

Fact sheet

Clare's Law in Alberta

Backgrounder on the *Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare's Law) Act*

Introduction to Clare's Law

The Government of Alberta passed the *Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence (Clare's Law) Act* in October 2019. The purpose of Clare's Law is to allow, in defined circumstances, people at risk of domestic violence to obtain information on an intimate partner's previous history of domestic violence or other relevant information.

This law will allow people to make informed choices about potentially harmful relationships, and will be an important tool in protecting Albertans from domestic violence.

Key elements

Clare's Law has three key elements:

- The right to ask: people at risk can apply to find out if their partner has a history of domestic violence or other relevant acts.
- The right to know: police can proactively disclose relevant information to people at risk of domestic violence, without an application.
- The right to privacy: people can trust that their personal information will be safeguarded and only relevant details will be disclosed.

Clare's Law is enabled under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP Act). Privacy legislation in Alberta governs the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

How it works

An application is made by the applicant or a third party. The application is then reviewed for eligibility and the identities of both parties are verified. The level of risk to the applicant is determined. A decision-making body then decides whether a disclosure should be made. If yes, then a disclosure is made to the applicant.

Stakeholder engagement

Phase 1 of stakeholder engagement was held in 2019. Phase 2 will involve an online survey and the establishment of a police working group.

Phase 2 of the Clare's Law stakeholder engagement seeks public input for the development of the regulations and an implementation plan. Themes to consider during this engagement include:

- What to expect when making an application
- What to consider in defining an intimate partner relationship
- What might be needed to help someone at risk

Take the survey

Albertans can share their feedback on Clare's Law by taking the online survey from June 29-July 13, 2020.

Take the survey here:

<https://www.alberta.ca/clares-law-phase-2-engagement.aspx>

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Domestic violence in Alberta

Alberta has high rates of domestic violence compared to most other Canadian provinces. Anyone can be affected, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age or cultural background.

Government is working with police services, communities, service providers and researchers to prevent and address domestic violence in Alberta. We are committed to promoting healthy relationships and providing supports for our province's most vulnerable people.

Other versions of Clare's Law

Different versions of Clare's Law exist or are being developed around the world. The United Kingdom was the first jurisdiction to pass the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme in 2014, also known as Clare's Law.

New Zealand implemented the Family Violence Information Disclosure Scheme in 2015 and New South Wales conducted a pilot project of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme between 2016 and 2019.

In Canada, Saskatchewan passed the *Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol (Clare's Law) Act* in 2019. Also in 2019, Newfoundland and Labrador introduced the Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act and a private member's bill was introduced in British Columbia. Manitoba has also made commitments to introduce a version of Clare's Law.

By exploring what others are doing, we can learn from experience and develop a solution that works for Alberta.

Get help

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, help is available.

In an emergency, call 911 for help.

If you need to speak to someone about resources and supports for dealing with domestic violence, call our Family Violence Info Line at 310-1818, available 24/7 in over 170 languages.

More information can be found at <http://alberta.ca/EndFamilyViolence>