

# Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Lived Experience Advisory Group Terms of Reference

## The importance of lived experience

Lived experience describes the knowledge, insights and expertise that arise from the direct experience of domestic, family and/or sexual violence. The use of the term ‘person with lived experience’ carries an acknowledgment that, for many people with lived experience of domestic, family, and sexual violence, the experience is both lived and living – it is ongoing.

DHS recognises that for many people, sharing their lived experience in advocating and providing advice for system change is an important part of their healing and recovery from violence.

Amplifying and centring the voices of those with lived experience is essential to creating safer, more inclusive, and more effective systems, policies, and services. This document outlines the role, membership and arrangements for the domestic, family and sexual violence (DFSV) Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG).

## Purpose

The DFSV LEAG was established in 2026 as a result of recommendation 12 from the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

The LEAG comprises of members drawn from the adult Lived Experience Advisory Network (LEAN) to provide advice and expertise to the Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (the Minister) and the South Australian Government.

The DFSV LEAG is a key part of the South Australian Government’s commitment to giving lived experience communities a direct voice to government on DFSV matters.

## Principles

The following values or guiding principles will guide the DFSV LEAG. These will be enacted through the DFSV LEAG Group Norms.

- Trauma informed – promoting predictability, care and avoiding re-traumatisation
- Culturally safe and respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols and leadership
- Accessible and inclusive for diverse backgrounds, identities and needs
- Safe, supported and influential participation
- Collective voice

## Composition and Membership

The DFSV LEAG has up to 12 members, including the Chairperson.

All members will have lived experience of DFSV (i.e. they are the primary victim-survivor with direct experience of DFSV).

To be eligible to join the DFSV LEAG a person must be 18 or over, a South Australian resident, and a member of the DFSV LEAN.

New members are recruited through an expression of interest (EOI) process available only to members of the LEAN.

The DFSV LEAG's membership will seek to achieve an appropriate representation of South Australia's diverse population including representation from people who are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- LGBTQIA+
- culturally and linguistically diverse;
- living with disability;
- from regional and remote South Australia;
- of mixed ages (from 18 years and above).

Additionally, membership will seek to reflect a broad diversity of experiences of DFSV with particular attention key intersecting experiences, including:

- experience of non-intimate partner sexual violence;
- experience of formerly being incarcerated;
- experience with the child protection system.

A minimum of three members of the LEAG should have lived experience of non-intimate partner sexual violence. It is preferable that at least one of these members also be a person living with disability.

The Children and Young Person (CYP) LEAN is in development and approaches to incorporating CYP are being planned with inclusion into the group once established.

Although members might provide advice from the perspective of their peers, identity group or community, they are not expected to formally represent their communities on the DFSV LEAG.

All members hold their positions in a personal capacity and cannot affiliate their membership with their professional or voluntary engagements, nor will their membership provide an advocacy opportunity for their professional engagements or employer.

## Terms of appointment

Members are appointed by the Minister for terms of two (2) years in the first instance

A member may, at any time, resign from the group by written notice provided to the Minister or the secretariat.

A member will cease to be a member of the DFSV LEAG if they:

- resign or retire from the group;
- act in a manner inconsistent with the Public Sector Code of Ethics;
- no longer live in South Australia;
- are absent from two consecutive meetings without explanation or sufficient notification to the secretariat;
- are no longer considered by the Minister, at their sole discretion, to be suitable for membership.

Additional DFSV LEAG members (including those to replace any member who has ceased their membership) may only be appointed through a formal EOI process unless the vacancy occurs within 12 months of the conclusion of a formal process whereby the selection panel *may* nominate to the Minister alternative shortlisted candidates to fill the vacancy.

## Chairperson

The LEAG will be chaired by an individual with lived experience of DFSV 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

### Process for Appointment

The Chairperson will be appointed by the Minister.

The term for Chairperson is one year.

Where the Chairperson cannot attend, they should contact the secretariat to identify another appropriate LEAG member to act as Chairperson. The Minister may consider the nomination of a Deputy Chairperson for such absences.

