

ABN 15 211 513 464

CHIEF INVESTIGATOR RITA SHACKEL

Professor of Law and Ethics

Room 525

The New Law School Building F10

The University of Sydney

NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA

Telephone: +61 2 9351 0368

Facsimile: +61 2 9351 0200

Email: rita.shackel@sydney.edu.au

Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

STUDY INTO WOMEN DEFENDANTS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT FOR ONLINE SURVEY

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study that will look at the experiences of women defendants in Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) cases. We are concerned that women defendants in DFV cases may be poorly supported by the police and the Courts and we want to change this by establishing first, whether this is in fact the case and if it is, how we can improve the system so that it works better for women defendants.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a woman defendant charged in a DFV case. This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this information carefully. You can ring us or email us (our contact details are below) to ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you do not want to take part, you don't have to.

By ticking the 'I agree' box below you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described below.

You can save or print a copy of this Participant Information Statement if you wish to keep it.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

Professor Rita Shackel, University of Sydney and Ms Anna Kerr, Principal Solicitor Feminist Legal Clinic (FLC) Inc. Ms Anna Kerr also provides services (usually once a month) as a solicitor to women

defendants in DFV cases through Legal Aid and Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service NSW Inc. (WDVCAS).

This study is principally funded by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) which is a non-profit organisation aimed at advancing women and based in Washington DC. AAUW funds global research which challenges public policies that bias and discriminate against women.

(3) What will the study involve for me?

If you decide to take part in the research study you will complete the survey that appears after you tick the 'I agree' box below. The survey is expected to take around 10-15 minutes and will ask questions about your experience as a woman defendant in a DFV case, how the charge/s against you has affected you and your experiences with the police and at Court.

The survey is anonymous. We do not require you to enter your name or other identifying details to participate in the survey. If you start the survey you can return to the survey later to complete it; you will be provided with a code to use to come back to your answers and complete the survey.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

The survey will take around 10-15 minutes.

(5) Who can take part in the study?

We are inviting women defendants in DFV cases who are or have been summoned to appear before a participating Local Court to be part of this research study. You must be 18 years or older to take part in this study.

(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. If you participate in this research study or choose not to it will not affect your dealings with the police, any assistance you may receive from WDVCAS, Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Services and/or Community Legal Centres and it will not affect your case at Court.

If you start the survey but decide not to complete it your survey answers will not be used in our study. We will only use your survey answers if you tick the 'Submit' box at the end of the survey.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

If you participate in this study there is a potential risk of you experiencing distress as the survey may trigger upsetting memories. The research project is focused on your experiences of the justice system. We will ask you about your experience of police and courts. We will not ask you direct questions or details about any violence you may have experienced. If you feel distressed during or after completing the survey please contact one of these support services:

NSW Domestic Violence Line 1800 656 463

1800WDVCAS (1800 938 227)

Support for victims of trauma: 1800RESPECT or 1800 737 732

Lifeline 13 11 44

Or talk to a trusted friend or your GP

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

We cannot guarantee that you will receive any direct benefits from being in the study.

(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

By submitting your survey answers you are agreeing to us collecting that anonymous information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement.

Your information will be stored securely and will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

The online survey will be hosted by REDCap. REDCap is an organisation that specialises in online research conducted by universities. The online capture and storage of your survey responses will be subject to REDCap's stringent security measures. We will store the non-identifiable hardcopy of information collected in your survey response in locked filing cabinets at The University of Sydney.

At the end of this study we intend to publish the findings of this research including in a report and journal articles so that our findings are widely available to practitioners in the justice system (including solicitors, police and the courts), policy makers, researchers and scholars. If we refer to what you have told us via the survey in any publication, no details that could identify you will be published.

(10) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

(11) What if I would like further information about the study?

If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact:

Rita Shackel T 02 9351 0368 E rita.shackel@sydney.edu.au

(12) Will I be told the results of the study?

You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by emailing us. This feedback will be in the form of a one page lay summary. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished. Results of the study will also be available at the completion of the study (by the end of 2019) on our project website: <LINK TO BE INSERTED>.

(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney; the reference number for the Ethics Approval is 2019/024. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)