

EVIDENCE GUIDE

NCHS RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY TO DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Community housing organisations are in a unique position to identify and respond to domestic and family violence across their tenancies. Community housing organisations have a responsibility as social housing providers to support their renters to sustain their tenancies, prevent homelessness from occurring and have a duty of care to respond in a way that promotes safe and secure tenancies.

Access to affordable, safe and secure housing is a key step towards recovering from the experience of family violence. Community housing organisations are uniquely placed to support safe housing for victim-survivors. They may be one of the first organisations to become aware of a domestic and family violence situation and are well placed to identify risk and refer adult and child victim-survivors to appropriate support services.

In many cases, community housing organisations may house perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Providing housing to perpetrators of domestic and family violence is an important component of risk management as homelessness is a risk factor that may lead to further harm towards victim-survivors. Housing perpetrators of domestic and family violence also presents an opportunity to ensure they are visible and monitored within the service system.

This evidence guide has been developed to support community housing organisations to assess, review and strength their housing practice in response to domestic and family violence as they aim to meet the National Community Housing Standards: Responding effectively to domestic and family violence.

STANDARD ONE

SKILLED WORKFORCE

The following provides examples of the type of evidence that could be gathered to show the organisation's approach to meeting these standards.

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation has a workforce that is skilled and capable as it identifies, engages with and responds to victim-survivors of domestic and family violence who are applicants and tenants			
1. Staff across the organisation's programs are trained in identifying and understanding the impact of domestic and family violence and know how to engage in developing an effective housing relationship that enables victim-survivors to make decisions about their tenancy and support needs	• Systems are in place to ensure that staff are trained, skilled and supported to identify and respond effectively to domestic and family violence across their tenancies. • The Workforce is culturally capable as evident through cultural knowledge, skills, behaviours and systems. • Key partners are identified, partnerships are established and invested in with a formal process established to review each partnership arrangement • Collaborate with organisations that align with your organisation's values	Victim-survivor focus • Staff training register • Certificates of training • Emails offering training to staff • Attendance sheets • Staff induction program • Staff performance review • Staff performance plans • Tenant feedback • Staff are able to articulate if they were interviewed how the life experiences of tenants and applicants can impact them and use this knowledge in their approach to their work • Staff are able to articulate if they were interviewed how they work in a trauma informed way Inclusive services • Cultural capability training records • Cultural frameworks • Staff induction program • Reconciliation Action Plan • Media articles • Duluth Power and Control Wheels	• Tenant Reps trained in identifying and understanding domestic and family violence • Staff participate in annual training to maintain and upskill in the range of practice responses required to effectively support tenants impacted by domestic and family violence • Staff are aware that they are mandatory reporters and have an obligation to report concerns about children • Evidence of managers supporting staff to review and strengthen their response to domestic and family violence through case review and supervision

STANDARD ONE: SKILLED WORKFORCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
		Effective collaboration • MOUs and other evidence of service agreements & working arrangements • Reviews of effectiveness of partnership arrangements with plan to further strengthen working relationships established • In-service package developed to skill up support services in ways to strengthen effective working relationships • Calendar record of in-service package sessions delivered	• Evidence of engagement and follow-up with victim survivors • Evidence of participation in case conferences with victim-survivors and a range of support services • Guidelines developed and evidence of implementation for how to engage virtually with victim-survivors to ensure that housing service is still able to be delivered during times of isolation and lockdown • Subject matter expert staff position created to support staff to strengthen their service response to domestic and family violence
2. Staff understand that tenancy problems (e.g. rent arrears, neighbour disputes) may arise from domestic and family violence, and that responding to that takes priority	• Processes are in place to analyse, review and strengthen the service response to issues / behaviours that might arise as a result of domestic and family violence across tenancies • Training program identifies the impact of domestic and family violence and supports staff to critique how they apply this knowledge across their employment • Trauma informed care underpins all service interactions with tenants and applicants	Victim-survivor focus • Tenant letters written in a trauma informed style • Induction program Inclusive services • Staff training register • Emails offering training to staff • Attendance sheets • Staff induction program Effective collaboration • MOUs & other evidence of service agreements & working arrangements • Reviews of effectiveness of partnership arrangements with plan to further strengthen working relationships established	• Complaints register identifies where there have been cases of domestic and family violence • Review undertaken regularly to explore possible remedies to complaints that are trauma informed and involve victim-survivors in complaint resolution

