



#ShiftTheBurden:
2023 New South Wales
Election Statement



Acknowledgement of Country

No to Violence acknowledges First Nations Peoples across these lands; the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters. We pay respect to all Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge a deep connection with country which has existed over 60,000 years. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and this was and always will be First Nation's land.



Summary

No to Violence believes the NSW Government must support five key initiatives which will hold perpetrators to account, keep more women and children safe, and realise our vision of a world free from male violence.

No to Violence is calling for the NSW Government to:

1. Expand and support the development of a highly skilled and sustainable perpetrator intervention workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Provide 5-year minimum contracts for all perpetrator intervention service providers○ \$1.7 million over four years for No to Violence to expand training and workforce development across the career-span of specialist men’s domestic violence workers in NSW○ Invest in initiatives to support worker wellbeing and improve staff retention
2. Build a thriving perpetrator intervention sector to ensure all men receive the services they need
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ \$7.54 million over five years to support the development and implementation of six new Men’s Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) in regional and remote NSW○ \$2.06 million over five years to support sector development
3. Invest in innovative programs that address gaps in the current perpetrator service landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ \$6.7 million over four years to fund the Men’s Accommodation and Counselling Service so that women and children can choose to stay home and remain connected to their community○ \$12.2 million over four years to develop, deliver and evaluate six tailored interventions that meet the needs of diverse populations○ Investment in cross-sectoral collaborations to assist with early identification and response to domestic violence, including through schools, sports organisations, and community services
4. Improve justice and legal responses to people impacted by domestic and family violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Require perpetrators of domestic violence who are on parole to participate in a registered MBCP○ Develop tools and training to support the criminal-justice system to assess patterns of coercive control○ Ensure prosecutors are trained to identify and respond to the unique ways in which domestic violence manifests in different communities and relationships
5. Invest in evidence-based practice through data collection, research, evaluation, and translation of evidence into action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ \$1.1 million over three years to lead two collaborative research projects that will explore:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The link between gambling and domestic violence▪ Early intervention with at-risk groups and individuals, including young men and boys engaging in intimate partner violence (IPV) and/or adolescent family violence (AFV)

Initiative 1: Expand and support the development of a highly skilled and sustainable perpetrator intervention workforce

Building a sustainable workforce requires an investment in improving worker conditions, expanding development opportunities, and strengthening career pathways to reduce turnover and maintain a healthy workforce. Recruitment and attraction campaigns will only go so far without competitive employment standards and workforce conditions. We are asking the Government to commit to 5-year minimum contracts, an expansion of training and workforce development for the sector, and an additional investment in the wellbeing and conditions of workers.

Five-year minimum contracts for all perpetrator intervention service providers

Procurement rules should be amended to provide for five-year contracts to enable providers to attract and retain qualified staff. Short-term contracts create an environment of job insecurity, which contributes to high staff turn-over and casualisation of the workforce. It also creates significant challenges for recruiting staff in rural and regional areas, where qualified workers are disincentivised from relocating due to the short-term nature of employment.

Supporting service providers with longer-term contracts means we will be able to embed important outcomes in improved service delivery, engage in quality improvement, and dedicate more resources to high-quality service provision to better serve people most in need of support.

Funding No to Violence to expand training and workforce development: \$1.7 million over four years

Working with family violence perpetrators is a highly specialist undertaking that requires deep knowledge and practice experience. The experience and quality of practitioners involved in perpetrator interventions is linked to better outcomes for participants.

In order to substantially expand the availability of the suite of perpetrator interventions including the complex specialist work in Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs), Family Safety programs and men's case management programs to meet current and increasing demand, the availability of accredited and non-accredited training needs to be expanded in NSW.

Initiatives to support workforce capability and capacity building

Working with men who use domestic violence carries risks, including the potential for vicarious trauma and burnout. An increased investment in initiatives like external supervision, job coaching, reflective practice opportunities and family violence-informed employee assistance programs would facilitate a greater focus on long-term workforce health, safety and wellbeing.

No to Violence is seeking:

- 5-year minimum contracts for all perpetrator intervention service providers
- \$1.7 million over four years for No to Violence to expand training and workforce development across the career-span of specialist men's domestic violence workers in NSW
- Investment in initiatives to support workforce capability and capacity building

Initiative 2: Build a thriving perpetrator intervention sector to ensure all men receive the services they need

As community awareness about the impacts of domestic violence increases, more men are reaching out for support. However, investment in perpetrator intervention services has not been commensurate to the increased demand. In order to address current waitlists and increasing demand for perpetrator intervention services, No to Violence seeks funding for six new MBCPs in regional and rural NSW, to support existing providers to comply with minimum Practice Standards, and to improve service integration.

