

Domestic or Family Violence Policy Statement

Executive Officer Rob Oerlemans

POLICY STATEMENT

- 1) Lions Australia confirms the right of all persons, regardless of gender, culture or creed, to live in a family or domestic relationship free of the fear of violence, abuse or intimidation.
- 2) It condemns without reservation conduct that is violent, threatening, coercive, controlling or induces fear.
- 3) It condemns those persons of any age and either gender who engage in a pattern of behaviour intended to gain or maintain power and control over another or others within the family or domestic relationship.
- 4) It condemns the exercising of physical, verbal, emotional, economic, sexual and or psychological abuse and affirms that any such practice cannot be tolerated and is contrary to the ethics of Lions Australia.

Background

Lions Australia adopted this policy at the National Convention in 2017, held in Hobart, Tasmania.

Lions prides itself on being an ethical organisation. We consider ourselves to be a family, and the majority of our members are in long term, domestic relationships including marriage. At our Convention the members felt it was important for Lions to make a strong statement about this matter.

The Motion to Convention included a statement indicating the broad scope of the definition of domestic violence as follows:

“Domestic violence includes:

- *emotional abuse—blaming the victim for all problems in the relationship, undermining the victim’s self-esteem and self-worth through comparisons with others, withdrawing interest and engagement and emotional blackmail*
- *verbal abuse—swearing and humiliation in private and public, focusing on intelligence, sexuality, body image or the victim’s capacity as a parent or spouse*
- *social abuse—systematic isolation from family and friends, instigating and controlling relocations to a place where the victim has no social circle or employment opportunities and preventing the victim from going out to meet people*
- *economic abuse—controlling all money, forbidding access to bank accounts, providing an inadequate ‘allowance’, preventing the victim seeking or holding employment and taking wages earned by the victim*
- *psychological abuse—making threats regarding custody of children, asserting the justice system will not believe or support the victim, destroying property, abusing pets and driving dangerously*
- *spiritual abuse—denial and/or misuse of religious beliefs or practices to force victims into subordinate roles and misusing religious or spiritual traditions to justify physical violence or other abuse*
- *physical abuse—direct assaults on the body, use of weapons (including objects), assault of children, locking the victim out of the house, sleep and food deprivation, and*
- *sexual abuse—any form of pressured/unwanted sex or sexual degradation, causing pain during sex, coercive sex without protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease, making the victim perform sexual acts unwillingly and criticising or using degrading insults.”*