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| Family Violence Framework for Emergency Management  |
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Department of Health

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| Family Violence Framework for Emergency Management |
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| The department would like to thank all those that contributed to the development of this framework. The department would also like to acknowledge the support and contribution of Family Safety Victoria. |

Contents

[Overview 6](#_Toc21337601)

[Background 6](#_Toc21337602)

[Purpose 6](#_Toc21337603)

[Need 7](#_Toc21337604)

[Outcomes 7](#_Toc21337605)

[Family violence in the context of emergencies 7](#_Toc21337606)

[Family violence increases in emergency-affected communities 7](#_Toc21337607)

[Family violence impedes community recovery 8](#_Toc21337608)

[The causes of family violence and their prevalence in emergencies 8](#_Toc21337609)

[The Victorian Government’s approach to addressing family violence 9](#_Toc21337610)

[Context 9](#_Toc21337611)

[The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk and Management Framework and Information Sharing 9](#_Toc21337612)

[Equipping Victorian workforces in family violence prevention and response 10](#_Toc21337613)

[Safety and Support Hubs “The Orange Door” 10](#_Toc21337614)

[Local Family Violence Specialist Services and Referrals 11](#_Toc21337615)

[Family Violence Regional Integration Committees and Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors 11](#_Toc21337616)

[Actions for the Emergency Management Sector 12](#_Toc21337617)

[Awareness 12](#_Toc21337618)

[Communications and public information 13](#_Toc21337619)

[Collaboration and alignment across sectors 15](#_Toc21337620)

[Planning 16](#_Toc21337621)

[Additional information 18](#_Toc21337622)

[Domestic and Family Violence Referral Options and Services 18](#_Toc21337623)

[Tools and Resources addressing gender and family violence in emergencies 19](#_Toc21337624)

[Research on violence against women and children 19](#_Toc21337625)

[General training on domestic and family violence 20](#_Toc21337626)

[Initiatives addressing gender and family violence in emergencies 21](#_Toc21337627)

[Further reading 21](#_Toc21337628)

# Overview

## Background

The Department of Health and Human Services’ (the department) 2016 *Addressing family violence in communities recovering from emergencies strategy* (the Strategy) was designed as a comprehensive plan for the integration of family violence services within emergency management. The Strategy sought to reduce the risk and impact of family violence after emergencies by facilitating engagement of family violence specialist services with emergency management recovery committees. The Strategy promoted consideration of family violence issues in recovery planning and activities, and developing initiatives supporting access to services for people experiencing family violence.

A 2017 review of the Strategy identified opportunities to improve the department’s current guidance, as well as a need for stronger alignment with the strategic direction of the Victorian government’s family violence strategy and policy, following the release of the final report and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The 2019 Family Violence Framework for Emergency Management (the Framework) replaces the *Addressing family violence in communities recovering from emergencies strategy*. It supports planning and response to family violence during emergencies, outlines existing family violence strategy and policy and the opportunities for partnership between the family violence sector and emergency management sector.

The emergency management sector plays a critical role in working with individuals, families and communities at a time of increased risk of family violence and cumulative trauma. The emergency management response, including planning and collaboration with other services is an important part of the system response to prevent and reduce the risks and impacts of family violence. At a community level, the emergency management response to family violence promotes greater equity and resilience during times of emergency and emergency recovery.

## Purpose

The Framework has been developed by the department’s Emergency Management Branch, in collaboration with the family violence and emergency management sectors.

The Framework aims to:

* provide the emergency management sector with an overview of family violence sector reforms and current family violence systems and programs in Victoria
* support the emergency management sector to respond to family violence by aligning existing family violence actions, sector programs and supports, with emergency management planning and response including communications and public information
* identify a suite of training and resources available to the emergency management sector to support workforce capability development and an increased awareness of family violence issues
* highlight opportunities for greater coordination and alignment between the emergency management sector and the family violence sector.

## Need

Addressing family violence in emergencies results in more resilient and equitable communities. Integrating family violence considerations into emergency management decision-making, policy development and service delivery contributes to:

* better targeting of resources
* increased community understanding of support and services
* reduced incidents of family violence
* greater community participation and equality
* increased social, economic and community resilience.