STANDARD ONE: SKILLED WORKFORCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
3 Tenancy management staff are trained and understand the impact of trauma on victim-survivors and are able to implement trauma informed responses in their dealings with victim-survivors. Impacts of domestic and family violence on children is understood and needs of children and young people is prioritised.	- Trauma informed practice informs all levels of service design and delivery - All staff approach tenant engagement utilising a trauma informed approach - Communication tools / correspondence templates are written in a trauma informed style	Victim-survivor focus - Trauma informed training register - Induction program - Template correspondence forms - Newsletters Inclusive services - Staff are able to articulate if they were interviewed how the life experiences of tenants and applicants can impact them and use this knowledge in their approach to their work	- Staff are able to communicate the core principles of trauma informed care if they were interviewed - Staff have access to Employee Assistance Programs - Staff are supported to develop and implement trauma informed responses to domestic and family violence through supervision and staff meeting discussion
4 Staff working with victim-survivors are familiar with the range of support services and entitlements available to victim-survivors	- Contemporary understanding of the domestic and family violence landscape - Evidence of partnerships, staff understanding of referral pathways and joint working arrangements established as part of core service delivery approaches. - Staff convey information clearly and free of jargon. Professional interpreter services are utilised if required. Evidence is available to show that this has occurred	Victim-survivor focus - Newsletters - Annual report - Brochures Inclusive services - Posters on display - Tenant pack resources - Brochures - Memos - Communication policy Effective collaboration - List of partnerships in operation - Partnership review report	- Minutes of participation and engagement in local domestic and family violence networks - Training sessions provided to domestic and family violence network on the community housing system

STANDARD TWO

FACILITATING ACCESS TO SUPPORT FOR VICTIM–SURVIVORS WHO ARE TENANTS AND APPLICANTS

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation establishes and maintains effective working relationships to ensure victim-survivors and perpetrators can receive appropriate support to enable victim-survivors to make the best decisions for themselves and their family			
5. Staff are aware of domestic and family violence services and have strong and effective working relationships with them to support referral where requested	Effective working relationships are established with domestic and family violence support services to support the delivery of integrated support to victim-survivors	Victim-survivor focus • Calendar of in-service presentations • Evidence of participation in safety planning discussions with victim-survivor and DFV support services such as minutes from planning meeting • Evidence of safety modification being undertaken • Evidence of engaging with known perpetrators to review their housing needs and plan effective allocation if eligible • Evidence of safety planning with victim-survivors if the perpetrator is eligible for housing allocation Inclusive services • A range of MOUs / partnerships with services that represent the range of tenant backgrounds Effective collaboration • MOUs / partnership agreements • Survey results exploring how partnerships are operating • Examples of shared practice responses such as referral templates / application forms	• Partnerships established with a diverse range of support services including: • LGBTIQ • CALD • Older women • People with disability • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people • Regular in-service calendar that strengthens service partnerships • Evidence of joint initiatives designed to strengthen housing and support solutions for victim-survivors

STANDARD TWO

FACILITATING ACCESS TO SUPPORT FOR VICTIM–SURVIVORS WHO ARE TENANTS AND APPLICANTS

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation implements sustainable tenancy practice to support victim-survivors to effectively manage their tenancy and identify the supports they might need during times of crisis to assist them to sustain safe housing and minimise the risk of becoming homeless			
6. Staff are able to articulate the approach used within their work role to identify issues that might indicate domestic and family violence is occurring within a tenancy	- Tenants are informed about their rights and options - A range of practice approaches are implemented to support victim-survivors to make informed decisions about their tenancy and support needs	Victim-survivor focus - Tenant records - Brochures describing the CHO response to domestic & family violence - Victim-survivor feedback - Practice framework - Policy and procedure documents Inclusive services - Tenant handbook - Posters - Brochures Effective collaboration - Number of tenancies sustained - Data reports such as number of NCAT applications resulting from domestic and family violence incidents	- Tenant reps are trained and understand the impact of domestic and family violence and are able to apply that knowledge in across their role - Information is routinely available to tenants about their rights as a tenant and their responsibilities
7 Staff utilise a range of tenant engagement practice approaches and are able to articulate specific approaches when asked	- The CHO has policies and procedures that inform the service response to domestic and family violence within tenancies - Staff are given regular opportunities to review policies and procedures which relate to domestic and family violence	Victim-survivor focus - Domestic and family violence policy and procedures - Sustaining tenancies policy and procedures Inclusive services - Posters / brochures that communication service delivery approaches in a variety of styles / languages Effective collaboration - Board report detailing number of tenancies sustained as a result of CHO support and intervention	- Policies have specific guidance such as how to respond when a victim-survivor identifies they are subject to financial abuse and are in rent arrears - Staff are aware of the support provided through financial institutions to victim-survivors and are able to provide advice to tenants about next steps - Feedback from staff in sought to inform policy and procedure review

