

Mobile lawyer for victims of family violence

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VICTIMS of domestic violence will soon find it easier to get help as the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre prepares to launch a mobile solicitor service.

The centre is hoping to have the specialist domestic violence lawyer service up and running as soon as next month.

The move comes as result of additional state government funding.

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Yvette D'Ath said the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre and Advice Bureau would receive \$297,864 extra funding in 2017-2020 to help provide legal services to the Gold Coast community.

"This funding will go towards supporting legal services

that assist with family law and family violence, which are two areas of law where demand for service is rapidly growing, especially in the community legal sector," Ms D'Ath said.

Centre principal solicitor Victoria Shiel said having a mobile domestic violence lawyer would allow the centre to

extend its operations into the community.

"We recognise that sometimes it's not safe for people, especially domestic violence victims, to come into the legal service," she said.

"So we can come to them at a shelter or it might be more appropriate to help them discretely at places like a shopping centre."

"We find we get calls from people in hospital who can't come into our office."

Ms Shiel said the lawyer

would work closely with existing Gold Coast support services such as DV Connect and Centacare.

"We do give out phone advice, but face-to-face support is far better and we ensure safety of our officer by linking in with other services," Ms Shiel said.

She said domestic violence was a major issue in the Gold Coast community.

"This move has allowed us to match our response with other agencies," she said.

By linking with other agencies in the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated Response group "it makes no door the wrong door for victims", Ms Shiel said.