

**Submission  
No 5**

## **EQUALITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (LGBTIQA+) BILL 2023**

**Organisation:** Domestic Violence NSW

**Date Received:** 9 April 2024

08.04.2024

Committee Members  
Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services  
Parliament House  
6 Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Committee Members,

**Re: Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023**

Please accept this letter as Domestic Violence NSW's submission in response to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services Inquiry into the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. We consent to our submission being made public.

There is a clear pattern, nationally and internationally, that transgender people are far more likely than cisgender people to experience violent victimisation of all forms, including domestic and family violence. Research suggests transgender people are 2.2 times more likely to be victims of physical intimate partner violence (Peitzmeier et al., 2021), and experience broader violent victimisation (including sexual assault and aggravated assault) four times more often than cisgender people (Flores et al. 2021). Like all other services in the domestic and family violence sector, refuges work closely with the local LGBTIQA+ services to ensure they are providing safe and accessible services to people with diverse genders and sexualities in need of assistance.

While concerns have been raised around this legislation in relation to women's refuges, women's domestic and family violence refuges have been servicing trans women for many years and have policies and risk assessments in place to ensure the safety of all clients. Many refuges also have alternative accommodation, such as bed sits or self-contained units, which can be used for trans clients who may not feel safe in accessing the refuge. Women's refuges are very experienced in balancing safety concerns among all residents, with complex safety assessments undertaken with all residents upon intake. Refuges carefully balance safety concerns, ensuring the safety of the existing residents and refuge dynamics is kept front of mind during such assessments. As such, the proposed bill will not affect the ways in which refuges operate, but does have the potential to reduce discrimination and make life better for trans and gender-diverse women.

We also look forward to the other important parts of this bill to ensure safety for LGBTIQA+ teachers and students, appropriate and inclusive language in our legislation, and the criminalisation of 'outing' LGBTIQA+ people and sex workers. The latter is a specific tactic of abusive behaviour perpetrated against LGBTIQA+ people and sex workers which is not experienced by people not in those communities. Domestic and family violence is everyone's responsibility, thus continuing to problematise and criminalise these forms of abuse is imperative in working towards a future free from violence.

Further, to attain this future, the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people must be prioritised through funding support to specialist organisations such as ACON, to ensure continued work around awareness raising, program delivery, and community care.

If you have any questions, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact CEO, Delia Donovan, on [REDACTED] or Deputy CEO and Team Manager, Policy, Advocacy and Research, Elise Phillips, on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Delia Donovan  
Chief Executive Officer  
DVNSW