



## Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

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Janet Lee  
Coroners Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
By email: [cpuresonses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:cpuresonses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au)

Dear Ms Lee

### Investigation into the death of [REDACTED] – COR 2019 3733

I write in response to your letter dated 21 November 2024, which enclosed a copy of Her Honour Coroner Giles's finding into the death of [REDACTED] and a recommendation made to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department).

Her Honour made one recommendation that requires a direct response from the department. I provide the following response to the recommendation on behalf of the department.

#### **Recommendation**

**I recommend that Child Protection, through the Aboriginal Unborn Child Report Working Group, develop and implement guidelines for working with pregnant Aboriginal women who are reported to Child Protection or are referred to the Orange Door or Child FIRST. These guidelines should be informed by the relevant findings of the Yoorrook Justice Commission.**

The department has considered Her Honour's recommendation and advises that they will be implementing the recommendation through an alternate approach, noting that the Aboriginal Unborn Child Report Working Group is no longer operational:

1. The coronial recommendation aligns with recommendations 11 and 12 of the Yoorrook Justice Commission's *Yoorrook for Justice* report. The department supports in-principle these recommendations from the Yoorrook Justice Commission and are addressing these through a joint implementation approach.
2. To progress this work, the department has commenced working in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal legal service providers and other government departments to undertake policy scoping work on a consent-based Child Protection Notification Scheme (CPNS), initially for unborn reports.
3. The CPNS Working Group supersedes the functions of the Aboriginal Unborn Child Report Working Group.

4. The purpose of the CPNS Working Group is to design and pilot a new model which is culturally responsive, provides holistic and intensive wraparound supports, including legal advice, for expecting mothers of First Peoples children subject to an unborn report. The intent is to increase take-up of these services by mothers pregnant with First Peoples children, which will in turn, reduce the number of First Peoples unborn reports leading to further involvement by Child Protection.
5. It is intended the CPNS model would operate alongside existing support services, which would continue to be utilised, including for example the Aboriginal-led Rapid Engagement and Diversion (RED) programs originally funded through the Aboriginal Innovation and Learning Grant and subsequently funded through the 2023-24 State Budget. This includes programs such as the Garinga Bupup initiative delivered by the Bendigo & District Aboriginal Cooperative, which provides early intervention support to expectant mothers of First Peoples children to prevent unborn reports.

The department will work alongside the CPNS Working Group to design a pilot program for operationalisation by 2026-27, subject to scoping and funding availability.

Should you have any queries, please contact Simone Corin, Executive Director, Aboriginal Initiatives, Quality, Improvement and Oversight [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



**Peta McCammon**  
Secretary  
11 / 02 / 2025