## Outcomes

The 2019 Framework seeks to achieve three key outcomes:

* reinforce the Victorian government message that family violence is not tolerated under any circumstances
* relief and recovery arrangements include appropriate supports for victim-survivors, vulnerable children and families, and referral pathways for perpetrators.
* partnerships between the emergency management and family violence sectors promote systemic and enduring responses to family violence.

The Framework seeks to achieve these outcomes through:

* Awareness building for the emergency management workforce
* development and dissemination of family violence specific communications and public information
* collaboration and alignment across sectors
* embedding family violence considerations into emergency planning.

# Family violence in the context of emergencies

## Family violence increases in emergency-affected communities

Evidence has shown that family violence increases in emergency-affected communities, and the compounding effect it has on emergency-related trauma can affect an individual’s ability to act to protect their own safety and wellbeing. In addition to emergencies, other factors may increase the risk of family violence, including homelessness, financial stress, unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, and trauma. Family violence is driven by gender inequality, gender stereotypes, and a culture of excusing violence.

The occurrence of family violence increases significantly in emergency-affected communities, especially violence against women[[1]](#footnote-1). Research into Victoria’s 2009 Black Saturday bushfires found that many women experienced increased incidents of violence, often perpetrated by their male partners. Approximately half of these incidents occurred in families that had not previously experienced family violence[[2]](#footnote-2).

## Family violence impedes community recovery

Family violence has significant social, financial, cultural, physical and psychological effects that can impede the effective and timely recovery of emergency-affected communities, especially for victim survivors and their families. Victim survivors experiencing family violence during and after emergencies are also likely to have their suffering compounded by emergency-related trauma, such as that associated with the loss of lives, homes, possessions, employment, income, and social support structures.

Family violence can increase vulnerability to risks associated with an emergency, for example, victim survivors who are subject to violence aimed at controlling their behaviour may be prevented from developing or enacting their own emergency preparedness plans. In emergencies, victim survivors may also feel that they are reliant on their abusive partners to keep themselves and their children housed and looked after during an emergency, which further exposes them to potential violence[[3]](#footnote-3).

Where women have left violent ex-partners, their new visibility and potentially shared emergency accommodation may expose them to unavoidable contact with an abusive ex-partner. Intervention orders may also be difficult to enforce during emergencies, including at relief centres[[4]](#footnote-4). The increased risk of physical and psychological harm that occurs during an emergency makes community recovery more difficult as it undermines people’s feelings of safety, wellbeing, resilience, and social cohesion.

## The causes of family violence and their prevalence in emergencies

The causes of family violence are complex and include gender inequality and community attitudes towards women. Compounding factors may also include financial pressures, alcohol and drug abuse, mental illness and social and economic exclusion[[5]](#footnote-5). It is well recognised that specific vulnerabilities exist for women and people with diverse gender identities, and additional factors such as age, culture, and disability, can further impact the experience of family violence and access to support services[[6]](#footnote-6).

Gender inequality can be exacerbated in emergency situations where men typically demonstrate more extreme forms of gendered stereotypes, such as ‘taking control’ of the family’s emergency preparedness and response plans. This can be seen in men controlling the emergency-related decision-making processes[[7]](#footnote-7) or being the only ones in the family to attend community information meetings.

# The Victorian Government’s approach to addressing family violence

## Context

In March 2016 the Royal Commission into Family Violence delivered 227 recommendations to transform Victoria’s response to family violence. The Victorian Government is undertaking significant reform to implement all 227 recommendations through system wide change that focuses on prevention, a shared responsibility for the safety of people at risk, and the visibility and accountability of perpetrators across each part of the service system. Family violence reforms are creating a system that works effectively and collaboratively to respond to the drivers, risks and impacts of family violence in our communities, and increase safety for people at risk of, or experiencing family violence.

The Victorian family violence reforms create a shared responsibility for preventing and responding to family violence. This involves the whole system working together to increase the safety of victim survivors and hold perpetrators to account. The emergency management sector plays an important role in working with families at a time of increased risk of family violence. Understanding how to support family safety as part of an emergency services response, and collaboration with other services, is an important part of emergency planning.

