

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Burgoyne to the Minister for Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence:

Domestic Violence Offenders

The Justice Legislation Amendment (Domestic and Family Violence) Bill 2019 (the Bill) was passed in June 2020 and included an amendment to the Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007 (the Act) allowing an offender to undertake a rehabilitation program in lieu of a mandatory prison sentence.

1. How many authorised rehabilitation programs are currently available to offenders under the Act?

Answer:

Section 85A of the *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007* provides that the Minister may, by Gazette notice, declare a program to be a rehabilitation program for the Domestic and Family Violence Act if the primary objective of the program is to change the behaviour of a person who commits domestic violence to:

- (a) reduce and prevent the person committing domestic violence;
- (b) increase the safety and protection of persons with whom the person is or may be in a domestic relationship; and
- (c) ensure the person accepts responsibility for the person's behaviour.

The notice must specify the requirements of the program.

Orders to attend Rehabilitation Programs are being trialled in Alice Springs as part of the Specialist Approach to Domestic and Family Violence at the Alice Springs Local Court before they are considered in other locations.

As a result, only one Alice Springs based program has been declared under section 85A. That program is the Tangentyere Council Men's Behaviour Change Program in Alice Springs.

2. What is the total funding allocated to authorised rehabilitation programs for financial year 2022-23?

Answer:

\$691,452 has been allocated to the Tangentyere Council Men's Behaviour Change Program in Alice Springs for 2022-23 by the the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities.

3. What are those authorised rehabilitation programs, in what locations do they operate and are they operated by the Northern Territory Government or a third-party?

Answer:

As indicated above, the only rehabilitation program declared under section 85A of the Domestic and Family Violence Act is the Tangentyere Council Men's Behavior Change Program.

This is run by Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation. It is based in Alice Springs and is funded through the Department of Territory Housing, Families and Communities as a trail through the Specialist Approach to Domestic and Family Violence in Alice Springs.

The program accepts clients from a range of referral pathways, including defendants ordered to attend as part of the Domestic Violence Order under section 24 of the Domestic and Family Violence Act.

4. If any programs are operated by third parties, what is the legal identity of those entities?

Answer:

The program is run by Tangentyere Council Aboriginal Corporation.

5. How much funding is provided to the third party providers identified in the question above?

Answer:

\$691,452 has been allocated to the Tangentyere Council Men's Behaviour Change Program in Alice Springs for 2022-23 by the the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities.

6. Since the Bill was passed in 2020, how many offenders have taken part in an authorised rehabilitation program?

Answer:

Since the 29 July 2020, 32 offenders have been referred to the Specialist Domestic and Family Violence List at the Alice Springs Local Court.

Of these 32 offenders, 20 were assessed as suitable and ordered to attend the declared rehabilitation program pursuant to Section 24 of the Domestic and Family Violence Act.

7. How many total hours of participation by the offender are required to complete an authorised rehabilitation program (please specify for each available program)?

Answer:

The Tangentyere Council Men's Behavior Change Program requires 32 hours of participation.

The defendant must, during a five month period, attend 16 group sessions or, if negotiated with the program facilitator equivalent individual sessions.

8. How many have successfully completed an authorised rehabilitation program?

Answer:

Five offenders have successfully completed the Tangentyere Council Men's Behavior Change Program. Eight are pending completion.

9. Of the offenders that have taken part in an authorised rehabilitation program, how many of those have been arrested at any point within the following 12 months?

Answer:

Of the five offenders who have successfully completed the Tangentyere Council Men's Behavior Change Program, none have been arrested within the following 12 months.

Of the 20 offenders ordered to take part in the Tangentyere Council Men's Behavior Change Program, five offenders were arrested within the following 12 months.