## Attendance at meetings

Members are encouraged to attend all meetings (in person or online); proxies are not allowed. When a member is unable to attend, they should advise the Chairperson and the

secretariat in advance and provide notes to the Chairperson regarding their views on the papers (for incorporating into the DFSV LEAG's meeting discussion).

Meetings are usually attended by members, the Minister, a Minister's advisor, and the secretariat (Department of Human Services (DHS) staff member/s responsible for supporting the DFSV LEAG). Group members can flag if they wish to discuss matters without the Minister or DHS representatives present.

We encourage requests for support with the secretariat working with individual members to develop safety and support plans. This may include that a support person attends with the member. If a member requires specific support, they should contact the secretariat. Where a support person attends the meeting, they are there for the individual member and are not counted as an official member. Support persons attending will be expected to adhere to the expectations in these Terms of Reference. Support persons will only be permitted to speak on behalf of members where explicit permission has been given by the relevant member.

Sometimes other ministers and staff from other government/non-government agencies may attend to listen directly to member's advice on matters they are working on. Members will be notified in advance by the secretariat who will be in attendance and the purpose for that attendance.

## Responsibilities

Members responsibilities include:

- Preparing for meetings – for example, by thinking about the topics on the agenda, reading any papers and being familiar with who is attending the meeting and why, seeking clarification from the secretariat/Chairperson as needed.
- Attending most meetings and letting the secretariat know if they cannot attend.
- 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.
- Adhering to the Group Norms and participate in their review.
- Upholding a duty of care to keep themselves, other members, and secretariat staff safe.
- Maintaining confidential or private information provided by other DFSV LEAG members.
- Reporting any actual or perceived conflict of interest to the secretariat and to the DFSV LEAG members at the start of meetings.
- Applying the DFSV LEAG principles at meetings by creating a culturally safe space, empowering diverse perspectives to be heard, and showing each other compassion.
- Displaying values that are appropriate for a Minister's advisory group and in keeping with the South Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics and Values (service,

professionalism, trust, respect, collaboration and engagement, honesty and integrity, courage and tenacity, and sustainability).

Chairperson's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the values and group norms are upheld.
- Supporting members to understand the Terms of Reference and how the group works.
- Supporting all members to take part openly, safely, and fairly. Promoting a culture of dignity, emotional safety, and constructive challenge and debate.
- Facilitating constructive and collaborative team discussions and relations. Empower all members to contribute in diverse and flexible ways.
- Seeking agenda items from members.
- Working with the secretariat to approve meeting documents (agenda, minutes etc.) Consulting with the secretariat to resolve issues related to the operation of the DFSV LEAG or delivery of the workplan, this includes conflicts of interest.
- Representing the group when corresponding or meeting with other groups, individuals, or committees.
- Liaising and meeting with the Minister and other stakeholders where necessary.
- Supporting development of the annual workplan with all members and the Minister.
- Driving the delivery of agreed actions arising from meetings.

The Minister's responsibilities include:

- Providing advice about priority areas for the DFSV LEAG to consider.
- Attending DFSV LEAG meetings in person (four times per year), and the annual round table with the LEAN.
- Liaising with other Ministerial offices on matters relating to the DFSV LEAG.
- Championing, promoting, and raising the profile of the DFSV LEAG including to community members and other stakeholders.
- Providing feedback to members about how the DFSV LEAG advice has been used to inform policy and service design.

The secretariat's responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and scheduling meetings including sending out agendas, minutes and other information to members.
- Onboarding new members through provision of inductions, relevant documents, governance materials and/or training.
- Serving as an effective liaison and conduit between the DFSV LEAG and the LEAN.
- Supporting members to attend meetings members including relevant referrals, bookings and reimbursements.
- Booking any necessary travel and accommodation for members to attend meetings.
- Maintaining the DFSV LEAG Advice and Actions Register.

- Processing sitting fees for members.
- Recording and disseminating meeting minutes.
- Reporting back at each meeting on the progress of meeting action items.
- Drafting and publishing communiques to the DHS website
- Establishing and supporting EOIs for the recruitment of members.
- Coordinating the annual review of DFSV LEAG operations and performance.

