

FAMILY, CRIMINAL AND DFV CONFERENCE

DFV Law Track

Program

58 mins **Therapeutic responses to DFV**

This session explores evolving therapeutic court responses to domestic and family violence (DFV) in Queensland. It will provide an overview of approaches that prioritise safety, accountability, and support, including the role of intervention orders and the implementation of DFV-specific diversion programs. Attendees will gain insight into how the justice system is integrating therapeutic principles to address the underlying drivers of violence and improve outcomes for individuals and families. This presentation will examine how these responses are being shaped by legislation, community needs, and cross-sector collaboration to better manage and reduce DFV-related harm.

Presenters:

Jason Garrick, Principal Lawyer (Violence Prevention and Women's Advocacy), Legal Aid Queensland

Nick Bennett, Director Magistrates Court (Crime practice)

Paul Monsour, Facilitator, Family Peace Project (Anglicare)

Chair: **Andrew Lander**, Legal Practice Director, Lander Solicitors



68 mins **The drafting of, and responses to, domestic violence applications**

While the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act eschews the rules of evidence, a sound evidentiary underpinning remains the key to well drafted applications and affidavits in domestic violence proceedings. This session aims to equip solicitors with a working model for efficient and effective filings in domestic violence applications.

Presenters:

Magistrate Cameron McKenzie, Brisbane Magistrates Court

Rémy Kurz, Barrister, Queensland Bar

Chair: **Patrick Quinn**, Director, Gilshenan & Luton Legal Practice



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48 mins **Family & Criminal law intersections in DFV**

This session explores the intersections between family and criminal law in the context of Domestic and Family violence matters and the challenges of navigating concurrent proceedings. Key topics include parenting disputes, evidentiary considerations and recent legislative reforms, including coercive control. The session aims to enhance understanding of how the family and criminal law areas of practice interact, highlighting practical and ethical considerations for legal practitioners.

Presenters:

Rachel Tierney, Senior Associate, Gilshenan & Luton Legal Practice; Accredited Specialist (Criminal Law) – Qld

Niki Schomberg, Special Counsel, Lander and Rogers

Chair: **Alexandra Moles**, Partner, Mills Oakley



54 mins **Ending DFV proceedings early**

This presentation explores practical approaches to resolving Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) matters at an earlier stage within the Queensland legal system. This session will touch on issues such as summary dismissals, the right to withdraw, procedural fairness, applications to vary orders, relevant legislation, case law and practice directions and will discuss relevant evidentiary considerations also. This presentation offers valuable guidance for legal practitioners aiming to reduce unnecessary litigation and improve outcomes in DFV proceedings.

Presenter: **Gerry Elmore**, Barrister, Queensland Bar

Chair: **Emma Higgins**, Legal Director, Robertson O’Gorman; Accredited Specialist (Criminal Law) – Qld



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Presenters



Nick Bennett

Nick Bennett is a Barrister practising exclusively in criminal law and related fields. He began his legal career as a Prosecutor with the ODPP and Queensland Police Service. Since joining Legal Aid Queensland in 2016, Nick has worked as a Lawyer and Principal Lawyer in Brisbane and regional areas, as Counsel in the Public Defenders Chambers, and was appointed Director of Magistrates Courts in 2025. In that role, Nick leads criminal lawyers representing vulnerable clients in the busiest Courts in the State, and contributes to improvements in the Legal Aid and criminal justice systems.



Gerry Elmore

Gerry Elmore was called to the Bar in 2015. He was admitted to practice in 2012. He practices in criminal law, regulatory litigation (civil penalties and summary prosecutions), judicial review and related appeals. He also has an advice practice in statutory interpretation and statutory powers.



Jason Garrick

Jason is the acting Principal Lawyer in the Violence Prevention Advocacy Team at Legal Aid Queensland. Jason has focused on civil domestic and family violence practice as a special interest area while practicing as a lawyer in family law, child protection and the civil response to domestic and family violence. Jason is Independent Children's Lawyer and skilled legal educator.

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Emma Higgins

Emma Higgins is an accredited specialist in criminal law and a member of the Queensland Law Society's Criminal Law Committee. She has extensive experience in criminal defence, disciplinary matters, and domestic violence law, with a particular focus on navigating the intersection of criminal and civil jurisdictions in domestic violence proceedings.



Rémy Kurz

Rémy commenced his life in the law as Terry O'Gorman's clerk in 2008 before being admitted as a solicitor in 2011. Following his admission, Rémy worked in both private practice and for Legal Aid Queensland. In 2016, Rémy returned to Robertson O'Gorman and in 2020 was awarded specialist accreditation in Criminal Law from QLS. In 2022 Rémy was called to the private Bar and shortly thereafter joined 8 Petrie Terrace Chambers. Rémy specialises in criminal defence and domestic violence proceedings but, since moving to the bar, has expanded his practice to include regulatory investigations, commissions of inquiry, and criminal prosecutions.

In 2024 and 2025 Rémy was recognised by his peers as a leading junior counsel (QLD Criminal Law) by Doyle's Guide.



