



Media release

Yvette Berry **MLA** **Deputy Chief Minister**

Minister for Early Childhood Development
Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Minister for Housing and Suburban Development
Minister for Women
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
Minister for Sport and Recreation

Member for Ginninderra

25 November 2021

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

Today is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

On this day each year communities across the world also begin 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, seeking to inspire action to end violence against women and girls around.

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Yvette Berry is calling on the Canberra community to get on board, unite in orange and take action to make our community safe for all.

“Gendered violence is an epidemic, and it takes a whole of community approach from the ground up to create long lasting change. Concerningly, we know that during the pandemic many women experienced violence from their partners for the first time.”

“The next 16 days provide an opportunity for the Canberra community to take a stand and share the message that violence against women in any form is not OK. I encourage Canberrans to start conversations about gender-based violence with your family and friends. Learn more about the facts and what you can do to help. Let’s make gender-based violence a thing of the past.”

This year for the 16 days, with support from sector and union advocates, Minister Berry wrote to Senator Michaelia Cash, Australian Government Minister for Industrial Relations, calling once again for 10 days of paid domestic and family violence leave to be included in the National Employment Standards.

“Domestic and family violence is a workplace issue, it can happen to anyone. It impacts all aspects of society and needs to be publicly acknowledged rather than kept hidden.”

The ACT Government acknowledged this by introducing 20 days of paid leave for domestic and family violence purposes as a formal entitlement in ACT Government enterprise agreements.

To this end the Minister expresses support for the We Won't Wait campaign run by Australian Unions as an ongoing call for action in this space.

The ACT Government is committed to taking action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and is funding and implementing a range of important projects to tackle this critical issue.

In the 2021-22 Budget, the Government invested \$46.5 million over four years through the Safer Families Levy and complementary initiatives to expand the ACT Government's evidence-based approach to addressing domestic and family violence, including:

- Family-centred responses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families impacted by family violence
- Reducing the risk of deaths from family violence
- Extending the Room4Change program to help prevent family violence
- Training for ACT Government workers to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence and support for any staff members impacted by domestic and family violence
- ACT Women's Safety Grants to support innovative projects
- Establishment of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program working groups and steering committee to focus on prevention, response, law reform and workplace safety.

In the 2021-22 Budget the Government also allocated an additional \$8.6 million over four years to expand homelessness services, including to support women and children escaping family violence

If you are experiencing domestic and family violence – you can reach out for help.

Call the Domestic Violence Crisis Service on 6280 0900 - or 1800 RESPECT on 1800 737 732.

Statement ends

Media contact:

Louise Momber M 0411 429 607 louise.momber@act.gov.au

More information:

Homelessness Service Expansion

Many women who leave abusive relationships return because they have no financial support or nowhere else to go. To help prevent more women and children from becoming homeless, the ACT Government is providing \$8.6 million over three years to expand homelessness services. [Crisis and emergency contacts - Community Services](#)

Safer Families Levy

The Safer Families Levy funds a range of programs and initiatives that aim to support victims of domestic and family violence, hold perpetrators accountable, and improve integration across our service system. This levy will increase by \$5 a year for the next four years, taking it to \$50 per household in 2024-25. Learn more about some of the reforms being funded through the levy at [Safer Families Reforms - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](#).

Training for ACT Public Servants

This 2021 16 Days of Activism theme is around gender-based violence in the workplace. The ACT Government recognises the role workplaces have in ending gender-based violence and promoting gender equality. In 2019-20, the Government committed \$2.476 million over four years to deliver domestic and family violence training for all ACT public servants, including frontline workers, so our community is better equipped to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence. If any staff member is impacted by domestic and family violence, help is available including paid leave. Learn more at [ACTPS ACTPS Domestic & Family Violence Toolkit - Community Services](#).

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The ACT Government is committed to taking action to prevent and respond to sexual assault in Canberra. Working groups were established to focus on prevention, response and law reform. Learn more at [Sexual Assault Prevention and Response - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](#)

ACT Women's Safety Grants

The ACT Women's Safety Grants provide funding of \$100,000 annually to support innovative projects to advance the following priorities identified in the Fourth Action Plan under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022:

- Primary prevention is key
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children
- Respect, listen and respond to the diverse lived experience and knowledge of women and their children affected by violence
- Respond to sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Improve support and service system responses

The recent 2021-22 Budget allocated \$400,000 over four years - to continue funding the Women's Safety Grants.

Community groups and organisations can apply for a grant of up to \$20,000 to support a project.

The 2021-22 Women's Safety Grants round is currently open for applications and will close on 3 December 2021. Applications can be submitted through the SmartyGrants portal here:

<https://dhcs.smartygrants.com.au/2122WG>

Previous projects to successfully receive funding through the Women's Safety Grants include:

- Culturally appropriate support to address domestic violence, including addressing language barriers and support to report abuse; and
- Art-based programs to support women in homelessness, domestic violence and alcohol and drugs services to express their journey.

ACT Legislative Assembly

Phone [\(02\) 6205 0233](tel:(02)62050233)

Email berry@act.gov.au

Twitter [@YvetteSBerry](https://twitter.com/YvetteSBerry)

Facebook [YvetteSBerry](https://www.facebook.com/YvetteSBerry)

Instagram [yvette_berry_mla](https://www.instagram.com/yvette_berry_mla)