## The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk and Management Framework and Information Sharing

### Multi-Agency Risk and Management Framework (MARAM)

The MARAM is a redevelopment of the Common Risk Assessment Framework or ‘CRAF’. The aim of the MARAM is to increase the safety and wellbeing of Victorians by ensuring all relevant services are contributing effectively to the identification, assessment and management of family violence risk. The MARAM contains a range of supporting resources including practice guidance and risk identification, screening and assessment tools to support prescribed organisations and family violence professionals.

The MARAM will gradually see a wider range of professionals and organisations prescribed with responsibilities for family violence risk assessment and management. These responsibilities will depend on their role in the service system and the type of contact they might have with people experiencing family violence. For the emergency services sector, this might include roles in referral for family violence risk and management through referral to relevant local and state-wide specialist services. Not all organisations within the emergency management sector are currently prescribed under the MARAM and the schemes. For more information, see [Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management) <https://w.www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/family-safety-victoria/information-sharing-and-risk-management/maram.html> on the Vic.gov.au website.

### Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme

The Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme authorises a group of workers known as information sharing entities (prescribed by regulations) to share relevant information in order to assess or manage family violence risk. It is designed to enable the service system to manage victim safety and hold perpetrators to account. This scheme commenced in February 2018 and will be progressively rolled out to more organisations as they become prescribed under the regulations. For more information, see [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme](https://w.www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/family-safety-victoria/information-sharing-and-risk-management/the-family-violence-information-sharing-scheme.html) <https://w.www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/family-safety-victoria/information-sharing-and-risk-management/the-family-violence-information-sharing-scheme.html> on the Vic.gov.au website.

### Child Information Sharing Scheme

The Child Information Sharing Scheme expands the circumstances in which authorised professionals and organisations can share information to promote and ensure the wellbeing or safety of children. Before information is shared under the scheme, professionals will seek the views and wishes of the child and families where it is appropriate, reasonable and safe to do so.

## Equipping Victorian workforces in family violence prevention and response

### The Industry Plan

Building from Strength: 10-Year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response articulates the Victorian Government's long-term vision and plan for the workforces that prevent and respond to family violence. It further outlines a system where the specialist family violence and primary prevention sectors work with other sectors, including emergency services.

### The capability frameworks

The Industry Plan is supported by two capability frameworks, the Preventing Family Violence and Violence Against Women Capability Framework and the Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework. The frameworks articulate the skills and knowledge needed to prevent family violence and violence against women, and to respond to victim survivors (including children) and perpetrators of family violence. The frameworks provide organisations with an evidence-based guide against which to self-assess their level of capability and capacity to determine the skills and knowledge required through training and development.

#### Specific training in alignment with the Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework

In alignment with the Industry Plan and the capability frameworks, an initial family violence identification and response training course, directly related to the Victorian context has been developed and accredited to support workforces develop requisite skills and knowledge. The course is comprised of a single unit based on the Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework and the MARAM Framework and is aimed at a foundational level worker’s role in family violence. Roll out of the training will commence through Victoria’s training system from the second half of 2019. [The Industry Plan and capability frameworks](https://www.vic.gov.au/about-family-safety-victoria) <https://w.www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/family-safety-victoria/industry-plan.html> can be accessed at the Vic.gov.au website.

## Safety and Support Hubs “The Orange Door”

### Overview

The Orange Door is a partnership across government and community sector organisations, and provides a single contact point for adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence to quickly access the services they need to be safe and supported. It brings together access points for family violence services, family services and perpetrator/men’s services. The Orange Door will gradually replace existing referral points for victims and perpetrators of family violence (including police L17 referral points) and children and families in need of support (Child FIRST).

The Orange Door works in partnership with Local Aboriginal services, organisations and communities to support Aboriginal self-determination and ensures that culturally safe responses are available for Aboriginal people across the state. The Community Operations & Victims Support Agency (COVSA) continues to provide a tailored access point for adult male victims of family violence (police L17 referrals for adult male victims will continue to go to COVSA, not The Orange Door).

### Access and referrals

Referrals to the Orange Door can be made by people self-referring, concerned friends, family or community members, and by all practitioners in the local area. Where an Orange Door does not yet exist in a local area, referrals can be made to local specialist family violence services.

