



The Family Court of Australia and Federal Circuit Court of Australia welcomes proposed legislative changes that will lead to improved risk screening

The Family Court of Australia and Federal Circuit Court of Australia (the Courts) strongly support the introduction this week of the Family Law Amendment (Risk Screening Protections) Bill 2020 which is an important framework to facilitate the Court's exciting new family-violence and risk screening initiative, the Lighthouse Project.

The [Lighthouse Project](#) is ground-breaking and innovative. It will allow the Courts to screen for risk and focus on public health and improved outcomes for families involved in the family law system.

The Lighthouse Project will operate as a pilot program in Adelaide, Brisbane and Parramatta and will involve the:

- Early risk screening through a secure online platform.
- Early identification and management of safety concerns.
- Assessment and triage of cases by a specialised team, who will provide resources and safe and suitable case management.

Importantly, all cases identified as being high-risk will be referred to a dedicated court list, known as the Evatt List (named after the Family Court's first Chief Justice, Elizabeth Evatt AC). The Evatt List focuses on early information gathering and intervention, through a judge-led support team. The team has specialised training and is experienced in working with families where high risk safety issues have been identified.

The Court is preparing to officially commence this new screening process later this year, but a final date will be largely dependent on legislative amendments which will ensure that the information generated and obtained during the family safety risk screening process is both confidential and inadmissible.

The project team is undertaking a program of consultation and training with key stakeholders. For enquiries please email the Courts at: LighthouseProject@familycourt.gov.au

Further details of the Lighthouse Project are available from the websites of the [Family Court of Australia](#) and the [Federal Circuit Court of Australia](#).

Details of the Bill are available from the website of [Parliament House](#).

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