

Crimes Legislation (Stalking and Harassment)

Amendment Bill

February 2025



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services

Tirohanga Whānui | Overview

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on Crimes Legislation (Stalking and Harassment) Amendment Bill. We support the kaupapa to strengthen the response to stalking and harassment.

Taunakitanga | Recommendations

Our main points are:

The harms of stalking have not been reflected in legislation

The current legislative settings do not match the seriousness of stalking and its impact on the lives of victims. We unreservedly tautoko the intent of this legislation.

Effective implementation is vital

Timeliness is vital when responding to stalking. The resourcing for Police to be responsive and serve notices will be critical in the efficacy of this legislation. Alongside this the role of community NGOs to support victims to speak up and engage with law enforcement is vital.

The Bill simplifies some matters, however there is still complexity around its interaction with other crimes, such as responses to family violence and digital harm, and the use of civil restraining orders and protection orders. Greater clarity may be required to ensure that communities, Police and Courts use the different legislative provisions consistently and effectively.

Careful research and analysis will be needed to understand whether the new legislation achieves its purposes. This requires comprehensive data collection of reports of stalking, notices given to perpetrators, charges laid and successful prosecutions. Monitoring is also needed regarding the use of related protection orders and restraining orders, including the timeliness of court responses and the responses to breaches.

Recommendation 1: We urge Parliament to continue to scrutinise the Police and NGO resourcing and Police and Court practices around these matters.

Recommendation 2: We urge Justice sector agencies to produce guidance and training to ensure consistent application of this and related legislation.

Recommendation 3: We urge Justice sector agencies to comprehensively resource NGOs, Police and Courts to respond rapidly and effectively to the harms of stalking.

Recommendation 4: We urge Justice sector agencies to comprehensively monitor and evaluate the implementation of this and related legislation.

Ko wai tātou | Who we are

NZCCSS has six foundation members; the Anglican Care Network, Baptist Churches of New Zealand, Catholic Social Services, Presbyterian Support and the Methodist and Salvation Army Churches.

Through this membership, NZCCSS represents over 230 organisations providing a range of social support services across Aotearoa. Our mission is to call forth a just and compassionate society for Aotearoa, through our commitment to our faith and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Further details on NZCCSS can be found on our website - www.nzccss.org.nz.

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