The secretariat can be contacted at [dfsvlivedexperience@sa.gov.au](mailto:dfsvlivedexperience@sa.gov.au)

Members of the DFSV LEAG can expect:

- to be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner to facilitate meeting participation.
- meeting papers provided in printed form, if requested.
- that any discussions of lived experience will remain confidential and will not be shared outside the DFSV LEAG without permission.
- to be given equal opportunity to participate in discussions.

## Meeting Frequency and Administration

The DFSV LEAG meets quarterly (four (4) times per year), , in consultation between the Minister and secretariat. A fifth meeting can be scheduled to report to the LEAN on the progress of LEAG. Members are to be provided the meeting dates for the year well in advance.

Meeting duration will be up to four (4) hours.

Meetings will usually be held at the Riverside Centre Building at 115 North Terrace but may be held in alternative locations.

Attendance can be in-person or online with a preference for in person should that be able to be facilitated, noting accessibility requirements, and regional locations of members.

Special meetings may be called to progress critical work. In these instances, members will be given at least ten (10) days' notice before the scheduled meeting date.

## Optional Out of Session Activities

Members may be asked to participate in out-of-session activities which will complement the work of the DFSV LEAG.

Potential activities include:

- Training and/or professional development opportunities.
- Specific consultations with South Australian government agencies.

On occasion, out of session papers may be circulated to DFSV LEAG members where relevant to the DFSV LEAG's work. The secretariat will circulate papers and advise on any response requested and timeframes.

Out of session activities will be pre-approved by the Minister's office to be remunerated.

## Agenda and Minutes

Members, the Minister, or other government agencies may also raise matters they want the DFSV LEAG to discuss for inclusion in the agenda. Members can raise these matters with the Chairperson or secretariat for potential inclusion in the agenda.

The secretariat will send a draft copy of the agenda and any papers to the Chairperson for approval. A final agenda will be sent to all members prior to the meeting at least 10 days prior to meetings or thereabouts.

The secretariat will take minutes of the DFSV LEAG meetings documenting key decisions and actions. Minutes will be high level and will not attribute comments to specific DFSV LEAG members. Minutes will be approved by the Chairperson following the meeting and be distributed to members by the secretariat.

## Remuneration and Reimbursement of Expenses

Members are entitled to remuneration as per the DFSV LEAG remuneration framework which operates in accordance with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 – Boards and Committees: Remuneration, Governance and Diversity (2025).

## Observers and Invited Guests/Speakers

Representatives from government agencies, Ministers' offices, non-government organisations, and academics may attend DFSV LEAG meetings, when necessary and by invite of the Minister only.

The DFSV 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 and the principles contained within this Terms of Reference.

The DHS secretariat will attend all meetings to provide secretariat support.

Guidelines for presenting to the DFSV LEAG will be prepared in support of guest presentations and to maximising the time and expertise of DFSV LEAG members.

## Decision Making & Authority

The DFSV LEAG is an advisory and consultative body. This means it gives advice to the Minister and other government agencies as arranged by the Minister. It does not make decisions about reforms or policies, and it is not necessary for members to come to an agreed position on topics.

### Decision making

A quorum for DFSV 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.

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

### Authority

The DFSV LEAG does not have the authority to:

- Expend money on behalf of DHS or the South Australian Government.
- Commit DHS or the South Australian Government to any arrangements.
- Consider any matters outside its scope of reference.
- Represent DHS or the South Australian Government.
- Comment on matters related to the DFSV LEAG in any public forums or media, including social media, unless authorised to do so.

## Communication and Reporting

Members will be given access to a central online site (e.g., SharePoint or equivalent) where the secretariat will save relevant resources and meeting documentation. Printed materials can be provided on request.

### 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 there are cross-portfolio implications. Personal identifying information will be removed where advice is being shared.

### External communication

External and public communication will be agreed messaging. A webpage page will be established for the DFSV LEAG on the DHS website. A communique will be produced by the

secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson, and published to the landing page following each meeting. The secretariat will also distribute the communique to the LEAN.

For any external communication, consent needs to be provided by members for their names, images and profiles to be used.

Key activities and outcomes will be reported to other stakeholders, such as relevant Ministers, South Australian Government agencies and/or the public. Key activities and outcomes will also be shared with the LEAN as appropriate, and through an annual Round Table.

