



Media Release

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BRINGING FAMILY VIOLENCE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE

The Andrews Labor Government is creating new laws, upgrading courts and giving police the tools they need to hold perpetrators of family violence to account and put victims first, as part of the landmark 10-year *Family Violence Strategy*.

The Labor Government will introduce new laws in early 2017 to deliver on a number of the most urgent recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence – including amending bail laws so that decision-makers take family violence risk into account.

New information sharing laws will override privacy laws so that privacy of a perpetrator does not trump the safety of a victim. Family violence perpetrators' right to consent to relevant information being shared will be removed and a 'trusted zone' of organisations that can share information will be created.

Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIOs) will be made more victim friendly by permitting the use of video and audio recorded evidence in some proceedings, expanding courts' powers to issue FVIOs, and prevent perpetrators from drawing out court proceedings.

Specialist Family Violence Courts will be rolled out to ensure victims are supported and perpetrators are held to account. More than \$230,000 in funding to the Judicial College of Victoria will help educate the judiciary on family violence dynamics.

A dedicated *Victoria Police Family Violence Centre of Learning* will be established to provide consistent training for officers over their careers to strengthen responses.

Police will have state-of-the-art mobile tablets and bodyworn cameras announced in the *Victorian Budget 2016/17*. A new digital platform to enable family violence services to receive information and referrals from police is being built, and will replace a fax-based system.

These are landmark reforms that will help save the lives of women and children across Victoria.

Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

"Everyone has the right to be safe from family violence. That's why we're strengthening our laws to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account."

"This is a landmark plan which will change the way the courts operate and provide more support to vulnerable Victorians who are victims of family violence."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police Lisa Neville

"If we can improve investigations into family violence incidents, we'll ensure better outcomes for victims and tougher consequences for offenders."

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