STANDARD TWO

FACILITATING ACCESS TO SUPPORT FOR VICTIM–SURVIVORS WHO ARE TENANTS AND APPLICANTS

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
8. Staff explore housing options for perpetrators of domestic and family violence as a strategy to minimise risk of ongoing abuse to victim-survivors	- Staff understand that housing a perpetrator where they meet eligibility criteria is one solution that might minimise the ongoing abuse of the victim-survivor - Staff seek to engage with perpetrators of domestic and family violence where safe to do so to explore their housing and support needs	Victim-survivor focus - Brochures on services available to perpetrators to support them to change their behaviour - Staff training register - Staff induction program - Partnership agreement with domestic and family violence service - Risk assessment plan - Risk assessment procedures Inclusive services - Posters / brochures that communication service delivery approaches in a variety of styles / languages Effective collaboration - Board report detailing number of tenancies created as a result of CHO support and intervention	- CHO staff are aware of the range of men's behaviour change supports and services available and have capacity to engage with them to seek advice and support when needed - CHO has guidelines about developing a web of accountability for perpetrators of domestic and family violence and implements these to inform service response and planning - CHO staff understand the importance of appropriate referrals for perpetrators of domestic and family violence to minimise risk to victim-survivors and their children

STANDARD THREE

ACCESS, TENANCY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation provides transparent and accountable access, tenancy management and maintenance services in line with its stated objectives and commitments for housing services			
9 Staff are skilled and able to ask applicants sensitively about domestic and family violence and any supports they may need now or potentially in the future	Information is available to applicants outlining CHO response to domestic and family violence	Victim-survivor focus • Brochures • Posters • Staff induction program • Staff training register Inclusive services • Brochures available in a number of community languages Effective collaboration • Partnership agreement with domestic and family violence service	Applicant / tenant feedback via survey / interview
10 Staff are skilled and able to ask new tenants sensitively about domestic and family violence and any supports they may need now or potentially in the future	• Staff receive regular training to enable a sensitive response to domestic and family violence • Staff are given opportunities to debrief after conversations with tenants and domestic and family violence and identify opportunity for skills development	Victim-survivor focus • Staff training register • Staff training outline • Staff induction • Duluth Power and Control Wheels • Tenant information brochure on CHO response to domestic and family violence Inclusive services • Staff training outline Effective collaboration • Information on partnerships available in brochure / pamphlet	• Policy that defines staff support mechanisms in relation to domestic and family violence • Staff are provided opportunities for external supervision with appropriately skilled domestic and family violence practitioner

STANDARD THREE ACCESS, TENANCY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
11 Staff engage with victim-survivors and support them to maintain their tenancy if they choose to remain in their tenancy	- The CHO has a strong commitment to sustaining tenancies and will actively work with each victim-survivor and support service to strengthen housing safety - Staff have a clear understanding of the rights and options available to tenants as specified in state / territory residential tenancy legislation	Victim-survivor focus - Domestic and family violence policy - Sustaining tenancies policy - Staff training register - Staff training outline - Staff induction Inclusive services - Evidence of use of TIS - Brochures in a range of community languages Effective collaboration - Partnerships with domestic and family violence services that focus on safe at home programs - Safety plan identified in place as part of tenant notes	Policies and procedures provide specific guidance in regard responses to domestic and family violence, victim-survivor support and responses to perpetrators CHO website provides information on the response to domestic and family violence and what victim-survivors can expect in regards quality service
12 Safety upgrades are identified with the tenant and support services and are implemented promptly to maximise safety for the victim-survivor	Home safety modifications are managed effectively in partnership with the victim-survivor and the domestic and family violence support service	Victim-survivor focus - Tools and templates used to assess safety of the home - Template report identifying from a housing perspective the modifications required and how they will be implemented - Calendar identifying time taken to assess for and implement home safety modifications - Tenant satisfaction survey Inclusive services - Evidence of use of TIS Effective collaboration - Report of planning meeting with victim-survivors and support services to help develop safety planning - Report to Board on the safety planning work and approach being implemented	- Evidence of planning meetings involving CHO staff, victim-survivor and domestic and family violence support service to explore safety planning requirements and solutions - Evidence of clear procedures that identify CHO approach to home safety modifications, and relevant cost parameters to guide decision making and planning with the victim-survivor and domestic and family violence support service

