

# Fact Sheet

## DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE

### WHAT IS DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Domestic and family violence is a crime in Australia. It 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 and 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 and family violence.

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

Other types of domestic and 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, for example, any unwanted sexual activity
- Social abuse, for example, insulting you in public
- Threats of physical violence and revenge
- Property damage, for example, smashing your belongings
- Harming or threatening to harm your pets.

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

### GETTING HELP

Report domestic and family violence to us via phone, email or our website. We will respond within one working day (Monday – Friday).

Contact the Domestic Violence Line, available 24/7, on [1800 656 463](tel:1800656463). If you are in immediate danger, call [Emergency Triple Zero 000](tel:000).

### ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Every case is different so we will advise you of what options you have. We will give you information about other services that offer further advice and support on such things 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 and will only be shared with a support provider 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 you or your children's safety. In such cases, we have a legal responsibility to share information with appropriate services. Your information will never be shared with the person who hurt you.

## **CHECK THE RISK TO THE SAFETY OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY, AND THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME**

We will carry out a risk assessment for all domestic and 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 and support to help you get alternative accommodation (such as emergency accommodation).

## **SUPPORT**

We can make a referral to a support service. A referral includes information about you, including your name, phone number, what has happened and information about any court notices or protection orders. It also includes any information about the person who hurt you, so that the service understands your situation and needs. A referral is automatic when police officers attend a domestic and family violence incident or where there are domestic violence proceedings in court.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY**

After a referral is made, a support service will contact you and offer you help with different issues you may face. Support may include:

- safety planning
- emergency accommodation
- counselling
- access to financial assistance
- court support, or

**Domestic and family violence...  
it's not just physical...  
it's against the law!**

**There's no excuse for domestic violence!  
Call the Domestic Violence Line**

**1800 656 463**  
**(free call 24/7)**

**If you are in immediate danger, call  
Emergency Triple Zero 000**



- other services you may need to increase your safety.

## WORKING TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

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

## TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES

If needed, we will provide you with translation and interpretation services.

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT

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

For eligible tenants and applicants, we have access to Start Safely, a subsidy which provides short to medium term financial help to eligible

clients leaving domestic and family violence. With this subsidy they can secure private rental accommodation and do not have to return to their homes.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Domestic Violence Line, available 24/7  
1800 656 463.

If you are in immediate danger, call Emergency Triple Zero 000.

### NEED TO CONTACT HOMES NORTH?

Armidale  
(02) 6772 5133

Glen Innes  
(02) 6732 3652

Gunnedah  
(02) 6742 0363

Inverell  
(02) 6722 5137

Moree  
(02) 6752 4440

Tamworth  
(02) 6766 6897

Coledale  
(02) 6765 8879

[www.homesnorth.org](http://www.homesnorth.org)