



4 May 2021

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights
PO Box 6100,
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretariat,

**ParentsNext: examination of (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) Social Security instrument 2021
Endorsement of DV Victoria/DVRCV Submission**

We are a community legal centre based in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne with offices in Footscray, Sunshine, and Werribee. Targeted legal services to people experiencing gender-based violence form one of our key impact areas, which we address by a combination of duty lawyer services, clinics and health partnerships focusing on economic abuse and restoring financial safety, and evidence-based systemic advocacy.

We endorse Domestic Violence Victoria and Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria's submission to this inquiry, which is itself informed by our previous work in the family violence and economic abuse space and that of others. We consider it vital that participation requirements in a government program not increase the risk to victim-survivors of either being exposed to further violence or being penalised for having experienced domestic violence previously.

We echo the submission's view that the ParentsNext program has negative human rights implications for victim-survivors, and also cite the primary recommendation of the 2019 Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs that ParentsNext not continue in its current form.

Yours sincerely,

Melissa Hardham
CEO
WEstjustice