

## Terms of reference - Inquiry into the Office of the Children's Guardian

On 5 March 2025 the NSW Government announced the appointment of Kate Eastman AM SC to conduct a special ministerial inquiry into the workplace culture of the Office of the Children's Guardian.

By direction of the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion under the authority of the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*, Kate Eastman AM SC is authorised to conduct a special ministerial inquiry into the workplace culture of the Office of the Children's Guardian and report on:

1. Incidents, conduct and practices contrary to the Office of the Children's Guardian's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2022) (Code) for the period January 2023 to date.
2. The governance and leadership of the Office of the Children's Guardian with respect to:
  - (a) ensuring the workplace culture, practices and systems are consistent with the ethical values in the Code;
  - (b) supporting the right of employees to raise concerns, grievance complaints or allegations about workplace conduct;
  - (c) responding to concerns, grievance complaints or allegations about workplace conduct.
3. The effectiveness of the Office of the Children's Guardian having regard to the need for both independence and oversight of the Office.

The special ministerial inquiry will be an inquisitorial rather than adversarial process. There will be no public hearings.

The conduct of the special ministerial inquiry will be determined by Kate Eastman AM SC and is anticipated to include:

- receiving information about the experiences, concerns and allegations from employees of the Office of the Children's Guardian;
- consulting with or interviewing current and former Office of the Children's Guardian employees, in a manner and form appropriate to the circumstances;
- reviewing relevant documents and information provided to the special ministerial inquiry.

A Report will be provided to the Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability Inclusion by 30 June 2025.

Consideration will be given to confidentiality (and protected addendums separate to the Report) in the content of the Report.

The Report will be tabled before each House of Parliament, and may be subject to restriction to Members of Parliament only as part of the tabling of the Report.