



Family and Domestic Violence System Reform Plan

Background Information

Improving the ways victim-survivors are supported
and perpetrators are held to account

Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledge the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Western Australia's Aboriginal Communities and their cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

We recognise that Aboriginal women and children experience family and domestic violence at far higher rates than other members of the Western Australian Community.

Acknowledgement of Victim-Survivors

We acknowledge the devastating impact of family and domestic violence on individuals, families and communities, and the strength and resilience of victim-survivors who have, and are still, experiencing family and domestic violence. We pay respects to those who did not survive and to their family and friends.

We recognise and respect the human right of everyone to live free from violence and fear. Importantly, we must not just say that we do we must show that we do. Actions, as we all know, speak louder than words. We must show that we respect the human right to live free from violence and fear by ensuring that systems are safe and accountable.

This means building an integrated family and domestic violence system where relevant information is shared so that the system can better identify, assess and manage the risk that perpetrators present to women and children's safety and wellbeing and to prevent further harm and death. Adult and child victim-survivors must never be left to manage a perpetrator's harmful and dangerous behaviours on their own.

In this document, term 'Aboriginal' people is used in preference to "Indigenous" or "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" people, in recognition that Aboriginal peoples are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. The term 'victim-survivor' is inclusive of adults and children who have experienced family and domestic violence.

Background of the System Reform Plan

A Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce (Taskforce) was convened between September 2023 and March 2024 to help guide Western Australia's efforts to address family and domestic violence. The Taskforce was a key request of the family and domestic violence sector and lived experience advocates during the Domestic Violence Summit in August 2023.

Led by Professor Colleen Hayward AM and Emily Roper PSM, Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Taskforce consulted across government, the community services sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and people with lived experience to inform a comprehensive plan of reform to create more unified and integrated systems and services responses. More information about the membership and activities of the Taskforce can be accessed [here](#).

Through the work of the Taskforce, the WA Government committed to the following key outcomes:

- establishment of a Lived Experience Advisory Group.
- significant investment in specialist services to address gaps and meet need, including \$96.4 million to address family and domestic violence and implement the System Reform Plan, adding to the \$72.6 million in new funding to strengthen responses to family and domestic violence announced in November 2023.
- development of the System Reform Plan for reforming the ways services and systems work together to support and protect victim survivors and respond to perpetrators.

System Reform Plan - development timeline

12 September 2023
Establishment of **Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce** announced

19 September 2023
Inaugural meeting of the **Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce**

28 November 2023
\$72.6 million to strengthen family and domestic violence announced

March 2024
LEAG consultation report released

17 July 2024
Expressions of Interest for **LEAG** released and **Terms of Reference** endorsed

September 2023

November 2023

January 2024

March 2024

May 2024

July 2024

October 2023

December 2023

February 2024

April 2024

June 2024

August 2023
Domestic Violence Summit

November 2023 to March 2024
Consultation on the System Reform Plan

- 5 workshops focused on Aboriginal family safety
- 4 system reform workshops
- Workshops and bilateral meetings with senior representatives from government agencies and with non-Government Taskforce members.

December 2023 to February 2024
Consultation on the Lived Experience Advisory Group

26 April 2024
System Reform Plan released including **\$96.4 million** to address family and domestic violence

Overview of the System Reform Plan

Released on 26 April 2024, the Family and Domestic Violence System Reform Plan sets out an unprecedented program of reform for responding to family and domestic violence in Western Australia.

The vision is a family and domestic violence response system that is collaborative, connected and organised around victim-survivor safety, recovery and re-establishment where all parts of the system provide trauma informed, culturally safe and joined-up services to keep victim-survivors safe and hold perpetrators to account. The full System Reform Plan can be accessed [here](#).

The System Reform Plan aims to create a more unified and integrated system and services response, that is easier for victim-survivors to navigate, and more effective at managing risk posed by perpetrators of violence. It is organised around four foundation pillars: workforce development; information sharing; risk assessment; risk management. These priorities recognise the parts of the system that need to change, as informed by the family and domestic violence sector, people with lived experience and the work of the Taskforce. Twenty-one reform projects against 17 reform actions are aligned to these foundation pillars.

Work continues to ensure that reform actions are implemented at the right time and in the right sequence. A phased approach to implementation is planned over the five years, from 2024 to 2029. Not all reform actions can be implemented at the same time as some are dependent on the delivery of others.



Vision

A Family and Domestic Violence response system that is collaborative, connected and organised around victim-survivor safety, recovery and re-establishment where all parts of the system provide trauma informed, culturally safe and joined-up services to keep victim-survivors safe and hold perpetrators to account.



