

Family and Domestic Violence Lived Experience Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

In 2023, the Hon. Sabine Winton MLA, Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence (the Minister) established a time-limited Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce to help guide the State's efforts to address the family and domestic violence. One of the Taskforce's first actions was to establish a Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) to place the experience and voices of victim survivors at the centre of family and domestic violence policy and service design in Western Australia. To design the service model for the LEAG, the Taskforce oversaw an extensive consultation process with victim-survivors and lived experience advocates, led by Kwobap consultancy.

The Terms of Reference outlined in this document have been informed by this consultation process. They describe how the LEAG will work including its membership, role, operating rules and reporting arrangements.

Chairperson

The LEAG will be chaired by an individual with lived experience who has demonstrated knowledge of trauma-informed practice and the necessary skills to facilitate and run a meeting. It is also preferable that the Chairperson understands Government processes.

Composition and membership

The LEAG will comprise 12 members, including the Chairperson. All members will have lived experience of family and domestic violence (i.e. they are the primary victim-survivor with direct experience of family and domestic violence, or they are the families and carers directly impacted family and domestic violence as secondary victims).

While family and domestic violence can impact people of all genders, social and cultural backgrounds, appointment to the LEAG will be cognisant of the disproportionate rates at which women, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, experience family and domestic violence. The LEAG's membership will seek to achieve an appropriate representation of the diverse experiences of family and domestic violence and Western Australia's diverse population including representation from people who are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander;
- LGBTQIA+;

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse;
- with disability;
- from regional and remote Western Australia;
- of varied socio-economic status; and
- of mixed ages (from 18 years and above).

A selection panel including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will consider applications and present recommendations to the Minister. The selection panel will use a skills matrix to ensure that the membership of the LEAG is composed of members with the requisite expertise and diversity relevant to the purpose and functions of the LEAG. As far as practicable, the panel will seek to recommend members that provide diverse representation, experience and backgrounds and reflect the disproportionate rates at which family and domestic violence is experienced for different groups. This includes working towards a target of half of all members being Aboriginal people.

Tenure of members

Members, including the Chairperson, will be appointed for a two-year term, and may be reappointed for one additional two-year term (four year maximum). Reappointment of members will be through a formal WA State Government Cabinet process.

A member may, at any time, resign from the group by written notice provided to the Minister. A member will cease to be a member of the LEAG if they:

- resign or retire from the group;
- pass away;
- are convicted of an offence which, in the opinion of the Minister, is incompatible with the work undertaken by the Department of Communities; and
- are no longer considered by the Minister at their sole discretion, to be suitable for membership. Such a decision is not appealable.

Additional LEAG members (including those to replace any member who has ceased their membership) may only be appointed through a formal WA State Government Cabinet process.

Purpose

The LEAG will establish a formal mechanism for people with lived experience of family and domestic violence to provide strategic advice to the Minister on the ways to improve responses to family and domestic violence and outcomes for victim-survivors.

Scope

The LEAG is a non-statutory advisory body. Without legislated powers, it does not have any delegated authority to act on behalf of or commit the State Government to any actions.

The LEAG does not have responsibility for providing advice or input into any individual cases or circumstances related to family and domestic violence, and any requests to do so should be declined.

Deliverables

Supported by the Secretariat and in consultation with the Minister, LEAG members will develop an annual workplan of agreed priorities. Aligned to the workplan, the LEAG will:

- Provide advice and propose actions to the Minister (or Government if relevant) on matters identified in their workplan or by agreed exception.
- Provide advice and propose actions to inform the design of family and domestic violence laws, policies, services, and programs.
- Provide advice and propose actions on the State's approaches to monitoring and evaluating implementation of family and domestic violence reforms and strategic policy including:
 - Family and Domestic Violence System Reform Plan;
 - Path to Safety: Western Australia's Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020-2030; and
 - Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy 2022 – 2032.
- Provide advice and propose actions on further developing and integrating lived experience expertise in the family and domestic violence sector.
- Support grassroots information sharing and consultation processes to enable community input to the LEAG and to the major law and policy initiatives impacting people experiencing family and domestic violence in Western Australia.

Principles

The LEAG will operate in accordance with the following principles:

- Trauma-informed
- Culturally safe
- Accountable
- Empowering
- Dignity and respect
- Confidentiality
- Compassionate
- Inclusive
- Diversity
- Integrity

Role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson is responsible for providing trauma-informed facilitation and group leadership including to:

- support development of the annual workplan with all members and the Minister;
- work with the secretariat to establish meeting agendas and provide advice on draft LEAG papers in line with the Terms of Reference;
- facilitate meetings including to help them run on time and to have constructive discussion toward delivery of the workplan;
- drive the delivery of agreed actions arising from meetings;

- promote a culture of dignity and emotional safety for members;
- consulting with the secretariat to resolve issues related to the running of the LEAG or delivery of the workplan, this includes conflicts of interest;
- liaising and meeting with the Minister and other stakeholders where necessary; and
- leading the annual review of LEAG operations and performance.

