidentification including particular exclusions. Firstly, a police officer will not be able to issue a PPD if they cannot identify the person most in need of protection. If police attend an incident and are unable to determine who is in most need of protection, this is an exclusion for the issuing of a PPD. Consistent with the current approach for police protection notices, an officer will not be able to issue a PPD against both parties. Before making a PPD, a police officer will also be required to make a reasonable attempt to locate and talk to the respondent and consider any views or wishes expressed by the aggrieved.

In its report, the committee acknowledged the significant risks associated with misidentification of the person most in need of protection. The committee expressed its support for the proposed safeguards included in the bill, stating it was satisfied the safeguards would be sufficient to mitigate these risks. The committee also recommended that the effectiveness of these safeguards be considered as part of the statutory review proposed by the bill. As indicated in the response I have tabled here today, the government supports this recommendation.

The bill includes two review pathways for a PPD after it is issued. A respondent or an aggrieved may apply for either a police review or a court review. Neither review affects the operation of a PPD while it is underway. The police review will be available to parties for 28 days after the PPD is issued. The purpose of the police review is to ensure the PPD provided a level of protection that was appropriate in the circumstances at the time the PPD was issued. This includes circumstances that existed at the time but were not known or considered by the officer issuing the PPD in the first instance. A police review must be undertaken by an authorised reviewing officer who is a rank higher than the approving officer for the PPD and who was not involved in investigating the domestic violence that led to the PPD being issued. The reviewing officer may decide to confirm or revoke the PPD and take another action such as issuing a police protection notice or issuing a new PPD.

The court process will operate in a similar way to the current process for a police protection notice. The respondent or aggrieved may apply to the court for a review of a PPD at any time during the 12 months it is in force. The court review operates independently of the police review process and is not an appeal of any decision made by the police on review. This means an applicant does not need to have sought a police review first. The court, upon review, will consider whether a protection order is necessary and desirable at the time of the review, not the time police attended and issued the PPD.

The court may make any order available under part 3 of the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act. The court may also make an order setting aside the PPD or decide to dismiss the application for a protection order. If a court makes an order setting aside the PPD, the direction is taken never to have been issued and will not appear on the respondent's domestic violence history. During consideration in detail I will move an amendment to give courts an additional option to end a PPD. This will allow for circumstances where keeping a record of the PPD on the respondent's history is considered appropriate. If the magistrate dismisses the application for review, the PPD will continue in force unaffected.

The bill creates a new offence for contravening a PPD, with a maximum penalty of 120 penalty units or three years imprisonment. This mirrors the maximum penalty for a contravention of a police protection notice. Domestic and family violence is to be treated seriously in all contexts, whether a PPD, a PPN or a DVO has been issued. A PPD is a serious response to domestic and family violence which provides a year of protection to the aggrieved. A longer period of protection can still be sought from the courts at any time.

During consideration in detail I intend to move amendments to the Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008. This amendment will respond to recommendation 3 of the committee's report and provide for the Family Responsibilities Commission to be notified of PPDs in relevant circumstances. Ensuring the Family Responsibilities Commission retains visibility of domestic and family violence occurring in welfare reform community areas will support early intervention in a culturally safe environment.

I will now provide an overview of the framework for electronic monitoring. The bill supports the Crisafulli government's election commitment to pilot GPS monitoring for high-risk domestic and family violence offenders. The provision outlined in the bill will allow specific courts to require the electronic monitoring of a respondent to a domestic violence order. The cohort eligible for the electronic monitoring pilot will be limited to respondents who have convictions or charges for a domestic violence offence, or an indictable offence involving violence against another person or have a history of charges for domestic violence offences made against them. This cohort is intended to capture high-risk perpetrators of domestic and family violence. When deciding to impose electronic monitoring conditions, courts will have to consider a range of things including the views and wishes of the aggrieved or named person.

While including electronic monitoring as part of a domestic violence order in the civil context is different to electronic monitoring as part of bail or parole, it is intended these provisions will complement the existing frameworks. I note the committee was satisfied that the provisions for the electronic monitoring pilot detailed in the bill achieve a fair balance between the intended purpose of the scheme and any potential limitations to human rights. I intend to move amendments to the electronic monitoring provisions during consideration in detail. These amendments concern how prescribed entities are asked for information by a court considering whether to make a monitoring condition. Further amendments will concern the admissibility of electronic monitoring information in non-domestic violence matters where the court considers it would be in the interests of justice to admit the evidence.