Upon receiving a referral, the Orange Door undertakes initial screening to assess for immediate safety issues, child wellbeing issues or risks that need to be addressed, and the priority or urgency of the action required. Appropriate services to meet the needs of people and families are then identified based on the assessment. For more information, see [the Orange Door website](http://www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au) <[www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/)>.

## Local Family Violence Specialist Services and Referrals

### Helplines

There are a range of services available to families and individuals experiencing or escaping from family violence. Individuals and families can access information and advice through a wide range of helplines and a full list is provided at Additional Information.

#### Specialist family violence services

Specialist services provide direct support to women and children experiencing family violence. Any practitioner (such as police, GPs, hospitals or other services) can make a referral to a specialist family violence service or affected individuals can contact them directly. The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria maintains an online services directory and an online directorate containing contact details and further information on services in the family violence and related sectors around Victoria. For access, see [the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria website](https://www.dvrcv.org.au/talk-someone/victorian-services) <<https://www.dvrcv.org.au/talk-someone/victorian-services>>

## Family Violence Regional Integration Committees and Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors

Family Violence Regional Integration Committees operate in all DHHS regions, bringing together specialist family violence agencies (working with victim/ survivors, perpetrators and primary prevention), child and family services alliances (including Child First and Integrated Family Services), Victoria Police, Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Groups, Department of Justice and Community Safety (including courts), Department of Health and Human Services’ Child Protection and Local Connections. These Committees drive an integrated family violence service system and identify and address local issues within a state-wide framework.

Each Regional Integration Committee is convened by a Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisor. These advisors work to drive the local implementation of key family violence reforms in their area, build partnerships and collaborate across sectors, develop/increase workers’ capability, and provide insight into operations, issues, functions and opportunities in their region. Further information about these Committees and locally available services can be sourced from local Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors. A contact database for all Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors can be accessed online at [the Look Out website](http://www.thelookout.org.au/family-violence-workers/regional-integration) <<http://www.thelookout.org.au/family-violence-workers/regional-integration>>.

# Actions for the Emergency Management Sector

## Awareness

Awareness of Family Violence for the Emergency Management sector will ensure that the workforce is equipped to identify and respond in emergency-affected communities.

**Suggested actions:**

* Family violence awareness training is regularly offered, promoted and included as part of planned training within the emergency management workforce.
* Emergency management organisations review the Preventing Family Violence and Violence Against Women Capability Framework and the Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework to self assess their level of capability and capacity against set criteria to determine what training and development may be required.

**Related outcomes:**

* The emergency management sector:
* has an understanding of family violence in the context of emergencies
* actively incorporates family violence considerations into emergency management policy, planning, decision-making and service delivery
* is equipped to identify and respond to family violence in emergency-affected communities.

### Tools, resources and approaches

#### Specific training

The Gender & Disaster Pod providestraining modules that address family violence within the specific circumstances of the disaster or emergency context. The modules are targeted at the emergency management sector and the broader recovery sector. For more information regarding training and other resources, see [the Gender and Disaster Pod website](https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au) <<https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au>>.

#### General training

A wide range of training and resources regarding family violence is available to the emergency management sector within Victoria. A full list of family violence training is provided at Additional Information.

## Communications and public information

Clear key messages regarding family violence in the context of emergencies should be provided to emergency-affected communities.

**Suggested actions:**

* Key messages regarding the risk of increased family violence and local support services are made available on recovery websites, at relief centres, in community newsletters, and at community meetings.
* Family Violence service provider information is regularly updated by councils and discreetly made available in relief centres and recovery centres. See section **Domestic and Family Violence Referral Options and Services** for helpline and specialist referral services information.

**Related outcomes:**

* Recovery communications from across the emergency management sector explicitly denounce family violence and its root causes (including poor attitudes towards women; aggression, and gendered views).
* Key messages regarding family violence are easily accessed in person in relief centres and recovery centres.

### Tools, resources and approaches

*A case example: Macedon Ranges Shire Council: Prevention of Violence Against Women in Emergencies:*

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council has developed and produced a suite of materials which include a A3 poster, a DL flyer and wallet card (which draws on GAD Pod resources). These materials aim to raise awareness of probable increased family violence after natural disasters and to provide information on where people can find help and support. These materials can be used after an emergency in relief and recovery centres, and other locations in the affected district. Macedon Ranges Shire Council is happy to share editable pdf files of these resources so that local support services can be added, and materials can be requested via email from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council <khaby@mrsc.vic.gov.au>.

