



Family Violence Resource Kit

Victorian Public Tenants Association

This booklet has been designed to provide information to people living in public housing, or who would like to receive accommodation in public housing, who are impacted by family violence.

*If you are concerned about your abuser checking your internet browsing history, you may want to access this website on **private mode**. This is an option you can use on any device that disables your browsing history and the web cache, meaning that no one else can see that you accessed this website, or searched for it. You can access private mode by opening your web browser normally, clicking the settings button (sometimes this looks like three dots or three lines) and then clicking **Go Incognito, inPrivate, or Turn on Secret Mode**. You will still need to exit out of the page when you are done.*

The VPTA acknowledges that anyone can be a victim of family violence, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability or race. This booklet is designed to be inclusive for everyone.

Table of Contents

What is Family Violence?	4
Who is impacted by family violence?	4
What to do if you don't feel safe	5
It is not your fault	5
Where to go to get help	6
Accommodation in social housing	7
Applying for social housing:	7
Important information about your social housing application:	8
Legal support.....	9
Support for people with a disability.....	10
Support for young people	11
Support for people in same sex relationships	12
List of Resources.....	13

What is Family Violence?

Domestic violence is a term that describes violence that occurs between current or former intimate partners.

Family violence is a broader definition that describes violence that occurs between family members. This can include domestic violence.

Family violence is not constrained to physical abuse. It can include abuse that is emotional, economic, social, sexual, or other types. Violence is not always obvious, and may begin in subtle ways that become worse over time. For more information about family violence, visit **Safe Steps** at <https://www.safesteps.org.au/>.



Who is impacted by family violence?

Family violence can happen to and be perpetrated by people of all ages, classes and cultures, and in all kinds of relationships. Whilst both men and women can be perpetrators or victims of family violence, overwhelmingly the majority of victim survivors are women and children, and the majority of perpetrators are men. The most common and pervasive instances of family violence occur in intimate partner relationships, perpetrated by men against women.



What to do if you don't feel safe

If you are in immediate danger, call **000**.

1800RESPECT is the **National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Helpline**, and is a 24-hour, confidential information, counselling and support service you can contact if you are experiencing family violence on **1800 737 732**. If you would like to chat to someone from this service online, you can click on this [link](#).

It is not your fault

Relationships are often complex. It is okay to still love someone that abuses you. It is not okay for someone you love to use violence against you. In addition, you do not have to wait until it 'gets bad enough' before you seek support, or want to leave a situation. Abuse is never your fault and you do not need to feel ashamed of being a victim, seeking help, or needing to find temporary accommodation for you or your children.

Where to go to get help

The following resources are available for tailored support:

- **Safe Steps** provides accommodation arranged through Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre | 1800 015 188 | www.safesteps.org.au
- **Victoria Legal Aid** offer free information about family violence intervention orders and how they can help with your legal problems | 1300 792 387 | <http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders/get-help>
- **1800RESPECT** is a confidential information, counselling and support service | 1800 737 732 | <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>
- **Justice Connect** is a specialised legal service for people facing disadvantage | (03) 8636 4400 | <https://justiceconnect.org.au/>
- **Safer in the Home** is a program offered by the Salvation Army to help keep you safe where you are currently living | 13 72 58 | <https://www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/eConnect/Mission/Safer-in-the-home/>
- **Financial Counselling** is offered by the Salvation Army to assist you with credit cards, overdue bills, or just making ends meet | 13 72 58 | <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/contact-us/>

You will find a list of resources for people impacted by family violence in the last section of this booklet.

Accommodation in social housing

If you need to find accommodation as a result of being impacted by family violence, social housing may be an option for you. There are two types of social housing available, public housing and community housing. Public housing is owned and managed by the government, and community housing is managed by not-for-profit organisations. Both types provide long-term rental accommodation with subsidised weekly rent amounts available to those who are eligible.



Applying for social housing:

Family violence is considered a safety issue that categorises social housing applicants on the **priority waiting list**. If you would like to move into social housing because you are being impacted by family violence, this means that you are eligible to apply for **priority access**. If you are currently living in social housing and need to move to a new social housing property because you are impacted by family violence, this means you are eligible to apply for a **priority transfer**.

You can find information and application forms on the Housing Victoria website [here](#). To put in your application, contact Housing Victoria on **1300 650 172**, or visit your local housing office. You can find your local housing office location and contact number [here](#).

If you have difficulty with speaking, reading, or writing English, you can access a Housing Victoria interpreter service [here](#).