The bill amends the Evidence Act 1977 to simplify and streamline the videorecorded evidence-in-chief framework, or VREC for short. Importantly, the bill expands the scheme statewide. VREC is a key component of our efforts to support victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. The existing VREC framework allows adult complainants in domestic violence summary criminal proceedings and committal proceedings to provide their evidence-in-chief by way of a videorecorded statement. This approach offers significant benefits. It can reduce the trauma for victim-survivors by minimising the need of extensive oral testimony in court; it allows for a more detailed account to be captured in a comfortable environment like their home; and it can assist in the recall of details closer to the time of the alleged offence, potentially reducing contested matters. The current framework has been operating as a trial in Magistrates Courts in Ipswich, Southport and Coolangatta. The bill will ensure victim-survivors across the state have the option of giving evidence in this way.

The amendments to the VREC framework seek to clarify that a complainant's evidence-in-chief may be comprised of more than one videorecorded statement. This recognises that victim-survivors may make multiple reports to police over a period of time. The bill omits the requirement for a recorded statement to be made 'as soon as practicable' after events. This is a crucial shift towards a victim-centric

approach, acknowledging that victim-survivors may be in a heightened state of distress and require more time before providing a detailed account to police. Many submitters to the committee supported allowing police officers to take statements at the most appropriate time for victim-survivors.

The bill also removes the requirement that a VREC statement must be taken by a trained police officer. While this caused concern among several submitters to the committee, the Queensland Police Service has assured that suitable training can be affected through internal policy and guiding principles, allowing for greater flexibility in workforce capabilities while still meeting the needs of victim-survivors appropriately. The Queensland Police Service is developing a combined PPD and VREC training package, with frontline officer training to commence before 1 January 2026. To increase flexibility, amendments are also being made to the translation requirement to allow for either an oral or a separate written English translation if any part of the recorded statement is in a language other than English.

The bill simplifies the requirement for the complainant to declare the truthfulness of their statement, replacing the need for an acknowledgement or declaration under the Oaths Act 1867 with a simpler declaration at the end of the recording. The intent is not to diminish the importance of swearing evidence but to enable a police officer to explain the process in simple language. Safeguards remain if the complainant knowingly provides false information.

The bill streamlines the process for obtaining informed consent. It provides that informed consent need only to be obtained once, either before or at the commencement of the recorded statement. This change avoids unnecessary repetition for victim-survivors, ensuring the framework is more streamlined while retaining important safeguards. The bill retains the existing requirement to obtain informed consent, which requires the police officer to explain key matters including that the statement may be used as evidence-in-chief, disclosed to the accused and that the complainant may be required to confirm its truthfulness in court.

Further amendments are made to significantly address the admissibility of recorded statements. The bill introduces an example of exceptional circumstances where an audio recording, as opposed to video, may be admitted. This example indicates that such a circumstance exists where a technological error or failure prevents the production of moving images. Finally, the bill clarifies that a court can consider a recorded statement in civil proceedings under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act. This is a crucial clarification, as victim-survivors often need to give evidence in both criminal and civil proceedings. Admitting a recorded statement in civil proceedings instead of a written statement or affidavit minimises the requirement for victim-survivors to retell their experiences, thereby reducing further trauma.

The bill proposes amendments intended to improve the maintenance of the approved provider list. This list is for service providers approved to provide court ordered intervention and counselling services to persons using violence. The bill will allow the chief executive to consider whether service providers meet certain criteria when determining whether they can be added to the list. Criteria will be prescribed by regulation in addition to the existing requirements for the approval of providers on the APL. We know it is important to get this right, and we will consult with the domestic and family violence sector in developing the criteria.

The Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will support our frontline police when they are responding to domestic and family violence while providing safety to victim-survivors and facilitates government's commitment to establish an electronic monitoring pilot for high-risk domestic and family violence offenders. Additional amendments to be moved will build on this government's commitment to victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence. I commend the bill to the House.