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Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

MEDIA RELEASE

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MAJOR UPGRADE FOR ORANGE COURTHOUSE

Orange Courthouse will have its largest renovation in more than a decade with the commencement this week on a \$630,000 upgrade.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the four-month project is part of the NSW Government's \$148 million package to appoint seven extra District Court judges. The funding includes crown prosecutors, court staff and an \$8.2 million infrastructure program.

"The upgrade is great news for the local community and it will significantly improve safety and include a new entrance to the courthouse, as well as rooms for victims, witnesses, jurors and Sheriff's Officers," Mr Speakman said.

Builders will add an extension at the front of the courthouse to accommodate the increase in security including the installation of an airport-style scanning machine, a Sheriff's Office, a search room and a secure exit. The upgrade has been designed in close consultation with heritage experts.

The project will provide a domestic violence room and waiting room to provide a sanctuary for vulnerable victims and witnesses to help reduce the stress of appearing in court. The court registry will also be renovated to provide additional workstations for staff and Sheriff's Officers.

Mr Speakman said two new Sheriff's Officers have joined the team at Orange Courthouse, taking the number of officers to four.

"The Sheriff's Officers completed seven weeks of rigorous training last year which included using communication skills to resolve conflict without force and defensive tactics," he said.

In addition, there will be a minor refurbishment of District Court Judge Graham Turnbull's SC chambers and his associate's room. There will be no impact on court operations during construction, which is due to finish in July.

Judge Turnbull began sitting at Orange Courthouse in 10 February 2020 and is one of seven additional permanent judges appointed to the District Court of NSW to help address the backlog of criminal cases.

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