STANDARD THREE ACCESS, TENANCY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
13 Property transfers are available to victim-survivors and are initiated where required	The CHO is responsive to safety needs and will facilitate property transfers when required to maximise safety for victim-survivors	Victim-survivor focus - Evidence that staff initiate discussions regarding transfers ensuring victim-survivors are aware of the opportunity Inclusive services - Evidence of use of TIS - Brochures are available in a range of languages Effective collaboration - Correspondence between your CHO, the victim-survivor and domestic and family violence support service	Evidence of arrangements with other CHOs to facilitate property transfers outside of CHO portfolio when needed
14 Housing assistance is extended to perpetrators to maximise safety for victim-survivors	- CHO staff understand that housing a perpetrator may minimise disruption through them not becoming homeless and provide additional safety for the victim-survivor - A risk management approach is taken to consideration of the housing and support needs of both the victim-survivor and the perpetrator	Victim-survivor focus - Domestic and family violence policy - Sustaining tenancies policy - Staff training register - Staff training outline - Staff induction Inclusive services - Evidence of use of TIS - Brochures are available in a range of languages Effective collaboration - Partnerships with support services who are able to assist perpetrators - Risk management discussed with the victim-survivor and domestic and family violence support service	- Staff member identified as responsible for engaging with local police to strengthen the service partnership response to domestic and family violence - Guidelines developed to support engagement with Police

STANDARD FOUR

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation monitors the operational performance of its response to domestic and family violence across its programs.			
15 The business plan identifies the response to domestic and family violence as a specific business activity with clearly articulated KPIs to monitor progress and effectiveness	The CHO identifies a response to domestic and family violence as a key activity within the business plan	Victim-survivor focus - Business plan - Staff skills development KPI - Business tools and templates to strengthen practice response - developed and implemented across the business Inclusive services - Staff skills development KPI Effective collaboration - Partnership development KPI	- Staff are able to articulate the CHO commitment to responding effectively to domestic and family violence if interviewed - The CHO has policies and procedures in place that specifies the response to domestic and family violence within the workplace - The Code of Conduct specifies the zero tolerance approach of employees who perpetrate domestic and family violence within the workplace and specifies the CHO response that will be implemented
16 A range of performance management information is available to senior management and the Board to inform understanding of the performance and effectiveness of business systems established to strengthen the housing response to victim-survivors of domestic and family violence	The CHO develops a range of data tools and reporting mechanisms to track and monitor their response to domestic and family violence to help strengthen the service response	Victim-survivor focus - Data tools that identify victim-survivors and capture a range of events that monitor CHO response to incidents of domestic and family violence - Data reports presented to Board as part of response monitoring Inclusive services - Tenant data cultural information (from tenant record) reflected in data reports to board Effective collaboration - Data report on number of referrals made to domestic and family violence support services - Data report on engagement with police	- CHO manager identified as lead on further building the response to domestic and family violence across the CHO platform - Tracking and monitoring the incidence of domestic and family violence across tenancies is a reviewed regularly by Board to identify opportunities for review and service strengthening

STANDARD FOUR OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation monitors the operational performance of its response to domestic and family violence across its programs.			
17 Frontline practices and decision making related to housing services for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence are directly informed by your organisation's strategic or business plan.	There is a systematic process in place to update all staff on policies and procedures developed and implemented to strengthen service response as identified in the strategic and business plans	Victim-survivor focus - Staff policy induction process - Staff meeting minutes - Staff induction process Inclusive services - Staff induction process Effective collaboration - Staff policy induction process - Staff meeting minutes	- Regular KPI reporting on domestic and family violence tabled as part of board papers - CHO leadership team review service response and initiate further policy and service delivery enhancements to strengthen the response to domestic and family violence