Fund the development and implementation of six new MBCPs in regional and remote NSW: \$7.54 million over 5 years

MBCPs are part of the primary response to perpetrators of domestic violence. Investing in a well-funded, innovative, and evidence-based MBCP sector means getting more services to more men who need them, and within a timeframe that is appropriately proximate to their help seeking or referral. This ultimately keeps more women and children safe.

No to Violence is proposing the development of six new MBCPs in regional and remote NSW, the development and implementation of which would be supported by our Workforce Development and Sector Development teams. The establishment of these programs will make a significant difference in managing demand and waitlists for perpetrator intervention services in NSW.

Supporting sector development: \$2.06 million over five years

As the national peak body for organisations and individuals working with men to end their use of family violence, No to Violence provides an important and unique function for the NSW men's family violence sector. Our Sector Development team provide the secretariat and professional service support to the NSW Men's Behaviour Change Network, and advocates for the resources, training, guidelines, and compliance regime they need to end men's family violence.

This work of the Sector Development team includes:

- Proactively increasing collaboration and integration between the men's family violence intervention sector and the broader DFV and social services sectors to keep women and children safe
- Developing, implementing, and reviewing a consistent risk assessment and management framework across NSW, the 'Risk Safety and Support Framework'
- Supporting best practice and compliance with the NSW Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, through regular Communities of Practice and Forums; and individual practice development support to emerging and provisionally registered providers
- Providing expert policy advice about the MFVI sector to NSW Government, the broader DFV sector including DVNSW, and social services sector to improve the system response to DFV
- Promoting the critical role of the MFVI sector in ending family violence through ongoing advocacy on behalf of the MFVI sector in NSW including written submissions to NSW Government inquiries

We require an investment of \$2.06 million over five years to continue this function.

No to Violence is seeking:

- \$7.54 million over five years to support the development and implementation of six new MBCPs in regional and remote NSW
- \$2.06 million over five years to support sector development

Initiative 3: Invest in innovative programs that address gaps in the current perpetrator service landscape

Our members know that the tactics of coercion and control are becoming more sophisticated, and that domestic violence cases are becoming more complex and severe. In order to respond effectively to the changing nature of domestic violence, the sector requires innovative solutions to address the complex and varying dynamics that can exist in abusive relationships. No to Violence is seeking investment to improve the suite of perpetrator interventions to impact the extent and severity of domestic violence.

Fund the Men's Accommodation and Counselling Service (MACS) so that women and children have the choice to stay home and connected to their community: \$6.7 million over 4 years

The Men's Accommodation and Counselling Service (MACS) is an innovative short-term program for men who have been legally excluded from the home as a result of their use of violence. An independent evaluation in 2021 found that MACS, operated by No to Violence in partnership with the Salvation Army Crisis Service, fills an important gap in the service system and is responding to a key area of need in Victoria.

No to Violence proposes the development of an NSW-specific model of MACS, to ensure that women and children have the choice to remain at home and connected to their community. We believe this service is a critical step in shifting the burden away from victim-survivors and ensuring that responsibility sits squarely with the perpetrators of violence.

For MBCPs to appropriately respond to risk and support behaviour change for perpetrators of violence, they must include the following ancillary service components:

- Pre-group work including motivational interviewing to ensure MBC group readiness
- MBC group work (20 weeks)
- 1-on-1 case management for men engaged in group work who have complex needs
- Family safety/partner contact work
- Comprehensive risk assessment and response

Additional resources to support family safety contact work as part of existing and any new MBCPs is required and should be appropriately resourced. Funding is required to support the training and practice development of family safety contact workers, resource the day-to-day operations of family safety contact, and ensure that family safety contact commences while men are on waitlists and continues throughout the duration of the program.

Establishing six new programs with case management and family safety contact would enable significantly more men to participate in important behaviour change programs over five years.

\$12.2 million over 4 years to develop, deliver and evaluate six tailored interventions that meet the needs of diverse populations

One-size does *not* fit all—especially when it comes to behaviour change programs. Different men have different needs, and these needs are tied to culture, community, and background. Program design and delivery needs to be tailored to meet the needs of the people receiving those services.

We must invest in programs that respond to different men’s needs and experiences. Working with community-led organisations who already have an established footprint in the DFV sector, to co-design for-community programs increases the likelihood that the content of MBCPs will be relevant for MBCP participants.

No to Violence is proposing the development of six tailored interventions, including:

- Self-determined, community-based practice for First Nations communities
- Community-led and safe programs for gay, bi, trans, and queer men
- Culturally appropriate, community-based programs for migrant and refugee men

Investment in cross-sectoral collaborations to assist with early identification and response to domestic violence

More often than not, perpetrators of domestic violence will come into contact with other parts of the community sector before engaging with specialist domestic violence services. In these cases, there are often missed opportunities for early identification through schools, sports clubs, gyms and other health services and community services.