Andrew Lander

Andrew Lander was admitted as a solicitor in 2003 after completing two years as an article clerk. He has practiced in family and domestic violence law since 2004.

After being employed in a number of prominent family law firms in Brisbane and the Gold Coast Andrew set up his own firm Lander Solicitors Queensland in 2015.

In May this year he was awarded a Master of Laws (Applied Law) majoring in Family Dispute Resolution Practice from the College of Law.

Andrew has had carriage of complex parenting and property settlement matters over the years.

Andrew has been a QLS Family Law Committee Member since 2016 and a registered Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner.

Andrew is also accredited by Legal Aid Queensland as a Domestic Violence Lawyer.

In his spare time Andrew enjoys collecting vinyl records, going to the gym, walking his two schnauzers and traveling.

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Magistrate Cameron McKenzie

Magistrate McKenzie was appointed a magistrate of the Magistrates Court of Queensland in 2019 and presided until June 2023 in the Specialist Domestic & Family Courts in Southport for one year and Beenleigh for two years.

His Honour is a current member of the Supreme Court of Queensland Rules Committee, and the Magistrates Court Domestic and Family Violence, Civil Law, Judicial Wellness and Conference Planning committees.

Prior to his appointment, his Honour practised in the areas of commercial litigation and insolvency and was a partner at DibbsBarker, Gadens and DWF. Before gaining partnership, his Honour spent a decade at NortonRoseFulbright where he progressed from Articled Clerk to Senior Associate.

Whilst a solicitor he held positions on the Queensland Law Society's Insolvency & Restructuring, Domestic & Family Violence, and Dispute Resolution policy committees, as well as the Law Council of Australia Business Law Section Insolvency & Restructuring Committee, the Appeal Costs Fund Board, and the Insolvency Practitioner Registration and Disciplinary Committee.

His Honour was also a Queensland Law Society Approved Mediator, Nationally Accredited Mediator, Registered Farm Debt Mediator and Franchise Code Mediator.



Alexandra Moles

Alexandra co-manages the Family and Relationship Law practice at Mills Oakley Brisbane and has over 20 years of experience practising exclusively in family law.

Alex is highly sought after for her expertise in high value and complex property matters involving businesses, companies, trusts, intergenerational family businesses, succession planning and intricate taxation issues.

She also has a strong parenting practice with a particular interest in high conflict parenting, personality disorders, psychiatric issues, alienation/resist/refuse cases and drug and alcohol abuse. Alex has experience in mediation, child-inclusive mediation and litigation about children. She frequently advises about safety and risk issues and how children's wishes are considered in determining children's arrangements in separated families.

Alex is consistently recognised by her peers as a leading family lawyer and ranks highly in the Doyle's Guide and Best Lawyers in Australia list.

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Paul Monsour

Paul has worked in Intervention Programs for men who use DFV since 2004, as a counsellor and group facilitator in the Living Without Violence program for men until early this year, and now in a similar role in the Family Peace Project Brief Intervention program, connected with the DFV Diversion program at Brisbane Magistrates Court. His work is based on building a strong relationship of trust and respect with clients, in which significant accountability and change conversations can take place. He was a member of the ministerial Advisory Group that advised on the development of the 2012 Qld DFV legislation and has sat on numerous references groups, roundtables and consultation groups in the DFV sector. Paul has provided leadership in the growth and development of the SPEAQ network for Intervention Program providers and has authored a number of key submissions and papers in collaboration with other SPEAQ members.



Patrick Quinn

Patrick has practised predominantly in criminal and misconduct law since his admission to the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2011. Patrick has been a member of the Queensland Law Society's Criminal Law Committee since 2017 and is currently the Deputy Chair.

Prior to his legal career Patrick worked as a hotel manager and maintains a strong interest in liquor and gaming law. Patrick balances his time between Brisbane and Central Queensland where he lives on a cattle property with his wife Jessica and their son.

Patrick's practice has a strong focus on the agricultural sector. He represents clients in a wide range of investigations and proceedings including:

- Domestic and family violence proceedings
- NHVR investigations and prosecutions
- work health and safety (including electrical safety)
- aviation (including ATSB investigations and licensing)
- white collar crime
- coronial, corruption and commissions of inquiry
- weapons licensing

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Niki Schomberg

Niki Schomberg is a Special Counsel in the Family & Relationship Law team at Lander & Rogers. Niki has been recognised by her peers as a Family Law Rising Star for Queensland in the 2020, 2023, 2024 and 2025 editions of Doyle's Guide, and was named a Rising Star by Australasian Lawyer in 2024. She is a member of the Queensland Law Society Family Law Committee. Niki has co-authored articles published by the Law Society Journal of New South Wales in relation to the complexities of corporate structures in family law settlements and the interplay between estate claims and binding financial agreements.



Rachel Tierney

Rachel practises in criminal, domestic violence and disciplinary matters across Queensland. She has considerable experience in domestic violence matters, where she assists clients in both bringing domestic violence applications for their protection and defending against them. She also assists clients with criminal charges arising from domestic violence-related matters. Rachel has complex trial experience and represents clients in all aspects of criminal law with particular expertise in sexual offences and misconduct related charges brought against members of the public service.