*Example family violence key messaging:*

The following family violence key messaging can be adapted for inclusion in wider communications during emergencies.

Emergencies can put additional stress on close relationships and families. Abuse in a relationship is never acceptable, regardless of the circumstances, and is never the fault of the victim.

People who have never been violent or controlling may find themselves behaving in ways they didn’t before; or existing violent behaviour may start to increase or escalate.

*What is family violence?*

Family violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour by one person to another within a close relationship. This includes not only physical violence but direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, controlling access to money and any behaviour which causes someone to live in fear.

If you are experiencing family violence, either from your partner or another family member; or you are using violence towards your partner or family, it can be very difficult to see how you can change things. You may think that anything you do will make things worse. You may feel afraid, isolated, degraded angry, ashamed and unsure about what to do.

There are many ways of dealing with problems that don’t involve violence, such as talking through problems or getting outside help.

There is help available.

The Orange Door is the access point to services for adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence. Visit orangedoor.vic.gov.au
Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre provides confidential support for women and children living with family violence. Call

1800 015 188 or visit safesteps.org.au

The Men’s Referral Service is a confidential telephone service for men who might be using violence towards a family member or who have been victimised by a partner or family member. Call

1300 766 491 or visit mrs.org.au

Call 000 if you, or someone you know, is in immediate danger.

*Family violence script for community meetings and agency debriefings:*

The Macedon Ranges Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Prevention of Violence Against Women in Emergencies Subcommittee has developed a script for agencies (including councils) to use during agency debriefs and community meetings. The script includes messages regarding increased family violence during emergencies and ways to access support. It is intended for use by agencies and community leaders with varied levels of knowledge about family violence to support a clear and confident delivery of messages to the affected community.

*We know that in the days, weeks and months after an emergency, family violence increases.*

*This could show itself in a wide range of ways. Some examples are:*

* *discouraging spending time with family and friends,*
* *controlling a person’s finances,*
	+ *threats to harm, or actual harm. This could be physical, emotional, financial or sexual. Threats to harm should be taken seriously.*

*For someone who’s already experienced family violence it can get worse or family violence can happen for the first time after a disaster.*

*We ask that everyone looks out for one another and acknowledges that difficult times are ahead. Preventing family violence is everyone’s business.*

*Importantly, there are people you can reach out to who may be able to help.*

*If you need help or if you are worried about a family member, a neighbour, a friend or a colleague, there’s information at the recovery centre and there’s staff who can refer you to the right support, and support will be available for as long as it’s needed.*

*We also have cards with the contact details of support services which you are welcome to take (hold one up).*

## Collaboration and alignment across sectors

Strong relationships with and alignment between the emergency management sector and the family violence sector will ensure that:

* prevention activities and responses to family violence across the emergency management sector are enduring
	+ the emergency management sector works collaboratively with the family violence sector to respond to family violence in emergency-affected communities.

**Suggested actions:**

* Family Violence Regional Integration Coordinators may be able to attend Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee and Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meetings to:
* provide information regarding the current risk / presence of family violence in the affected community
* identify and propose prevention, and support initiatives that could help reduce the increased risk and impact of family violence
* support implementation of any identified family violence initiatives.
* The emergency management sector works closely with the family violence sector to embed emergency management considerations into family violence policy, and the family violence sector works closely with the emergency management sector to embed emergency management considerations into family violence policy and programs.
* DHHS regional emergency management staff may be invited to attend the regular Family Violence Regional Integration Committee meeting to share ideas on integrating family violence and emergency management, and to engage directly with local family violence service providers.

**Related outcomes:**

* Recovery coordination agencies have embedded planning, preparedness and response networks that include local family violence sector representatives.
* Strong alignment and strategic relationships exist between the emergency management sector and the family violence sector.
* The Family Violence sector considers individuals affected by emergencies as a vulnerable cohort in addition to currently recognised cohorts (e.g. Aboriginal, CALD, elderly, children) within policy and program design.