### **Public Comment**

‘Public comment’ refers to comment(s) for any media, social media, journals, books or other publications, the internet, chat rooms, meetings, any public speaking events or otherwise made publicly in the community.

The Chairperson will act as the spokesperson for, and representative of, the DFSV LEAG. Where appropriate, other members of the DFSV LEAG may undertake this role if approved by the Chairperson or Minister.

Members are only authorised to make public comment on behalf of the DFSV LEAG after consultation with, and approval by the Minister.

When referring to the work of the DFSV LEAG in an external context, members should preface opinions that could be misinterpreted as an official comment on behalf of the DFSV LEAG with a statement that the comment is made in a private capacity.

### **Performance Review**

A review will commence after 18 months of the LEAG commencement and will be completed before the end of the first term of operation. The review will be conducted to confirm that the DFSV LEAG is effective and is meeting its purpose and may suggest changes to enable more effective operations for the Minister to consider. This review will similarly review this Terms of Reference. The review will invite and considering feedback from members, the secretariat, the Minister and other stakeholders as appropriate.

In addition, the group is to review training needs and Group Norms.

### **Annual Reports**

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 – Boards and Committees: Remuneration, Governance and Diversity (2025) which requires the delivery of annual reports to the Minister on the activities undertaken and outcomes achieved over the

reporting period does not apply to the LEAG, as the Minister is a member of the Council.

## Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

DFSV LEAG members may decide to remain 'anonymous' in the public domain if they are concerned about their safety and wellbeing. The wider group will be informed of any member's decision to remain anonymous, 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 EOI process and for any relevant checks during the selection process.

Membership of the DFSV LEAG also requires the identity of members to be shared with key stakeholders including other DFSV LEAG members, the secretariat, payroll, and relevant Ministers.

The discussions within DFSV 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 DFSV LEAG.

Members will also be required to declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

## Honesty and Accountability

By virtue of their appointment, members are:

- 'Public officials' for the purposes of Section 74 of the *Public Sector Act 2009*; and
- 'Advisory body members' for the purposes of the *Public Sector (Honesty and Accountability) Act 1995*.

All members are subject to the duties and obligations arising under the legislation. This includes adherence to the Public Sector Code of Ethics.

Where a member has a direct or indirect personal or pecuniary interest in a matter decided or under consideration, these duties require that the member:

- Must, as soon as reasonably practicable, disclose in writing to the Chairperson full and accurate details of the interest.
- Must not take part in any discussions relating to the matter.
- Must be absent from the meeting when any such discussion or voting is taking place.

Members are expected to comply with the Public Sector Code of Ethics (to the extent that it applies).

## Training

Training and development will be provided to all members to support cultural awareness, sharing safely and for influence, and induction to South Australian Government policy and processes, legal obligations as DFSV LEAG member, and legislative requirements. Training needs are to be reviewed at least annually.

## Safety & Wellbeing

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* aims to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of individuals at work, establishing clear duties for employers and employees to minimise workplace risks. This includes acknowledging that everyone has a responsibility to recognise and manage potential psychosocial hazards in the workplace. In line with work health and safety legislation, DHS, the Minister, and members share a duty of care to each other (including all members and secretariat staff) for the DFSV LEAG to be safe.

Participation on the DFSV LEAG may bring up emotions/feelings due to lived experience and DHS will ensure supports are available to members. This includes individual therapeutic supports and access the DHS Employee Assistance Program supports.

DHS will provide:

- Self-Assessment tool for prospective members to use to assess their readiness prior to applying and, if appointed, to conduct an annual reassessment.
- Funding for supports for individuals including debriefing support.
- An individual Safety and Support Plan, including access to appropriate development and other therapeutic supports.
- A trauma-informed approach to all meetings and activities, including optional post-meeting debriefing and regular check-ins.

Members will:

- Follow the agreed DFSV LEAG principles and Group Norms.
- Take responsibility for seeking support and managing their safety and wellbeing (as needed), including the co-development of a Support Plan.

## Terms of Reference

This Terms of Reference is effective from the date of endorsement and will be reviewed annually.

May 2026