Roles and responsibilities of LEAG members

Members of the LEAG will:

- work collaboratively with each other, the Chairperson, secretariat and the Minister to develop the annual workplan;
- allocate time to read papers prior to meetings;
- attend meetings to share their lived experience expertise related to items on the meeting agenda. This will include supporting the development of advice to the Minister and other stakeholders;
- work collaboratively with each other and the secretariat to achieve the LEAGs purpose and Workplan deliverables;
- upon request of the Chairperson, attend meetings with the Minister and other stakeholders to verbally deliver formal LEAG advice and provide explanation, context, and clarification;
- advocate for and represent the wider community of people with lived experience of family and domestic violence;
- uphold a duty of care to keep themselves, other members, and Secretariat staff safe; and
- report any actual or perceived conflict of interest to the secretariat prior to, or at the start of LEAG meetings.

Role of the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

The Minister and the Minister's Office is responsible for:

- providing advice about priority areas for the LEAG annual workplan;
- attending LEAG meetings in person each year (approximately twice a year);
- liaising with other Ministerial offices on matters relating to the LEAG;
- championing, promoting, and raising the profile of the LEAG including to community members and other stakeholders; and

- providing feedback to members about how the LEAG advice has been used to inform policy and service design.

Role of the secretariat

The Department of Communities will provide secretariat to the LEAG. The secretariat will attend LEAG meetings and be responsible for providing administrative support to the Chairperson and the LEAG members, including:

- establishing and supporting selection panels for the recruitment of members;
- onboarding new LEAG members through provision of inductions, relevant documents, governance materials and/or training;
- coordinating and scheduling meetings;
- preparing meeting documents in consultation with the Chairperson;
- circulating meeting papers to LEAG members at least five business days prior to meetings;
- recording and disseminating meeting minutes;
- reporting back at each meeting on the progress of meeting action items; and
- publishing communiques to the LEAG landing page.

Sub-committees

Sub-committees may be created to focus on specific issues (either time limited or ongoing) aligned to the annual workplan. The roles and responsibilities of members in these terms of reference apply to sub-committees.

Ethical Standards and duties

A Code of Conduct will be developed describing the ethical standards, behaviours and duties that all members and the secretariat will be expected to abide by. The code of conduct will be discussed at the first meeting of the LEAG, and members will be required to sign and date the document, at this meeting.

Confidentiality and conflicts of interest

LEAG members may decide to remain 'anonymous' in the public domain where they are concerned about their safety and wellbeing. This will be identified to the wider group and members will be required to keep the identities and details of those individuals confidential. Names and identifying details will need to be provided to apply for the Expression of Interest process and for record screening at the appropriate time. Membership on the group does also require the identity of members to be shared with key stakeholders including other LEAG members, the Secretariat, and relevant Ministers.

The discussions within LEAG meetings are confidential. Members will be required to sign a confidentiality declaration to this effect. Communications that can be shared externally to stakeholders and the wider community will be agreed within the LEAG.

Members will also be required to declare conflicts of interest and shall abide by the terms of the LEAG's Code of Conduct relating to conflicts of interest.

Meeting frequency and location

The LEAG will meet bi-monthly (six meetings per year) with provision for additional out of session meetings at the request of the Minister.

Meeting locations will be decided by members and the Chairperson and noted in the annual workplan, with the option for both metropolitan and regional locations.

Members can attend meetings online but are expected to attend two meetings in person to support group cohesion.

Decision making

A quorum for LEAG meetings will be met if the Chairperson and the majority (50% or more) of the members are present. Members will try to reach a consensus view. Where consensus is not reached: the majority view will be documented, and the minutes will reflect differing advice.

Proxy

Members are encouraged to attend all meetings; proxies are not permitted.

Where the Chairperson cannot attend, they must nominate another appropriate LEAG member to act as Chairperson or the meeting should be rescheduled.

Guests

The LEAG may invite non-members or guests to attend the meeting to provide information, expert advice and observe proceedings. Guests may speak to specific agenda items and may be asked to join the meeting for a specific item only. Guests do not have voting rights and need to respect meeting confidentiality.

Authorising Minister

The Hon Sabine Winton MLA, Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence is the authorising Minister for the LEAG.

Internal communication

With Minister

Minutes from each meeting will be recorded and provided to the Minister. The Minister may share relevant advice to other Ministers particularly where appropriate or there are cross-portfolio implications.

Between members

To enhance knowledge and understanding of current issues and trends affecting people experiencing family and domestic violence in the community, members are encouraged to informally discuss issues with their networks. However, members of the LEAG must keep LEAG discussions and papers confidential and refer to the content of public Communiques as a source of approved information sharing. Members of the LEAG are not to make any comments to the media, share information online (including to social media platforms), or publish details of the LEAG's activities (beyond the public Communique) without consulting the Chairperson and Secretariat and receiving written approval to do so.

External communication

A dedicated online landing page will be established for the LEAG. A communique will be produced by the secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson, and published to the landing page following each meeting.

Performance Review

The LEAG will conduct an annual review and self-assessment to ascertain its effectiveness and whether it is meeting its purpose. This will include inviting and considering feedback from the Secretariat, Minister and other stakeholders on the timeliness, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the LEAG's advice.

The LEAG will also review the Terms of Reference annually to assess if it is still appropriate and fit for purpose or if changes are required, for example to increase effectiveness, minimise administrative burden, improve accessibility or to reflect new State Government priorities, market conditions or legislation.