



Secretary

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

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CSEC-260300219

Niels Gabriels
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria

By email: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Gabriels

Investigation into the death of Ashleigh Mills (COR 2020 004808)

I refer to your letter of 12 March 2026 to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), providing a copy of Coroner Audrey Jamieson's finding without inquest into the death of Mr Ashleigh Mills and recommendations to the Victorian Government.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) acknowledges the circumstances leading up to the death of Mr Mills outlined in the Coroner's finding, and I pass on my sincere condolences to Mr Mill's family and loved ones for their loss.

Please find below my department's response to Coroner Jamieson's recommendations directed to DFFH.

Recommendation 1: *With the aim of preventing like deaths and promoting public health and safety, I recommend that the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing consider reconvening the Hoarding and Squalor Taskforce with the aim of promoting best practice and inter-agency responses to hoarding and squalor.*

DFFH Response: *The Coroner's recommendation is under consideration.*

The Hoarding and Squalor Taskforce was disbanded in 2012, as it had fulfilled its aim of developing the Hoarding and Squalor practical resource. The department has a number of practices and strategic plans to respond to hoarding and environmental neglect, which address the need to improve best practice and inter-agency responses that were previously supported by the Housing and Squalor Taskforce.

DFFH funds and operates the Support for High-Risk Tenancies (SfHRT) program which provides a targeted response to people with complex needs who are at risk of losing their public housing tenancy. The majority of referrals responded to by SfHRT relate to hoarding and environmental neglect and the impact of these behaviours on a person's tenancy.

The program integrates and coordinates services needed to sustain at-risk tenancies. This includes providing advocacy, brokerage and consultation for clients via referrers. More information on this program can be found at: [Complex needs responses - DFFH Service Providers](https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/complex-needs-responses) <<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/complex-needs-responses>>.

DFFH accepts in principle the need for an interagency response to hoarding and squalor, and alongside the Department of Health, will further consider mechanisms to promote best practice subject to funding.

Recommendation 2: *With the aim of preventing like deaths and promoting public health and safety, I recommend that the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing update and reissue the 2013 publication Hoarding and squalor: a practical resource for service providers or compile a similar publication for service providers.*

DFFH Response: *Please see below regarding work undertaken in 2024 which addresses the Coroner's recommendation.*

New guidelines titled *Make Safe: Guidance for services working with people living with hoarding and environmental neglect*, were published in January 2024. These guidelines were developed to replace *Hoarding and squalor: a practical resource for service providers* and include updates that incorporate contemporary information on the theoretical understanding and best practice response to people presenting with hoarding and environmental neglect behaviours, along with the latest service options. This resource is available publicly on the DFFH service provider website.

I trust this information assists.

Yours sincerely



Peta McCammon PSM

Secretary

11/06/2026