



**Mark Speakman**  
Attorney General

**Pru Goward**  
Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW LAWS TO PROTECT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS**

Domestic violence victims will have greater protection in NSW with the introduction of tougher strangulation laws and longer Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs).

Attorney General Mark Speakman and Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Pru Goward announced today the NSW Liberals & Nationals will introduce legislation to Parliament in coming weeks.

Mr Speakman said today's announcement sends a strong message that domestic violence will not be tolerated.

"Reducing domestic violence is one of the Premier's top priorities. If passed, these reforms will provide better outcomes for victims, make perpetrators more accountable and help reduce domestic violence reoffending," Mr Speakman said.

A simpler strangulation offence will be introduced that will be easier to prove, with a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment.

"The new offence will resolve the current situation whereby many strangulation incidents are being prosecuted under lesser charges such as common assault, for which the maximum sentence is two years imprisonment."

Ms Goward said the new strangulation offence recognises the results of research which demonstrate such attacks can be a precursor to tragedy.

"Strangulation is a red flag for domestic violence homicide, so it's important NSW has a specific offence formulated to capture domestic violence strangulation," Ms Goward said.

"These reforms are another example of how this Government is tougher than ever on the criminals who commit acts of domestic and family violence."

If passed, the new law will exist alongside the current strangulation offences in the *Crimes Act*.

The package of reforms will also improve protections for victims under the state's ADVO regime by:

- introducing indefinite ADVOs in the most severe cases where other interventions have failed;
- requiring ADVOs to remain in place for two years after an adult domestic violence offender is released from prison, unless the court determines otherwise; and
- increasing the default length of ADVOs for adults from 12 months to two years.

The new laws also give the NSW Police Force the power to immediately vary ADVOs to respond to serious and immediate risks to victims.

NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller said this new power will help reduce stress on victims.

“Evidence shows ADVOs are an important tool to help reduce reoffending and protect victims of domestic violence. These changes will also reduce the trauma victims experience having to attend court to seek extensions and amendments to orders,” Commissioner Fuller said.

The reforms respond to the recommendations of the *NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015 - 2017* and are supported by a comprehensive program of activity to deliver the Premier’s Priority to reduce domestic violence reoffending.

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