



Australian Department of Social Services – Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program Inclusion Round
Via portal: <https://engage.dss.gov.au/safe-places-emergency-accommodation-program-inclusion-round/safe-places-emergency-accommodation-program-inclusion-round-make-a-submission/>

10 March 2023

RE: Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program Inclusion Round

To the Australian Department of Social Services (DSS),

The Australian Government's allocation of \$100 million over 5 years to the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Inclusion Round is welcome. Domestic and family violence (DFV) continues at unprecedented rates impacting the safety and wellbeing of families and communities. The scale and impact of the federal investment, which equates to an average of \$20 million per annum nationally, could go significantly further through a coordinated partnership with states and territories.

We understand that the Safe Places grants program provides funding for capital works and not service provision, which is the responsibility of the applicant. Service provision funding responsibilities almost always flow to State Government agencies, in NSW this is typically the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). For DSS to achieve the best results from the Safe Places grants program generally and the Inclusion Round specifically, collaboration with DCJ to provide both capital works and service provision funding to successful applicants is critical. We, therefore, recommend:

1. The establishment of a formal agreement between DSS and DCJ to provide ongoing funding along with Safe Places grants for all operational costs, including DFV and other specialist wrap-around services, ongoing maintenance and reporting on use for the 15 year designated use period. Formal agreements should be finalised and implemented prior to the commencement of the Safe Places Inclusion Round.
2. The Federal Government work closely with NSW Government and provide investment through invitation to tender in communities that are not being funded through the Core and Cluster program.

The Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association (ACHIA), Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW) and Homelessness NSW (HNSW) (the Peaks) are writing to you in our capacity as partners working in partnership to deliver a program of engagement, sector capacity building and workforce development to support specialist homelessness services (SHS'), Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO's), Community Housing Providers (CHP's), Specialist DFV providers and others to successfully participate in the current NSW Government Core and Cluster program. This is a \$484M program which was announced in October 2021, and which is being rolled out in 3 Tranches (Tranche 1 and 2 are complete).

The Core and Cluster program funding aims to provide up to 75 new women's refuges and enable frontline service providers to support up to an additional 2,900 women and children each



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year. The new refuges will be designed and operated based on the Core and Cluster model, which allows for independent living and privacy while also providing access to on-site support. This approach is considered best practice in specialist emergency accommodation provision.

Many DFV specialist services in NSW, ACCOs and organisations that support women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities are small with a local community focus. As such they are well placed to provide high quality specialist services to their communities.

DCJ are currently part way through implementation of the Core and Cluster program. Given this, now is the time for DSS and DCJ to plan together for the delivery of Safe Places Inclusion Round funding for women and children leaving DFV in NSW.

If you wish to discuss this letter further, you are invited to organise a meeting with the following representatives of the 3 Peaks:

Lisa D Sampson, CEO, ACHIA NSW 0414 285 721 achiaceo@communityhousing.org.au

Delia Donovan, CEO, DVNSW 0400 936 192 ceo@dvnsw.org.au

Trina Jones, CEO, HNSW 0408301864 trina@homelessnessnsw.org.au

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Sampson
CEO, ACHIA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Delia Donovan".

Delia Donovan
CEO, DVNSW

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trina Jones".

Trina Jones,
Chief Executive Officer



About ACHIA NSW

The Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association (ACHIA) NSW is the peak body for community-controlled Aboriginal Community Housing Providers in NSW and represents the collective pinnacle of Aboriginal social and community housing expertise in NSW. ACHIA NSW co-design and pursue opportunities for the sector to leverage their strengths and opportunities. As a member-driven and member-accountable peak, ACHIA NSW elevate the pivotal role Aboriginal Community Housing providers have in providing culturally informed, culturally responsive services.

About Domestic Violence NSW

Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW) is the peak body for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW. We have over 130 member services across NSW.

DVNSW members represent the diversity of specialist services working in NSW to support women, families and communities impacted by domestic and family violence. Our member organisations include crisis and refuge services, transitional accommodation and community housing providers, Aboriginal controlled organisations and specialist culturally and linguistically diverse organisations, men's behavior change programs and networks, specialist women's legal support services, women and children's support services, women's health centres and Safe at Home programs.

DVNSW works to improve policy and legislative responses to domestic and family violence and to eliminate domestic and family violence through advocacy, partnerships and the promotion of good practice. We sit on over 85 advisory groups and committees and provide regular, informed advice to all levels of government. We are a member of the National Women's Safety Alliance and work alongside other peak organisations such as Safe and Equal in Victoria.

About Homelessness NSW

Homelessness NSW (HNSW) is a not-for-profit Peak body working to end homelessness in NSW. We exist to build the capability of people and capacity of systems to end homelessness. We have a vision for a future where everyone has a safe place to call home and connection to their community. Our 190 members include specialist homelessness services, allied organisations and services. We work with our members, people with lived experience and a broad network of partners to understand drivers of homelessness, advocate for solutions, build skills and knowledge, and scale innovation.