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Mandatory Domestic Violence Reporting to Become Territory Law

Groundbreaking new laws designed to protect women and children from family violence will be introduced into Parliament tomorrow, Minister for Children and Families Malarndirri McCarthy said today.

Amendments to the Domestic and Family Violence Act will make domestic violence reporting mandatory across the Northern Territory.

“Today is White Ribbon Day, and I say to the community that domestic and family violence will simply not be tolerated,” Ms McCarthy said.

“There are too many women and children enduring abuse – in fact half of the assaults in the Territory each year are cases of domestic violence – and this Government is saying enough is enough.

“The Northern Territory is taking a lead by becoming the first Australian jurisdiction to introduce these unprecedented laws to send a message to the community that abuse against women and children is unacceptable.”

The Bill requires all adults to report domestic violence if they believe another person’s life is in danger or they believe a person has caused or is about to cause serious harm to another in a domestic relationship.

Ms McCarthy said the draft bill had been open for consultation to give the public an opportunity to comment on the new laws.

The Government will commit $15 million over four years to support the introduction of mandatory reporting, including more crisis accommodation, increased counselling services and continuing public education campaigns.

“This is about the community lifting the lid on domestic violence, and giving children and women the right to live a life free from abuse.”

The Bill will be introduced into Parliament tomorrow, and debated in the February sittings.

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