Important information about your social housing application:

- **You must state in your application that you are impacted by family violence.** If you don't state this, you may not be considered for **priority access** or **priority transfer**, and will have to wait longer for housing.
- **It is recommended that you put in an application for both public and community housing.** Demand for public housing in Victoria outweighs the amount of public housing properties available to those on the waitlist, and applying for both will increase your chances of receiving a property quickly. You are able to apply for both with the same application.
- Office of Housing staff can apply discretion when allocating housing to applicants impacted by family violence. **Discretion can be used to approve applicants that otherwise would not meet the eligibility criteria**, for example, are not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, exceed the income limit, or own real estate.
- You may need to provide documents such as **police reports, intervention orders, or letters from a support worker or your doctor.** If you do need to provide these documents, your housing office will let you know.
- If there is a particular area you cannot live in because you will not be safe there, **you should identify these areas in your application.**

If you have any concerns about applying for, or transferring to, a public housing property, free call the **Victorian Public Tenants Association** on **1800 015 510**, or email enquiries@vpta.org.au for confidential advice and assistance.

Legal support

If you are impacted by family violence, you may want to consider accessing legal support. You can do this through accessing a private lawyer, legal aid, or directly through the courts. There are a number of services you can access for legal support.

- **Victoria Legal Aid** offer free legal advice and assistance | 1300 792 387 | <http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders/get-help>
- **Women's Legal Service Victoria** offers free legal services to women | 1800 133 302 | <https://womenslegal.org.au/>
- **Magistrates' Court of Victoria** can provide Family Violence Intervention Orders | <https://www.mcv.vic.gov.au/>



Support for people with a disability

People with a disability are at a high risk of experiencing family violence. Sometimes, the abuse can take different forms when perpetrated against someone with a disability, such as taking advantage of their disability, belittling them because of their disability, or harming a support animal. Sometimes, a person with a disability may experience abuse from their carer. If you have a disability and are seeking support for family violence, there are specialised services available for you.

- The **National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline** is a confidential service you can access to report and discuss abuse and neglect of someone, including yourself, with a disability | 1800 880 052 | <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/serviceprofiles/national-disability-abuse-and-neglect-hotline-service>
- **WIRE** is an information and referral service of Victorian women, non-binary and gender-diverse people | 1300 134 130 | <https://www.wire.org.au/about/what-we-do/>
- **Women with Disabilities Victoria** is the peak body for women with disabilities in Victoria | 03 9286 7800 | <https://www.wdv.org.au/>



Support for young people

Young people can be victims of family violence, either directly or through living in a home where family violence exists. If you are a young person and would like support with violence in your relationships or in your home, there are specialised services available for you.

- **Headspace** is a mental health service you can access if you are aged between 12 and 25 years old | <https://headspace.org.au/>
- **Frontyard Youth Services** is a Melbourne based service that supports young people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness across Victoria | (03) 9977 0077 | <https://www.mcm.org.au/homelessness/frontyard>
- **The Good the Bad the Ugly** is a website aimed at young people that offers relationship and dating support | <http://lovegoodbadugly.com/>
- **Drummond Street** offers varied support for families and children | (03) 9663 6733 | <https://ds.org.au/>

You may also feel comfortable talking to a trusted person you know and asking them for support and assistance. This might include a relative, an older friend, a sporting coach or a teacher at your school.



Support for people in same sex relationships

People in same sex relationships can experience domestic violence from their partners in the same way that people in heterosexual relationships can. If you are in a same sex relationship and you're experiencing family violence, specialised support is available for you.

- **Rainbow Door** is a free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline providing information, support, and referral | 1800 729 367 | <https://www.rainbowdoor.org.au/home>
- The **LGBTIQ Legal Service** provides free help for LGBTIQ people in Victoria with their legal problems, including family violence | lgbtiqlegalservice@skls.org.au | <https://lgbtiqlegal.org.au/>
- **Switchboard Victoria** provides peer-based support for LGBTIQ+ people, their families, allies and communities | 1800 184 527 | <http://www.switchboard.org.au/>



List of Resources

Phone Services:

1800 RESPECT

1800 737 732

National sexual assault, domestic and family violence information and support line.

<https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre

1800 015 188

24-hour family violence response line providing access to professional support.

<https://www.safesteps.org.au/>

Rainbow Door

1800 729 367

Free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline providing information, support, and referral.

<https://www.rainbowdoor.org.au/home>

CASA House

(03) 9635 3610

Centre Against Sexual Assault providing 24/7 counselling and support.

<http://www.casahouse.com.au/>

Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line

1800 806 292

After hours:
03 8345 3495

A telephone crisis counselling service for victims/survivors of both past and recent sexual assault.

http://www.casahouse.com.au/index.php?page_id=139

WIRE

1300 134 130

Free support, referral and information for all Victorian women, non-binary and gender diverse people.

<https://www.wire.org.au/>

Translating and Interpreting Service

Free access to a telephone or on-site interpreter in your own language 24/7.

