



# PUTTING VICTIMS FIRST

National is working hard to deliver on our election promises in law and order to make families feel safer in their homes and communities. As part of that we've introduced a range of initiatives to put victims at the heart of the justice system. These include on-the-spot safety orders, an offender levy, and more support for victims.

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## VICTIMS HAVE BEEN NEGLECTED FOR TOO LONG

Crime affects our communities, our society, and our economy. But most of all it affects the victims of crime and their families. They have to deal with the emotional, physical, and financial effects of crime long after it's been committed.

Victims have been neglected for too long. That's why we're putting victims at the heart of the justice system. On 1 July the National-led Government introduced a range of measures to improve services for victims of crime.

## NEW INITIATIVES TO PUT VICTIMS FIRST

### \$50 levy on all offenders

All convicted offenders will pay a \$50 offender levy to the courts at sentencing. The levy will be used to provide extra entitlements and services for victims of crime.

### More support for victims

National is improving services for victims of violent crime to help address the financial and emotional costs they face.

These include:

- Boosting grants for families of homicide victims, including a High Court attendance grant of \$124 a day for family members of homicide victims.
- Help with expenses for victims of sexual violence.
- Increases in travel, accommodation, and child care assistance for victims attending court proceedings.
- Funeral grants for families of homicide victims.

Victims of sexual violence will receive further support in the courts. This will give victims access to a trained adviser who understands the dynamics of sexual violence cases and victims' needs.

All victims of crime will now have access to more information about the justice system by way of a DVD, support material, and a redesigned victims' website.

## On-The-Spot Safety Orders to Protect Families

On-the-spot safety orders will ensure that victims of domestic violence get immediate protection from dangerous situations.

Police can now remove an alleged violent person from the home for up to five days. This will provide a safety period for victims.

### Safety Orders in Action

A woman lives with her male partner and their two children. Police have attended six family violence incidents at their home in the past year and the man has previously been arrested for assault.

A neighbour calls police about a disturbance at their house. When police arrive, the man is angry, but no one has been physically harmed. The woman and the children are upset and crying.

The man verbally abuses the police, but he cooperates. The woman is afraid of the police leaving. She explains that the last time she called them, they came, they warned her partner, and left. Then he hit her.

It's unclear whether a crime has been committed, and police don't have enough evidence to arrest the man. But they are concerned for the woman's safety, so they issue an on-the-spot safety order to provide immediate protection for the woman and the children.

The man must immediately leave the home and not return for five days. This will help protect the woman and her family from the threat of violence and give her time to think about what she should do next.

## NATIONAL'S COMMITMENTS

- Putting victims at the heart of the justice system.
- Getting tough on crime.
- Making families feel safer in their homes and communities.