

For Immediate Release

25th May 2021

Domestic Violence NSW Applauds Introduction of Affirmative Consent Legislation

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Attorney-General Mark Speakman has today announced that NSW will introduce affirmative consent legislation to strengthen and simplify consent laws. The government reforms are specifically being designed to protect victim-survivors and educate the community.

“Domestic Violence NSW applauds this move to make NSW a safer state, reducing the legal grey areas regarding consent in relation to sexual offences,” says CEO of DVNSW, Delia Donovan.

The NSW government’s response to a review of consent laws by the New South Wales Law Reform Commission was prompted by Saxon Mullins (Director of Advocacy, RASARA), after she [spoke out on Four Corners](#) about her experience of seeking justice after sexual assault.

The key reforms include stipulating that:

1. A person does not consent to sexual activity unless they said or did something to communicate consent, and
2. An accused person’s belief in consent will not be reasonable in the circumstances unless they said or did something to ascertain consent.

Affirmative Consent is one of the points of the [Nine Point Plan to Address Sexual Violence in NSW](#) released in April 2021 by DVNSW and the NSW Women’s Alliance.

“The 2020 figures in NSW showed that victim-survivors are coming forward more than ever to report experiences of sexual violence,” says Ms Donovan.

“It is essential that we provide the legislative and social supports to create safety for victim-survivors, while continuing the work in preventing this crime in the longer term through respectful relationships education and primary prevention campaigns.”

While DVNSW acknowledges this is an extremely significant step forwards, there is more that must be done in this space regarding the other eight points of the plan, and looks forward to working with the NSW government and frontline services to implement them.

---Ends---

Media Contact

Caitlin Morahan, Media and Communications Manager, Domestic Violence NSW: 0466 813 124



Domestic Violence NSW is the peak body for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW. DVNSW provides a representative and advocacy function for specialist services and the women, families and communities they support. Their mission is to eliminate domestic and family violence through leadership in policy, advocacy, partnerships and the promotion of best practice.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence help can be found via:

- **1800RESPECT** or 1800 737 732 which offers a national counselling helpline, information and support
- **NSW Domestic Violence Line** 1800 65 64 63 which offers a state-wide counselling helpline, information and support
- **Men's Referral Service** 1300 766 491 for men, or friends and family of men using violence