131 450

<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

1800 880 052

A free and confidential service for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability.

<https://www.jobaccses.gov.au/complaints>

inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence

1800 755 988

Supports women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) experiencing domestic violence.

www.intouch.org.au

Elders Rights Advocacy (ERA)

1800 700 600

Support for older people to uphold their rights and prevent abuse.

www.era.asn.au

Women with Disabilities Victoria

The peak body for women with disabilities in Victoria.

(03) 9286 7800

<https://www.wdv.org.au/>

WISHIN

1800 825 955

Helping women experiencing homelessness or family violence.

<https://www.wishin.org.au/>

Safer in the Home

13 SALVOS (13 72 58)

Helps to keep you safe and secure where you are living.

<https://www.sarmy.org.au/en/Social/eConnect/Mission/Safer-in-the-home/>

Housing and Accommodation: Housing Vic

1300 650 172

Information about social housing and social housing applications.

<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/>

Safe Steps Women's Refuges

1800 015 188

Refuge accommodation arranged through Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre.

www.safesteps.org.au

Victorian Public Tenants Association

1800 015 510

Providing support and advocacy for Victorian public housing tenants.

<https://vpta.org.au/>

Useful Websites: What's Okay at Home?

Website helping young people understand what family violence is and

how to help others who are experiencing it.

<https://woah.org.au/>

DFFH Victorian Homelessness Support Centres

Information about social housing and where to get help for homeless support.

<https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/getting-help>

The Women's Safety Services Network

Internet and computer safety tips.

<https://wesnet.org.au/safety/>

Victoria Police Family Violence

How to get assistance from the police for family violence.

<https://www.police.vic.gov.au/family-violence>

Pets of the Homeless

Provides support to the pets of people facing and experiencing homelessness.

<https://petsofthehomeless.org.au/>

The Orange Door

Support for people experiencing family violence and families who need extra support with the care of children.

<https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/>

Headspace

Mental health support for people aged between 12 and 25 years' old

<https://headspace.org.au/>

Seniors Rights Victoria

Provides information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse.

<https://seniorsrights.org.au/>

The Good the Bad the Ugly

Website aimed at young people that offers relationship and dating support.

<http://lovegoodbadugly.com/>

Frontyard

(03) 9977 0077

Service for people aged 12 to 24 who

are disengaged, at risk, or experiencing homelessness in Melbourne's CBD.

<https://www.mcm.org.au/homelessness/frontyard/our-services/accommodation>

Legal Services and Support:

Victoria Legal Aid

1300 792 387

Free information about family violence intervention orders and how they can help with your legal problem.

<http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders/get-help>

Youth Law

(03) 9113 9500

Free legal advice if you are under 25.

<http://youthlaw.asn.au/>

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

1800 064 865

Providing referrals, advice/information,

duty work or case work assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria.

<https://vals.org.au/about/>

Women's Legal Service Victoria

1800 133 302

Providing free legal services to women experiencing particular disadvantage to address legal issues arising from relationship breakdown or violence.

<https://womenslegal.org.au/>

LGBTIQ Legal Service

Free help for LGBTIQ people in Victoria with their legal problems.

<https://lgbtiqlegal.org.au/>

LGBTIQ+ Legal Advice at Fitzroy Legal Services

(03) 9419 3744

Service assisting vulnerable and marginalised members of the

LGBTIQ community with a range of legal problems.

<https://www.fitzroy-legal.org.au/>

Court Network

1800 681 614

A unique court support service.

www.courtnetwork.com.au

Family Violence Law Help

National Legal Aid website offering information and resources for those experiencing family violence.

<https://familyviolencelaw.gov.au/>

Victims of Crime

The official Victorian Government website for people affected by crime.

<https://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/>

Services and Support for Indigenous People:

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

1800 064 865

Providing legal assistance and advise for Aboriginal people in Victoria.

<https://vals.org.au/about/>

Djirra

1800 105 303

Legal and non-legal support to Aboriginal people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence.

<https://djirra.org.au/>

Victoria Police Family Violence and Aboriginal Communities

Website providing information and resources on family violence and Aboriginal communities.

<https://www.police.vic.gov.au/family-violence-and-aboriginal-communities>

Mobile Apps: Daisy App

Provides information about support services in your local area, developed by 1800RESPECT.

<https://www.1800respect.org.au/daisy/>

Emergency+ App

Provides your location details on a Triple Zero call.

<http://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au/>

Ask Izzy

Can link you with nearby services providing housing, meals, healthcare, counselling, legal advice, addiction treatment.

<https://askizzy.org.au/>

Arc

Enables you to identify patterns of behaviour that make you feel scared, unsafe, undermined or intimidated, record your experiences, and tell your story.

<https://www.arc-app.org.au/>