

CFV 94 Women's Information and Referral Exchange

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Proposal 9–1:

Agree.

WIRE considers it to be excellent that the gendered nature of family violence is recognised; that is, family violence is perpetrated mostly by men against women and children.

However, WIRE considers that the phrase "has a detrimental impact on children" does not capture the potentially devastating effects of family violence on children, and should be replaced with a stronger phrase regarding the link between family violence and child abuse.

Proposal 9–2:

Agree with points (a), (b) and (c).

However, WIRE suggests the addition of a fourth point which state: "requests a change of assessment."

WIRE sees cases where a change of assessment is belied by ongoing abuse; this may be financial abuse, such as when a father hides income in order to limit his payments; or emotional abuse, such as when a father takes the children wholly into his care in order to stop paying child support.

Proposal 9–3:

Agree.

WIRE considers that women should be referred to a Centrelink social worker, but should not be obligated.

Proposal 9–4:

Agree.

WIRE sees cases of women who are very fearful of retribution should they begin collecting child support via the Child Support Agency or should they request a change of assessment to better reflect the father's circumstances.

WIRE considers it vital that women are given the opportunity to consider their safety, and the safety of their children, before significant action is taken against the other party.

Proposal 9–5:

Agree

Proposal 9–6:

Agree

Question 10–1:

Agree

Proposal 10–1:

WIRE agrees that in the event of receiving documentation containing offensive material, the matter should be referred to a senior officer.

However, WIRE does not agree that the senior officer should determine whether or not the woman is informed about the offensive material.

WIRE considers that it is vital that the woman be informed about any offensive material written about her because it may be pertinent to various court proceedings.

Proposal 10–2:

Agree

Question 10–2:

Agree with (a).

Proposal 10–3:

Agree.

In addition, the Child Support Agency should inform the woman and the police about the threat.

The threat should be recorded and provided to the woman for the purpose of court proceedings.

Question 10–3:

The Child Support Agency needs to be alert to the instance whereby a woman shifts from being a payee to a payer; this can be indicative of ongoing family violence.

Proposal 10–4 :

Unsure

Proposal 10–5:

Unsure

Proposal 10–6:

Disagree.

WIRE considers it inappropriate that such power should sit with a Centrelink social worker or a Child Support Agency officer.

Proposal 10–7:

Disagree.

Question 10–4:

Unsure.

Proposal 11–1:

Strongly agree.

Proposal 11–2:

Agree.

WIRE considers that women should determine the duration of their own exemption.

Proposal 11–3:

Agree

Proposal 12-1:

Agree.

See comments Proposal 9-1.

Proposal 12-2 :

Agree.

Proposal 12-3:

Agree.

Proposal 12-4:

Agree.

Proposal 12-5:

Strongly agree.

WIRE considers the development of a consistent definition of child abuse and neglect, and its link to family violence, to be fundamental.

Other comments:

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