

## Cape York Welfare Reform



### What is the Cape York Welfare Reform about?

The state government has committed to work with the federal government, the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership and local leaders on Welfare Reforms in four Cape York communities: Aurukun; Hope Vale; Coen; and Mossman Gorge.

The Welfare Reforms **aim to restore social norms and local authority and change behaviours** in response to chronic levels of welfare dependency, social dysfunction and economic exclusion through alcohol and treatment support, improved educational opportunities, better health services, economic development and income management support.

### Are the Welfare Reforms linked to the Alcohol Reforms?

Yes, the aim of the Alcohol Reforms is to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and affects the 19 discrete Indigenous communities (including Aurukun and Hope Vale) and two other Cape communities, Coen and Mossman Gorge.

The government will establish four **new well-being centres** in the Cape York Welfare Reform communities. These centres will provide integrated drug and alcohol counselling and support services (as well as general counselling services) and **will meet the objectives of both projects**. Alcohol Reform also has an emphasis on prevention through diversionary services.

### What is the Family Responsibilities Commission?

As part of the Welfare Reforms, the Parliament has passed the *Family Responsibilities Commission Act 2008*, which established the Family Responsibilities Commission (FRC). The FRC **commenced operation on 1 July 2008** and will cease operation on 1 January 2012.

The FRC is responsible for **linking families with support services to work on strengthening family roles**. The commission can refer people to health, employment and education services already in place, together with additional programs that the government will provide as part of the Welfare Reforms.

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The Commission **will apply to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members who have lived in the trial communities for at least three months**. People who could be subject to Commission decisions are those who:

- are welfare recipients, and
- live (or lived at relevant times) in trial communities.

The four triggers to bring a person before the Commission will be:

- The person's child has three absences in a school term without reasonable excuse or a child is not enrolled in school without lawful excuse, or
- The person is the subject of a child safety notification or report, or
- A magistrates court convicts the person of an offence, or
- The person breaches his or her state or council owned housing tenancy agreement (illegal purpose, nuisance, condition report, malicious damage, rent arrears).

### Further information

Further information on the Cape York Welfare Reform Trial can be obtained from the **Indigenous Government Coordination Office**:

[http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/About\\_the\\_department/About\\_us/divsworkunits/Indigenous Government Coordination/Cape York Welfare Reform trial/](http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/About_the_department/About_us/divsworkunits/Indigenous_Government_Coordination/Cape_York_Welfare_Reform_trial/)