

## Ombudsman finds Services Australia failed domestic violence survivor and recommends remediation and compensation

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Office) has released a damning report on some instances involving Services Australia's Child Support Program, following a complaint received by a member of the public who in the report is known as 'Ms H'.

During the investigation the Office found Child Support officer(s):

- failed to consider Ms H's circumstances
- took an inflammatory and non-trauma informed approach
- failed to refer Ms H to support services
- failed to use the correct procedure to address the department's denial of procedural fairness
- failed to document their decision, and
- unnecessarily exposed Ms H to debt collection and appeal processes.

Statement attributed to Mr Iain Anderson, Commonwealth Ombudsman:

*'In my opinion, actions undertaken were unreasonable, unjust, oppressive, and otherwise wrong in all the circumstances.'*

*The language, tone and inflection displayed by the Child Support Officer in call recordings lacked consideration for Ms H's situation.*

*In response to the Office's investigation, Services Australia acknowledged staff error and accepted all of my recommendations.'*

Read the [full report on our website](#).

For media enquires please email [media@obudsman.gov.au](mailto:media@obudsman.gov.au).