



Attorney-General and Minister for Justice  
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of  
Domestic and Family Violence

1 William Street Brisbane Q 4000  
GPO Box 149 Brisbane Q 4001  
Telephone +61 7 3719 7400  
Email [attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:attorney@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Our ref: 572305/7; 6235099

Your ref: A885935

21 JUL 2022

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to e-Petition 3664-21 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 21 June 2022 titled *Stop Coercion and Segregation*.

The petitioners draw to the attention of the House the use of coercion and segregation by the Queensland Government. I note that the petition does not include any specific examples of what policies include coercion and segregation and how they are incompatible with human rights, informed consent and freedom of choice.

The Queensland Government uses a variety of policy tools which are broadly consistent with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) *Best Practice Principles for Regulation Making*. Such policy tools range from regulation through to subsidies and information campaigns, as well as new tools, such as the use of social media, co-production and design with community stakeholders and new digital governance and data analysis techniques.

I understand that some of the measures that were put in place to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic may have had significant impacts on individuals' human rights.

The *Human Rights Act 2019* (the Act) has proven to be an important tool for government agencies, particularly when responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act requires the government to make decisions to protect Queenslanders during the pandemic only after consideration had been given to the potential impact on individual human rights and ensures that human rights are elevated in policy and legislative development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has required the Queensland Government to react quickly and flexibly to keep Queenslanders safe. I believe it is Queensland's strong health response, including measures under the Queensland Government's COVID-19 legislation, which has not only allowed our economy to stay open but has also saved Queenslanders lives. Thanks to the Queensland community and the tireless work of Queensland's healthcare workers, we have now reached a level of immunisation in the community whereby it was safe for the Chief Health Officer to relax some of the remaining COVID-19 measures on 30 June 2022.

(2)

I note that the Act provides a human rights complaints mechanism. If any of the petitioners believe that their human rights have been unreasonably limited by a government decision or action, they are able to make a human rights complaint under the Act. The first step is to complain directly to the government agency that made the decision or provided the service.

If a person has made a human rights complaint to a government agency and is not satisfied with the agency's response (or does not receive a response within 45 business days), they can escalate the complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission (the QHRC). The QHRC will decide whether to accept a complaint and how to resolve it. One option is conciliation, which is an accessible and independent dispute resolution process.

I am very proud of the Queensland Government's record in combatting the spread of COVID-19 and its commitment to the protection of human rights, where we live in a state with an independent Human Rights Commission and human rights legislation which provides protection for all Queenslanders.

I thank the petitioners for bringing their concerns to the attention of the House.

Yours sincerely



**Shannon Fentiman MP**

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

Member for Waterford