

## Media Release - Immediate release - 24 April, 2023

DecrimQLD, Respect Inc and Scarlet Alliance welcome the announcement last night by the Attorney-General Hon. Shannon Fentiman that the Queensland Government will decriminalise sex work in Queensland. The announcement follows an independent review by the Queensland Law Reform Commission and provision of the report and 47 recommendations to the Attorney-General on 31 March.

We look forward to the release of the Queensland Law Reform Commission (QLRC) report. The consultation paper resulted in many submissions from sex worker organisations and individual sex workers in Queensland outlining their lived experiences and the impact of the current licensing framework. The QLRC was tasked with [recommending a framework for a decriminalised sex work](#) industry in Queensland by the Attorney General in August, 2021. The purpose of this framework was to remove barriers to workplace health and safety and legal protections for sex workers, while having regard to both the experiences of Queensland sex workers and the views of the Queensland community.

*“Sex work is work and laws that criminalise sex work workplaces and our safety strategies diminish our ability to work safely or legally. While decriminalisation will be a life changing policy shift for sex workers and our families because we will no longer be criminalised, the rest of Queensland thinks it has already happened and will probably not even notice it has changed,” said **Lulu Holiday, State Coordinator of Respect Inc.***




Decriminalisation is the repeal of sex work and sex industry specific criminal laws. It is not ‘de-regulation’ as once these criminal laws are repealed the existing laws and regulations that apply to all businesses will apply to the sex industry. WHS is a good example, the WHS regulator currently has no role in relation to sex industry workplaces and sex workers want WHS guidelines that apply to every workplace.

*“The Prostitution Act enables the 20 licensed brothels but criminalises all other sex work workplaces. The Criminal Code criminalises sex worker safety strategies and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act allows for police to deceive sex workers by posing as our clients and entrapping us for actions that are about working safely,” **Janelle Fawkes #DecrimQLD Campaign Leader***

Queensland will follow states and territories that have already decriminalised sex work in those jurisdictions.

*“The announcement brings Queensland in line with domestic and international best practice. Decriminalisation is a cost effective, high compliance model for government and supports workplace health, safety and rights for sex workers,” said **Mish Pony CEO, Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association.***

Independent sex workers are criminalised for:

- working together, in the same building or hotel as another sex worker 
- messaging another sex worker with their current location or when a client arrives and leaves 
- employing a receptionist or someone to answer phones
- using a driver another sex worker uses
- describing what services are offered & what services are not offered 

Independent sex workers have to choose between working **LEGALLY or SAFELY**

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