

Legislative Council
Hansard
Wednesday 2 September 2026

[excerpt...]

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

QUESTIONS

Family Violence Act 2004 Reforms - Definition of Family Violence

Ms WEBB question to LEADER for the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms RATTRAY

[2.43 p.m.]

I believe, in response to a question I previously put to the minister for Women, is now coming back via a more appropriate minister. I note the government has announced its intention to pursue reforms to the state *Family Violence Act 2004* in the wake of public consultation on the discussion paper released earlier this year. While it appears positive that further reforms are in the pipeline, I note that the joint statement released by the Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence and the Attorney-General were silent on addressing long-standing concerns over the definition of 'family violence' in our laws.

- (1) Can you confirm that currently Tasmania is the only Australian state to limit the definition of 'family violence' to 'intimate partners and significant relationships', unlike other jurisdictions which recognise other forms of family violence?
- (2) Can you clarify whether the proposed reforms to the *Family Violence Act 2004* will include revising the current definition and scope of the 'family violence' definition as called for by stakeholders, including the Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance, the peak body?

ANSWER

Thank you, Mr President. To respond to the honourable member's question: the *Family Violence Act 2009* (the act) allows a spouse or person in a significant relationship, including an ex-partner, to obtain a Police Family Violence Order or apply for a Family Violence Order to protect them and any affected children from family violence. An affected child is a child under 18 years of age whose safety, psychological wellbeing or interest are affected or likely to be affected by family violence.

The act is part of an integrated response to family violence under the Safe at Home framework established in 2004, to assist with the implementation of the act. Safe at Home includes a range of service systems, processes and networks to provide a coordinated response to incidents of family violence in Tasmania. The service provided under this framework aligned with the relationship definition provided by the act. It is acknowledged that violence and abuse can occur across all families and between all family members. Violence can make a significant impact on a person's life and it is completely unacceptable. The government is now undertaking a significant program of family violence reform in response to feedback received on the

Strengthening our Responses to Family Violence in Tasmania: *Family Violence Act 2004* and Related Legislation discussion paper. The discussion paper's release was an important part of the government's commitment to continuously evaluate and improve responses to family violence. It started a community-wide conversation about where further action should be taken, and the government will consider expanding the scope of the act to cover other types of violence occurring within family environments as part of this work.