



MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Industrial Relations

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

FUNDING BOOST WILL HELP WOMEN SEEKING AVOS

Attorney General John Hatzistergos today announced that additional domestic violence advocacy workers will be recruited to assist victims taking out Apprehended Violence Orders in more than 100 NSW courts.

Mr Hatzistergos said a \$2.6 million funding boost from the Rees Government will create part-time jobs for the equivalent of 23 full-time positions in the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program.

"Domestic violence is an abhorrent crime that destroys families and often thrusts women and children into the justice system for the first time in their lives," said Mr Hatzistergos.

"The new advocacy workers will help people seeking Apprehended Violence Orders and will provide referrals to counselling, housing and material aid services that may be of assistance."

Mr Hatzistergos said the service also conducts community development and educational activities to raise awareness about domestic violence.

"With this additional funding, the service will be able to direct more resources toward women in culturally diverse and Aboriginal communities."

Mr Hatzistergos said domestic violence advocacy workers were already working in 65 NSW courts. The additional funding will extend services to a further 42 courts, bringing the total to 107.

Minister for Women and Member for Balmain, Verity Firth said the recruitment drive delivers on an election commitment to increase funding for the advocacy service.

"We are committed to a whole of government approach to tackling domestic violence, including victim advocacy and bringing perpetrators to justice," said Ms Firth.

"Domestic violence evidence kits have been rolled out to all police commands."

"We have also given the police powers to apply for 24-hour Telephone Interim AVOs, and to apply for AVOs on behalf of victims who are reluctant to proceed."

Ms Firth said the initiatives were part of the NSW Government's four-year, \$40 million package aimed at addressing domestic violence.

The services for the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program are provided by non-government organisations through funds administered by Legal Aid.