

STATE BUDGET

2018-19

MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES MICHELLE LENSINK MLC MEDIA RELEASE

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State Government commits \$11.9 million to address scourge of domestic violence

The Marshall Liberal Government is delivering on its key election commitments to address the scourge of domestic violence, by investing more than \$11.9 million over the next four years on a suite of measures to support women and children at risk in South Australia.

The 2018-19 State Budget includes a raft of positive measures to address domestic violence in South Australia:

- \$4 million to be spent on establishing 40 new emergency crisis accommodation beds for people fleeing abuse;
- \$5 million in interest-free loans to non-government organisations to find new domestic violence support housing including renovations and capital upgrades;
- an extra \$1.66 million over four years to extend the Women's Safety Services SA domestic violence crisis hotline to 24-hours a day;
- \$150,000 on the development of a personal protection app linking at-risk women directly to police and domestic violence services;
- \$510,000 to support a state-wide trial of a Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme to enable women to request information on their partner's criminal history;
- \$624,000 over four years for the South Australian Coalition of Women's Domestic Violence Services to enhance its community work and activities advocating for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence;

Minister for Human Services Michelle Lensink said the multi-million dollar funding boost highlighted the Liberal Government's commitment to helping reduce the scourge of domestic violence in South Australia.

"The Marshall Government is committed to doing whatever we can to ensure women living in a violent or abusive relationship are better able to access immediate support," said Minister Lensink.

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“The \$4 million in funding for 40 new crisis beds, as well as the \$5 million of interest-free loans for the non-government sector, will ensure more women have access to emergency accommodation when they need it.

“The crisis beds will be established in consultation with experts in the domestic and family violence sector to ensure they are placed in locations where the need is greatest.

“The additional \$1.66 million over four years to extend the SA domestic violence crisis hotline to 24 hours a day will help ensure hundreds more women living in a violent or abusive relationship are able to access immediate, specialist support when they need help most.”

Until now, the free and confidential state-wide hotline has only been able to afford to operate 9am to 5pm on weekdays, with calls outside of these hours diverted to a homeless service run by Uniting Committees so this funding boost is very welcome news.

Last year, the DV Crisis Line responded to 7,576 calls. Of those, 1,552 became registered clients of the service.

In addition to telephone counselling, trained staff can help find women safe accommodation and provide information about police, legal, housing and financial issues.

“Domestic violence is, shockingly, an issue that affects the lives of far too many people across the country – one in four women in Australia experience intimate partner violence,” said Minister Lensink.

“Domestic, family and sexual violence are at the forefront of the Liberal Government’s concerns regarding women’s policy and as a government, we will continue to do whatever we can to ensure women feel safe and supported and know where to turn for help.”

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme will be trialled by the Office for Women and help ensure people are better informed about their partner’s criminal history.

The scheme will provide a clear and secure pathway for women to access information on their partner’s criminal history. Support to deal with any information disclosed will also be provided.

In addition to State Budget commitments, the Liberal Government is holding a series of Domestic and Family Violence roundtables across the regions during 2018 to enable stakeholders to hear from the Minister and the government’s reform agenda, as well as provide feedback directly about issues and priorities.

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“The forums are critical to help assist the government to establish a coherent and much needed plan for reform as we know a one-size-fits all approach is not good enough,” said Minister Lensink.