



August 2023

QPASTT's Position Statement on the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill

As an organisation founded on the principles of human rights, and as an advocate of community empathy and justice for survivors of torture and trauma, QPASTT is opposed to the amendments introduced by the Queensland Government under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill which will allow adult watch houses to be used as youth detention centres for the next three years.

We acknowledge that children and young people who have experienced systemic disadvantage, including those from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds, are overrepresented in the child protection and youth justice systems. However, the rights of young people are reflected in international law as well as the Queensland Human Rights Act (2019). The proposed amendments override the Act's specific protections for children in detention that ensure their segregation from adults.

QPASTT strongly affirms that "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights). By allowing the indefinite detainment of young people in adult watch houses, the amendment fails to recognise the correlation between disadvantage and trauma. Detainment of young people in adult facilities restricts access to age appropriate trauma-informed and culturally competent supports, creating increased and unnecessary risk of further traumatising.

The recent amendments violate various human rights conventions agreed to by the Queensland Government including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), and Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules).

To prevent ongoing traumatising caused by unnecessary and unsafe detention practices, QPASTT advocates for cessation of youth detainment in adult watch houses.

About QPASTT

QPASTT is a specialist rehabilitation agency providing culturally responsive services to promote the health and wellbeing of people in Australia who have sought safety from persecution, torture and war-related trauma. We are the Queensland representative for the Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma.

QPASTT works with refugee and local communities to support people to heal from the impacts of trauma and intergenerational trauma. We collaborate to build safety and connection so that people feel a sense of belonging and we collaborate to create opportunities for individuals, families and communities to thrive. QPASTT also advocates for community empathy and justice for survivors of torture and trauma.