

## The Queensland Cabinet and Ministerial Directory

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# Virtual summit explores domestic and family violence victims' safety during COVID-19

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### JOINT STATEMENT

#### **Premier and Minister for Trade**

The Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk

#### **Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence**

The Honourable Di Farmer

Tackling domestic and family violence in the COVID-19 pandemic was the focus of Australia's first COVID-19 Domestic and Family Violence Virtual Summit today, with frontline service providers and sector experts helping the state government to chart a path forward.

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said participants explored options to continue to support people experiencing domestic and family violence and deliver essential services within the new reality of the Coronavirus.

"The global COVID-19 crisis is unprecedented, leaving many people feeling isolated and it is essential that people experiencing domestic and family violence know how to access support at this time," Ms Palaszczuk said.

"Home is not a safe haven for every Queenslander and today's summit was an opportunity to hear from the experts in their fields on what they are confronted with and their advice on how to keep Queenslanders experiencing domestic and family violence safe.

"We have heard from a range of service providers on issues like housing, perpetrator interventions and the impacts for children, and they have drilled down more intensively to together develop practical actions to deal with these issues in the present climate."

The Premier also announced that a further \$2 million would be made available for domestic and family violence service providers to cope with increased demand and costs – in addition to a funding boost of \$5.5 million announced in April.

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Di Farmer said that while today's summit was centre stage, it formed part of a series of conversations taking place on domestic and family violence.

"We have held three forums in the lead up to today's summit with representatives of the LGBTIQ+ community, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples," she said

"We will also be talking to representatives of organisations who work in the areas of sexual violence, disabilities and the corporate and community sector in the coming weeks and importantly with domestic and family violence survivors.

"I am very excited about the ideas and solutions put forward today and am looking forward to making further announcements to help push back against the perfect storm environment created by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Long-time domestic violence prevention advocate and Co-Chair of the Queensland Government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Council Kay McGrath chaired today's summit and said it played an important part in hearing the voices of those on the frontline in these unprecedented times.

"Today's summit provided a valuable opportunity to recognise the impacts of increased isolation on domestic and family violence victims and identify how we shape services for now and the future," Ms McGrath said.

"I was impressed with the spirit of co-operation and the willingness to take on board each other's thoughts and ideas around how we can work together to best support those who are facing domestic and family violence."

Minister Farmer said the summit demonstrated how people could adapt through technology when faced with a starkly different landscape in which to operate. She thanked Telstra, Cisco and Taleka for their support to ensure stakeholders from across Queensland could participate.

General Manager of Queensland Government business Gaven Nicholls said Telstra was proud to be part of the summit and provide the technological support for such an important event.

"Telstra is committed to making a positive difference in the community for survivors of domestic and family violence, particularly through our Telstra Safe Connections Program," Mr Nicholls said.

Minister Farmer thanked the more than 120 summit participants and reassured them that the government would continue to not only listen but also act to support them.

"We are boosting support for essential government-funded services, so people have somewhere to turn to access the help they need," she said.

"Most importantly I want those Queenslanders and their families who find themselves in abusive situations to understand and know that they can reach out for help."

Those experiencing domestic and family violence can get support by contacting DVConnect Womensline on 1800 811 811, DVConnect Mensline on 1800 600 636 and 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732, or in the case of an emergency please contact Triple Zero (000) immediately and ask for Police.

ENDS

\*Please call for photographs of the virtual DV Summit.

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