



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

Geoff Lee
Acting Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans

MEDIA RELEASE

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RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM TO HELP TACKLE DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Stopping violence in the home is at the forefront of an Islamic leaders' gathering in Chullora this weekend, Attorney General Mark Speakman and Acting Minister for Multiculturalism Geoff Lee announced today.

Mr Speakman said the Council of Imams NSW seminar, as well as broader work with religious and community leaders, is a key opportunity to tackle domestic and family violence.

"Religious and community leaders play a crucial role in helping to prevent domestic abuse as they can be the first point of contact for those experiencing violence," Mr Speakman said.

"We want to have an honest conversation about the scourge of domestic violence and its devastating effects while giving these leaders the necessary resources and training so they know what to do if someone confides in them who needs help.

"By doing so, we can have more people supporting us to send the very clear message that there is never any excuse for violence in the home and there are support services available."

Representatives from NSW Police, Legal Aid NSW, South West Sydney Legal Centre and Victims Services are attending the event on Sunday (3 November).

"The NSW Government is making a record \$431 million investment over four years to prevent violence, support victim-survivors and hold perpetrators to account," Mr Speakman said.

"These measures include tougher penalties for offenders, dedicated Domestic Violence Liaison Officers and High-risk Offender Teams across the NSW Police Force, behaviour change programs and a more coordinated frontline response to at-risk families."

Dr Lee said the seminar will host about 15 Islamic leaders and is organised by the Diversity Services Unit of the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

"This event is a critical resource for religious and community leaders," Dr Lee said.

"Domestic violence can affect anyone, but migrants and refugees can be particularly vulnerable as they may be less likely to seek support due to the pressures they face when settling into a new country and community.

"Leaders are looked to for guidance and support, so it's really important that they're properly equipped to respond if they're approached by a member of their community."