

COMMUNITIES — PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS — MANDATORY REFERRALS

926. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) (1) How many mandatory referrals were received from the Department of Housing for each strike issued against a tenancy where children resided in each of the following years:
 - (a) 2021;
 - (b) 2022; and
 - (c) 2023 to date?
- (2) (2) How many of the mandatory referral tenants received from the Department of Housing engaged in the Strong Families program in each of the following years:
 - (a) 2021;
 - (b) 2022; and
 - (c) 2023 to date?

Mr J.N. Carey replied:

Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in Western Australia is governed by the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (the Act), which legally requires Communities staff to mandatorily report instances of child sexual abuse, and which are subject to penalties under the Act if not completed.

This reporting is completely separate to the ‘referrals’ where Communities’ policy implements processes to ensure that child protection officers are notified when a strike against a tenancy is issued for households that include children. These referrals provide child protection officers the opportunity to engage the family with appropriate support or intervention.

- (1) (a) In 2021, 251 internal referrals were made by housing staff to child protection staff where a strike was issued against a tenancy where children resided.
- (b) In 2022, 291 internal referrals were made by housing staff to child protection staff when a strike was issued against a tenancy where children resided.
- (c) In 2023, as at 30 September 2023, 196 internal referrals were made by housing staff to child protection staff where a strike was issued against a tenancy where children resided.
- (2) (a)–(c) A report released under the former Liberal–National Government recommended abolishing the Strong Families Program. The Strong Families program subsequently concluded in 2017. Communities continue to support families through Early Intervention and Family Support (EIFS) Services, in line with the EIFS Strategy.