



New South Wales

# Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025

## Explanatory note

This explanatory note relates to this Bill as introduced into Parliament.

## Overview of Bill

The object of this Bill is to amend the *Crimes Act 1900* and the *Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002* to—

- (a) make it an offence to block, impede, hinder or take certain other action to affect a person accessing or leaving a place of worship, and
- (b) authorise police officers to issue move on directions in relation to an apparently genuine demonstration, protest, procession or assembly occurring in or near a place of worship in certain circumstances.

## Outline of provisions

**Clause 1** sets out the name, also called the short title, of the proposed Act.

**Clause 2** provides for the commencement of the proposed Act.

## Schedule 1 Amendment of Crimes Act 1900 No 40

**Schedule 1[2]** inserts proposed sections 214B and 214C.

Proposed section 214B makes it an offence to, without reasonable excuse, intentionally block, impede or hinder a person accessing or leaving a place of worship or harass, intimidate or threaten a person accessing or leaving a place of worship. The offence carries a maximum penalty of 200 penalty units or imprisonment for 2 years, or both. The offence does not apply to conduct that—

- (a) forms part of industrial action, or

- (b) occurs at or outside Parliament House or an office of a member of Parliament, or
- (c) is in accordance with the consent of the Commissioner of Police or the person apparently in charge of the place of worship.

The proposed section is subject to the *Summary Offences Act 1988*, section 24, which provides that a person is not guilty of an offence relating to the obstruction of a person, vehicle or vessel in a public place if the person's relevant conduct is only for the purposes of participating in an authorised public assembly.

Proposed section 214C requires the Attorney General to review the proposed offence 2 years after it commences.

**Schedule 1[1]** makes a consequential amendment.

## **Schedule 2      Amendment of Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 No 103**

**Schedule 2[2]** authorises police officers to issue move on directions in relation to a demonstration, protest, procession or assembly occurring in or near a place of worship unless the demonstration, protest, procession or assembly—

- (a) is an authorised public assembly under the *Summary Offences Act 1988*, Part 4, or
- (b) is part of industrial action or an industrial dispute or campaign, or
- (c) occurs outside Parliament House or an office of a member of Parliament, or
- (d) is in accordance with the consent of the Commissioner of Police or the person apparently in charge of the place of worship.

**Schedule 2[1]** makes a consequential amendment.