No to Violence proposes that the Government supports specialist domestic violence services to build cross-sectoral collaborations with community organisations to improve early identification and intervention with perpetrators of domestic violence.

No to Violence is seeking:

- \$6.7 million over four years to fund the Men’s Accommodation and Counselling Service (MACS) so that women and children have the choice to stay home and connected to their community:
- \$12.2 million over four years to develop, deliver and evaluate six tailored interventions that meet the needs of diverse populations
- Investment in cross-sectoral collaborations to assist with early identification and response to domestic violence, including through schools, sports organisations, and community services

Initiative 4: Improve justice and legal responses to people impacted by domestic and family violence

Addressing domestic violence involves building integrated responses that hold perpetrators accountable for their behaviours. No to Violence acknowledges the significant work being done by the NSW Government to improve legal responses to domestic violence, including progress made in criminalising coercive control as well as other initiatives including courts administration. However, further work is required to strengthen referrals to MBCPs, to build capacity in observing tactics of

coercive control, and in building cultural competence within legal and criminal justice services.

Mandate perpetrators of domestic violence who are on parole to participate in a registered MBCP

Programs are required to strengthen referral pathways to MBCPs through the justice system, including by making participation in MBCPs mandatory for all perpetrators who are on parole. This initiative will help to keep perpetrators in view, offers counselling and case management, and reduces the risk of further harm to victim-survivors. This initiative will be supported by the investment in six new MBCPs under Initiative 2.

Develop tools and training to support the justice system to assess patterns of coercive control

We recommend the development of resources and training to support the justice system (including police, legal staff, and the judiciary) to assess patterns of coercive control. This should include how to determine which person is the predominant aggressor and which person may be using tactics of resistance to respond to ongoing abuse. Police should receive training in how to gather evidence of pattern-based offending in coercive and controlling relationships.

We note that one-off training is not sufficient for justice services; it must be ongoing and cover the gendered nature of domestic and family violence, systems abuse tactics used by perpetrators, and the cumulative impact of all forms of violence and abuse. We recommend that training is delivered by specialist domestic and family violence professionals and involve co-production between victim-survivors, the sector, and police.

Ensure prosecutors are trained to identify and respond to the unique ways in which domestic violence manifests in different communities and relationships

Family violence manifests differently in different relationships and communities. Prosecutors and the broader criminal justice system require tailored training so they can identify and respond to family violence in all its forms. This includes but is not limited to understanding family violence in same gender and other LGBTIQ+ relationships; family violence in migrant and refugee communities; and family violence in First Nations communities. Prosecutors should be afforded the opportunity to understand the role of intergenerational trauma and lateral violence in family violence presentation.

No to Violence is seeking:

- Mandatory referrals of perpetrators of domestic violence who are on parole to participate in a registered MBCP
- Develop tools and training to support the justice system to assess patterns of coercive control
- Ensure prosecutors are trained to identify and respond to the unique ways in which domestic violence manifests in different communities and relationships

Initiative 5: Invest in evidence-based practice through data collection, research, evaluation, and translation of evidence into action

Understanding the nature of domestic violence, including what works under what circumstances in responding to perpetrators, is essential to ending men's violence. No to Violence is committed to building evidence-based programs, and we know the benefits that result from collaborative research projects between peak bodies, service providers, and academic and research institutions. The combined expertise of NTV as a national peak body, the research skills and resources made available by academic institutions, and the on-the-ground expertise of service providers are powerful tools to end men's family violence.

\$1 million over three years to fund two collaborative research projects involving academic and sector partners

No to Violence is well placed to lead collaborative research projects that will produce practical outcomes for improving responses to domestic violence in NSW. We are proposing two projects to address key gaps in the evidence base: the link between gambling and domestic violence; and early intervention with young men and boys engaging in intimate partner violence and adolescent family violence. These projects will provide opportunities to build new partnerships across the specialist domestic violence sector, financial counselling sector, education, and community sectors. In doing so, these partnerships will contribute to building a more cohesive and responsive sector.

No to Violence is seeking:

- \$1.1 million over three years to fund two collaborative research projects that will explore:
 - The link between gambling and domestic violence
 - Early intervention with at-risk groups and individuals, including young men and boys engaging in intimate partner violence (IPV) and/or adolescent family violence (AFV)

ntv

**Leading the change
to end male family
violence in Australia**

Men's Referral Service
1300 766 491

ntv.org.au

Join the conversation

