

**Brown, Fiona (Sen L. Reynolds)**

**From:** Barons, Lauren <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, 29 March 2019 6:05 PM  
**To:** Brown, Fiona (Sen L. Reynolds)  
**Subject:** Support for employee [DLM=Sensitive:Personal]

Sensitive:Personal

Dear Fiona

Following our discussions, I understand that you have taken the following actions in relation in discussions with the staff member in your office:

- Made her aware of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other support services available. If you haven't already you may wish to ensure the staff member is aware of 1800Respect.org.au
- Notified her that, should she choose to, she is able to pursue a complaint, including a complaint made to the police, and that to do so would be within her rights.
- You have made it very clear to her that if she requires assistance in making a complaint, you would be willing to support her.
- In addition, I understand you have discussed with her on several occasions that if she does choose to pursue a complaint, either now or at a later date, she would have the full and ongoing support of yourself and the Minister.
- You have provided the employee with the opportunity to come to you for further assistance, support or guidance at any time.
- You have encouraged the employee to access to the EAP provider as soon as possible, and on days she was not in the office, you have checked in with her to make sure she is OK and has support at home.
- You have provided the employee with the leave required to attend medical and EAP appointments.

I consider that the steps you have taken are appropriate, taking into account guidance material available including from the Human Rights Commission (see links under Section E of the [Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)).

Ultimately any decision as to whether to lodge a police report or pursue any other form of complaint relating to this matter would be a personal choice of the person involved. I note the 1800Respect website recommends the person should have 'as much control as possible over what to do next' and that a person 'may decide not to report to police, or not to have a medical or examination.... This is their choice and must be respected'. For a referral to be made on her behalf or without her consent or against her wishes could be harmful to her.

We acknowledge that there is also an obligation to ensure a safe working environment. It may be the case that should further information come to light, or there is a concern about the employees ongoing safety in the office, an alternate approach may need to be considered.

I would encourage you to continue to show your support and provide her with the assistance she requires to make a decision on whether she does want to take this further.

As we discussed, while all MOP(S) staff have access to three counselling sessions under the EAP, this can be extended where required and I am happy to approve additional sessions that may be needed in this instance.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss this further or if there is any additional support we can provide to the office. I also remind you that you are able to access EAP as well.

Regards,

Lauren