



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

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OVERTURNING PREVIOUS CHILD ABUSE SETTLEMENTS

Have your say on potential reforms to empower NSW courts to set aside unjust settlement agreements between child abuse survivors and responsible institutions – that’s the call from Attorney General Mark Speakman today as a discussion paper goes live online.

“The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse revealed harrowing stories of survivors forced into unfair financial agreements,” Mr Speakman said.

“We’ve taken significant steps to overhaul the legal frameworks that allowed these deals to flourish – removing limitation periods for child abuse claims, joining the National Redress Scheme and breaking down barriers preventing survivors from suing institutions.

“But now we want to know your views on whether courts should have the power to reopen previously closed agreements between institutions and survivors of child abuse.”

The Discussion Paper, [Setting aside settlement agreements for past child abuse claims](#), asks twelve questions about the need for reform and how they could operate in the best interests of survivors.

Any potential changes would build on the NSW Government’s comprehensive response to the Royal Commission’s recommendations.

The response, to date, includes the introduction of a landmark [Bill](#) last week to allow for more relevant evidence, including evidence of abuse against other victims, to be admissible in child sexual abuse prosecutions.

“While these reforms would go beyond the findings of the Royal Commission, we know how important this issue is to impacted survivors,” Mr Speakman said.

“Ensuring greater access to justice for survivors is at the heart of our response to the Royal Commission. We can’t undo the horrors of the past, but we can continue to build a fairer and more just legal system for survivors.”

Submissions can be made via www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au until **Wednesday, 15 April 2020**.

MEDIA: Sean Robertson | 0439 813 220