Workforce Development

A system-wide workforce where everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities and have the knowledge and skills to provide safety-focused, family violence informed and culturally appropriate responses to victim-survivors and those using violence.



Information Sharing

The right information is shared at the right time to the right people to keep victim-survivors safe, maintain perpetrators in view and support coordination of service responses.



Risk Assessment

Workers, organisations and agencies are required and supported to assess risk in a consistent way to inform decision making and action. This approach includes the use of specific Aboriginal family safety screening and risk assessment tools.



Risk management

Case coordination and specialist responses are appropriately resourced, with collaborative practices required and embedded. Victim-survivors consistently receive a sensitive and safe response and perpetrators are visible and held to account across all parts of the system.



Foundation

A strong and supported specialist family and domestic violence service sector that includes Aboriginal led responses to family safety.

Changing a system takes time

The Taskforce repeatedly heard that navigating the range of supports and services needed by victim-survivors to support their safety and recovery was complex and onerous. Improving outcomes for victim-survivors and providing appropriate responses to perpetrators, requires each of the services and agencies involved in responding to family and domestic violence to work seamlessly together in an integrated system response. The Taskforce focused on putting the needs of victim-survivors first.

As with any reform program, change takes time. The System Reform Plan is focused on longevity and sustained change. While the first reporting period focused on laying the foundations for change, future work will include defining and measuring the impact of these changes.

While the reform actions are foundational to improving the way victim-survivors access and navigate supports and services, the direct impact on victim-survivors will take longer to be realised and the difference will take longer to be felt.

Going forward, input from the Lived Experience Advisory Group will be critical for ensuring that the reform program is making the right changes for victim-survivors.

The reform program focused on longevity and sustained change – direct impacts will take longer to be realised



For Victim-Survivors

- I can access the help I need when I need it, to keep me and my family safe and to support recovery and re-establishment.
- Services are locally tailored, culturally safe, family violence and trauma informed.
- Services and the service system take responsibility for managing the risk posed by the perpetrator.
- As a child or young person, I am recognised as a victim-survivor and supported to be safe and recover.



For Perpetrators

- The actions of all services, and service systems hold me to account for my coercive, controlling behaviours and provide pathways to interventions that target behaviour change.
- I have access to culturally safe interventions.



For Community

- I do not tolerate violence or violence supportive attitudes.
- I see stopping family and domestic violence as mine and everyone's responsibility.
- I know how to promote respect and challenge violence supportive attitudes.



For Service Workers

- I understand my role and responsibilities in responding to family and domestic violence and have the tools and skills I need to provide a response that meets the needs of my client.
- I know how to share information in a way that is safe, purposeful and supports the needs of victim-survivors.
- I support continuous quality improvements, including service or program review.

Governance of System Reform Plan

Robust governance and accountability are critical to successful implementation of the reform program and achieving outcomes for victim-survivors. Below provides an overview of the governance framework for implementation of the System Reform Plan.

Family and Domestic Violence Implementation Oversight Group

The Family and Domestic Violence Implementation Oversight Group (Oversight Group) was established in June 2024. The purpose of the Oversight Group is to drive, oversee and monitor implementation of the System Reform Plan to strengthen responses to family and domestic violence in Western Australia. The Oversight Group reports directly to the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence.

The Oversight Group is Co-chaired by the Director General Department of Communities, and the Chief Executive Officer Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing. Membership of the group includes senior officers from eight government agencies and five non-Government representatives.

Program Working Groups

In July 2024, the Oversight Group endorsed the establishment of four Program Working Groups (working groups), specific to the four pillars of the System Reform Plan: workforce development; information sharing; risk assessment; risk management. Working groups are responsible for designing and implementing the reform actions relevant to their pillar. They provide expert advice and support decision making at a project level, and regularly report back to the Oversight Group on progress, key achievements and barriers to implementation.

Lived Experience Advisory Group

The first of its kind for the family and domestic violence sector in Western Australia, the LEAG provides an opportunity for people with lived experience of family and domestic violence to share their valuable insights and perspectives to help shape Western Australian policies and programs relating to the prevention of family and domestic violence.

The LEAG provides advice directly to the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence to ensure their voices inform policies, services and programs. The model for the LEAG was informed by consultation with more than 500 people around the State, led by Kwobap Consultancy. More information about the consultation on and development of the LEAG model can be accessed [here](#).

The LEAG plays a critical role in informing implementation of the System Reform Plan. To establish the LEAG, an expressions of interest process was undertaken, attracting a total of 190 nominations. The recruitment process for membership of the LEAG was overseen by the Implementation Oversight Group and included independent and Aboriginal representation on the selection panel.

Implementation Governance

