

Question on Notice
No. 953
Asked on 12 June 2019

Mr S Bennett asked Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. A Palaszczuk)—

QUESTION:

Will the Premier advise the number of domestic and family violence perpetrators in the public service that have been given family and domestic violence leave (paid and unpaid) over the last year?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is committed to the prevention of domestic and family violence. As part of this commitment, Queensland has set the benchmark for employers across Australia in implementing a workplace response that is holistic and comprehensive in its approach and focussed on creating safe and respectful workplace cultures.

Queensland was the first Australian jurisdiction to include paid domestic and family violence dedicated leave entitlements in industrial legislation.

Creating leave for domestic and family violence removes the historic unfair circumstances, where victims had to access sick leave, recreation leave or unpaid leave to manage the violence perpetrated upon them.

To best ensure the privacy and safety of affected individuals the data for this category of leave is not centrally collected.

This approach is supported by leading sector experts such as Australia's CEO Challenge, White Ribbon Australia and Our Watch, and an independent Flagship Evaluation of the Queensland Government's Workplace Response to domestic and family violence.

The policy in relation to perpetrators was clarified in September 2018. The intent of the Special Leave Directive 4/15 is first and foremost, to ensure employees who experience violence are safe and supported.

It is a confidential matter between the employee and their manager, within these guidelines.

It was intended to provide precious time to cover emergency situations, counselling, attendance at court or legal advice for those affected by domestic and family violence.

In the case where perpetrators request leave for domestic and family violence related appointments paid leave is only available to perpetrators in very limited circumstances, in a genuine attempt to break the cycle of violence.

Strict conditions which now apply to this leave for perpetrators include:

- Leave will be only be granted when all other leave is first exhausted, and
- Evidence is provided to show they are attending a recognised and authorised behavioural change program.

Additionally, in May 2019 all Queensland public sector departments met the Queensland commitment to achieve White Ribbon Australia accreditation. This reflects the holistic approach adopted and helps drive broader and sustained cultural change in the workplace.