STANDARD FIVE

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation communicates its commitment to a culture of zero tolerance of violence against women to the community to contribute to the work required across Australia to end the incidence of domestic and family violence			
18 Through taking an intersectional approach, the CHO understands the ethnic groups that reside within their areas of operation and uses this information to inform its domestic and family violence communication strategy	The CHO identifies the groups (key partners, internal staff groups, external stakeholders) and individuals (tenants, applicants) who seek housing opportunities within your area of operation	Victim-survivor focus - Communications plan Inclusive services - Information in a range of relevant community languages Effective collaboration - Business plan KPIs	- Engagement with community-based support services to develop a shared response to housing and domestic and family violence - Minutes or meetings - Terms of Reference for a partnership approach
19 The CHO communicates its position across a variety of publications and on-line forums	- Information is presented in plain, jargon free language - Access to TIS is publicised	Victim-survivor focus - Communications register - Newsletters - Website - Posters on display Inclusive services - Brochures / website identifies the use of TIS when needed Effective collaboration - Data report - Board report on collaboration work undertaken	- A communications plan, reviewed annually, informs the approach the CHO takes to communicating its commitment to responding effectively to domestic and family violence - Media appearances are tracked and reported to the Board / Executive - Media releases, submissions and other advocacy work are available on your organisation's website

STANDARD SIX

MAINTAINING AND/OR EXPANDING HOUSING SERVICES TO VICTIM-SURVIVORS

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation's housing management and / or development planning reflects the needs of victim-survivors.			
20 Properties managed by your organisation address the needs of victim-survivors	- Safety planning informs asset management strategy - Tenant safety is a key consideration in all new property acquisition and property development activity	Victim-survivor focus - Asset management strategy - Business plan Inclusive services - Tenant survey Effective collaboration - Partnerships established	- Code of Conduct implemented with contractors - Contractors undergo training in understanding domestic and family violence
21 Home safety modifications are undertaken promptly	The CHO identifies the importance of a prompt response to safety planning and modifications	Victim-survivor focus - Business plan - KPI monitoring Inclusive services - Tenant survey Effective collaboration - Partnerships established with domestic and family violence services	- Procedure developed to identify time constraints established to deliver on home safety modifications - Monitoring undertaken to track timeline implementation and effectiveness
22 Property safety audits are undertaken routinely as part of ongoing asset management planning	Tenant safety is identified as a key component of property management and is routinely assessed.	Victim-survivor focus - Asset management plan - Business plan - KPI monitoring Inclusive services - Tenant survey Effective collaboration - Partnership survey	Key elements impacting home safety are identified and incorporated into routine asset management checklist
23 Research and planning inform the development of strategies to meet identified needs of victim survivors that might include the development of Local Allocation Strategies	The CHO identifies and plans for a range of approaches to meet the housing needs of victim-survivor tenants and applicants	Victim-survivor focus - Business plan - Strategic plan Inclusive services - Tenant survey Effective collaboration - Partnership survey	Evidence of research in both housing and domestic and family violence responses informs strategic development

STANDARD SEVEN

GOVERNANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
Your organisation understands the housing needs of victim-survivors of domestic and family violence and has identified strategies to support victim-survivor housing needs			
24 Your organisation's senior executive and Board are committed to strengthening the housing response for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence	- There is evidence in the use of research and trend data relating to domestic and family violence and how this has informed service design and delivery - Planning is undertaken to identify areas for improvement in the service response to victim survivors and perpetrators of domestic and family violence - The strategic and business plans identify a commitment to strengthen the service response to domestic and family violence	Victim-survivor focus - Victim-survivor focus - Policy review schedule - Schedule of NCAT action reviews - Service evaluation reports - Strategic plan - Business plan - Relevant research reviewed, reported on and utilised as part of service planning - Demographics data - Commitment to zero violence identified in the communication strategy and communicated in organisation publications - Annual report that showcases data and practice responses - Website - Newsletters Inclusive services - Strategic plan - Business plan - Policy development - Policy review Effective collaboration - Partnership reviews	- Victim-survivors participate in policy review processes and their advice informs policy and service development - Research reports and review inform strategy and service development - External evaluation of CHO response to domestic and family violence is undertaken

STANDARD SEVEN GOVERNANCE

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GUIDE	DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES	EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES
25 A range of reporting is available to senior executive and Board to inform understanding of the service response to victim-survivors of domestic and family violence	• There is documented evidence that the CHO monitors its progress at all levels in implementing actions to strengthen its housing response to domestic and family violence • The CHO collects key statistics and develops reports that relate to the access rate and tenancy sustainability that inform service effectiveness and identify opportunities for service improvement	Victim-survivor focus • Business plan • Domestic and family violence KPIs • Report to Board against business plan • Policy review schedule • Research analysis reports Inclusive services • Strategic plan • Business plan • Policy development • Policy review • NCAT outcomes review and analysis Effective collaboration • Partnership reviews	• Victim-survivors participate in policy review processes and their advice informs policy and service development • Research reports and review inform strategy and service development • External evaluation of CHO response to domestic and family violence is undertaken