

21 October 2026

Territory frontline services call for urgent action as family violence claims more lives.

- *Four women and girls have allegedly been killed in domestic violence-related incidents in the Northern Territory this year, including two girls under 18.*
- *The NT's rate of family and domestic violence-related hospitalisations is around 20 times the national average, with harm increasing the more remote a community is.*
- *Remote and very remote communities continue to face significant gaps in specialist support, safe accommodation and emergency responses.*
- *NTCOSS and frontline services are calling on the NT and Commonwealth Governments to commit to key actions to keep women and children safe.*

The Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS) and frontline domestic, family and sexual violence (DFS) services are calling on the NT and Australian Governments to take meaningful action on the Territory's family violence crisis, following the recent death of a 16 year old girl in Alpururulam.

The sector says the death must not be treated as an isolated tragedy, coming in a year that has seen multiple women and girls lose their lives and many more suffer serious harm.

NTCOSS Interim Chief Executive Claire Pirrett said the Territory could not keep losing women and girls while communities and frontline services were left without the support and resources needed to prevent violence and respond safely.

"Our thoughts are with this girl's family and community, and with every Territory family who has lost someone to violence."

"We are so far past the time for meaningful action from both the NT and Australian Governments. Governments must act now, with sustained investment into the areas that will actually stop the cycle of violence."

"We know that harm increases with remoteness, yet remote communities are where specialist support, safe places to go and emergency help are hardest to reach."

Ms Pirrett raised concerns that funding in the 2026–27 NT Budget was not reaching the communities where the need is greatest, with approximately one third of the Budget's domestic violence funding directed towards government-run initiatives that do not operate in remote and very remote communities.

"Funding for the NT Government's Circuit Breaker program has increased from approximately \$6.5 million in 2025–26 to \$8.3 million in 2026–27. The program works with around 300 families annually, representing an investment of more than \$25,000 per family. Despite this investment, the program does not operate 24/7 in any region and is not accessible to families living in remote Aboriginal communities and homelands."

"Meanwhile, our frontline services are facing increasing demand, workforce shortages, limited funding and increasingly complex cases."

"The NT cannot respond to this crisis alone. We need sustained and adequate investment from the Australian government that recognises high levels of need and high demand for services and the considerable expense of service delivery in remote and very remote places."

Leading specialist DFSV sector voices stood alongside NTCOSS calling on the NT and Australian Governments to commit to a whole of system response.

Bettina Danganbarr AM, Chairperson and Founder of Galiwin'ku Women's space said "Governments must address the systemic barriers that prevent women and children from achieving safety, including access to housing, crisis accommodation, health care, legal support and specialist services. This requires coordinated, adequately resourced responses that support people to leave violence, remain safe and rebuild their lives. This needs to include all of the NT not only those who live in the major centres."

Samone Sallik, General Manager of Tennant Creek Women's Refuge, said small frontline organisations could not continue to carry the load without proper resourcing.

"The death of this young girl must not become another tragedy that generates attention for a few weeks before the underlying issues are forgotten."

"We need both the NT and Australian Governments to invest in long-term, sustainable solutions, including prevention, specialist DFV workers in remote communities, improved emergency responses, safe accommodation and greater support for existing frontline services."

"Ultimately, every woman and child deserves to feel safe, regardless of where they live. We need action before another life is lost, not just after."

Ms Danganbarr AM, said the service gaps in the Territory were directly putting people at risk.

"We cannot continue to see women and girls lose their lives while communities and frontline services face significant gaps in the support and resources needed to prevent violence and respond safely."

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The NT has by far the highest rate of family and domestic violence-related hospitalisations in Australia, at 708.3 per 100,000 people. This is approximately 20 times the national average of 35 per 100,000, and the rate of harm and hospitalisation rises with remoteness. On average, 115 incidents of domestic violence are reported in the NT every day.

Support services

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence, call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can call 13YARN on 13 92 76. In an emergency, call 000.