

FACT SHEET

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE: INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR TENANTS

THIS LEAFLET EXPLAINS WHAT WE CAN DO IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE

WHAT IS DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Domestic & family violence is a crime in Australia.

Domestic & family violence is any form of *physical, psychological and/or financial abuse or control* a person experiences from a partner, ex-partner, family member, someone close to you or in a family-like arrangement such as carers or flatmates.

Domestic & family violence is against the law.

IT'S NOT JUST PHYSICAL

You do not have to be physically hit or hurt to have experienced domestic & family violence.

Domestic & family violence is more than physical abuse. It includes behaviour that is threatening & controlling that can cause you to fear for your own safety or another person's safety.

Other types of domestic & family violence include:

- Emotional abuse e.g. manipulation, isolation, put-downs, mind games
- Financial abuse e.g. forcing you to hand over control of income or assets, coercing you to take on debt or sign a contract, not allowing you to earn an income
- Sexual abuse e.g. any unwanted sexual activity.
- Social abuse e.g. insulting you in public
- Threats of physical violence & revenge
- Property damage e.g. smashing your belongings
- Harming or threatening to harm your pets

Domestic & family violence can leave you feeling stressed, anxious and/or depressed and impact on your health & wellbeing.

WHAT WILL WE DO TO HELP YOU?

One working day response

You can contact us if domestic & family violence has impacted your housing via phone, email or our website. We will respond within one working day (Monday – Friday).

You can also contact the:

[add relevant state based domestic violence phone support line]

If you are in immediate danger, call the Police on 000.

ADVICE & INFORMATION

We know that every case is different so we will advise you of what options you have.

We will give you information about other agencies that offer further advice and support on such matters as tenancy advice and legal issues. With your permission, we will refer you for help.

SAFE PLACE TO MEET AND SAFE COMMUNICATION

Your safety is very important to us. We want to help you secure your ongoing safety from domestic and family violence. You can meet staff in private at our offices or at an agreed safe place. We will also agree how we can stay in contact with you in a safe way.

KEEPING YOUR INFORMATION SECURE

Your information is strictly confidential & will only be shared with a support service that is bound by law to keep it secure.

We will not give your details, or the information you provide, to anyone without your permission unless there are serious concerns for your or your children's safety. In such cases, we have a legal responsibility to share information.

Your information will never be shared with the person who hurt you.

SENSITIVITY

We understand if you are more comfortable talking about your situation to someone who is the same sex as you. You should let us know if you want to speak to someone of the same sex and if we can, we will arrange that for you.

CHECK THE RISK TO SAFETY & THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME

We will facilitate a risk assessment for all domestic & family violence cases. We will go through your options with you which may include increasing the security in your home.

If it isn't safe for you to stay in your home, we will give you advice, information & support to help you get alternative accommodation (such as emergency accommodation).

SUPPORT

One way for us to help you is to make a referral to a support service.

A referral includes information about you, for example: your name, phone number, what has happened and information about any court notices or protection orders. The referral includes any information about the person who hurt you, so that the service understands your situation & needs.

A referral is automatic when police officers attend a domestic & family violence incident or where there are domestic violence proceedings in court.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOU & YOUR FAMILY

After the referral is made, a support service will contact you & offer you help with different issues you may face.

Support may include:

- Safety planning
- Emergency accommodation
- Counselling
- Access to financial assistance
- Court support, or
- Other services you may need to increase your safety.

WORKING WITH YOU

Important decisions about your safety should be made by you, and in most cases we will seek your consent before making a referral to a support service.

WORKING TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

We will work with our partners to support you and to deal with anyone causing domestic & family violence. We know that domestic violence cases involve many organisations & we will work closely with them to ensure you & your family are safe.

TRANSLATION & INTERPRETATION SERVICES

If you need this, we will provide you with translation & interpretation services.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

We recognise that sometimes it is in the best interest of a victim-survivor (and their children) to be provided with support so that they can remain safely in the family home. In other cases, the best action is to assist the victim-survivor to move to new accommodation. We will work with you to assist you maintain or secure safe and affordable housing.

MORE HELP & ADVICE

Emergency accommodation

If you need emergency accommodation because of domestic & family violence, call the [add relevant state based domestic violence phone support line].

National counselling helpline, information & support

1800 RESPECT is a national telephone & online counselling service for people who have been affected by sexual assault, domestic & family violence.

Counsellors are qualified, professional & specialist trained and can be contacted on

1800 737 732

www.1800respect.org.au/get-help

1800 RESPECT also has a capacity to find help finding services through a search function **1800RESPECT Service Directory | 1800RESPECT**

Legal Services

Legal services can be found by contact your state based Legal Aid service. [Add details of relevant state based legal aid service]

Tenancy Advice

We encourage our tenants to seek advice from tenant advice and advocacy services. [Add details of relevant state based tenant advice service]

Technology & safety

Internet, email & location features on your computer & mobile devices help connect you to support services. However, this technology can also be used by your partner or ex-partner to monitor you & threaten your safety. If you do not feel safe on your personal phone and computer, you can:

- Use computers available for public access which can be found at libraries, community centres & internet cafes
- Create new email, Facebook & messaging accounts using an anonymous user name & new passwords
- Turn off the location feature on your mobile phone & your Facebook page

More information can be found at:

<http://www.dvrcv.org.au/knowledge-centre/technology-safety>

www.facebook.com/safety/tools

GETTING HELP WITH MONEY

If you are planning to leave a violent or abusive relationship or the perpetrator of the abuse leaves, you may be eligible for a crisis payment from Centrelink – you must contact the department within seven days of separation.