### Tools, resources and approaches

The inclusion and attendance of Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors at Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees, Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees and recovery committees to provide information regarding the current risk or presence of family violence in local emergency-affected communities will provide the opportunity to identify community-specific initiatives that could reduce the risk of family violence. Additionally, Family Violence Principal Advisors may then leverage this relationship to include representation from the emergency management sector within Family Violence Regional Integration Committees.

## Planning

Embedding family violence considerations into emergency management planning processes based on local needs and ensuring information regarding local family violence services is maintained will support best practice response.

**Suggested actions:**

* Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees and Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees should work with the Family Violence Regional Integration Committees and Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors to develop family violence actions and initiatives within regional relief, response and recovery plans and municipal emergency management plans to address family violence issues such as safety at relief centres and access to the Victorian government’s Family violence flexible support packages program[[8]](#footnote-8).
* Family violence information, including information relating to risks, available support, and services at the local level is regularly reviewed and maintained by local government in partnership with the local Family Violence Regional Integration Committees and Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors.

**Related outcomes:**

* Family violence actions and initiatives in the regional relief, response and recovery plan and the Municipal Emergency Management Plans are implemented during relief and recovery.
* Referral pathways and services are mapped and included in relief, response and recovery plans based on local needs (on advice from local Family Violence Regional Integration Committees and Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors).
* Best practice family violence service design principles are reflected in local recovery arrangements (with the support of Family Violence Regional Integration Committees and Family Violence Principal Strategic Advisors).

### Tools, resources and approaches

#### Protocol for agencies

The Macedon Ranges Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Prevention of Violence Against Women in Emergencies Subcommittee has developed protocols for use when operating relief and recovery centres. The Protocol is an agreed set of principles that considers the correlation between emergencies and the increase in incidence and severity of family violence. They are designed to guide delivery of relief and recovery services to the community as well as support for response agency staff and volunteers.

When we open an emergency relief centre (ERC) we will:

* Aim to have all ERC staff trained to identify and respond appropriately to family violence
* Be open and frank about the correlation between emergencies and family violence when speaking with people seeking relief from an emergency
* If required, provide a safe space in the ERC for women and children impacted by family violence
* Where possible, provide separate toilets and bathrooms for women and men
* Have copies of the wallet cards with contact information for local services
* Have posters on display in the ERC
* If required, refer women to Family Violence support services for immediate support and assistance
* Seek Victoria Police assistance where family violence court orders impact one or both parties’ ability to attend a relief centre
* Have member of Victoria Police present to provide overt reassurance to victims of family violence and to enforce court orders if necessary
* When we open a recovery centre (RC) we will:
* Aim to have all RC staff trained to identify and respond appropriately to family violence
* Be open and frank about the correlation between emergencies and family violence when speaking with people seeking recovery services
* Have copies of the wallet cards with contact information for local services
* Have posters on display in the RC
* Where practicable, have staff from Family Violence support services present to enable immediate referral. Where this is not possible, RC staff will contact services for immediate support and assistance if required
	+ Seek Victoria Police assistance where family violence court orders impact one or both parties’ ability to attend a recovery centre

When we hold a community meeting we will:

* Include information about family violence in emergencies as part of the meeting format by reading prepared script
* Be open and frank about the correlation between emergencies and family violence and have a senior representative from Council or the control agency articulate this as part of the information presented to the community
* Have copies of the wallet cards with contact information for local services
* Where practicable, have staff from Family Violence support services present to enable immediate referral. Where this is not possible, staff will contact services for immediate support and assistance if required
* Have a member of Victoria Police present to provide overt reassurance to victims of family violence
* Seek Victoria Police assistance if it is known that family violence court orders impact one or both parties’ ability to attend a community meeting

When we conduct an agency debrief we will:

* Be open and frank about the correlation between emergencies and family violence and have a senior representative from the control agency articulate this as part of the information presented to participating agencies by reading prepared script
	+ Have copies of wallet cards available for agencies to take for their staff and volunteers.

# Additional information

## Domestic and Family Violence Referral Options and Services

### Helplines

There are a range of services available to families and individuals experiencing or escaping from family violence. Individuals and families can access information and advice through the following helplines.

|  |  |  |
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| Organisation | Services provided  | Contact information |
| **1800RESPECT** | National sexual assault, domestic and family violence information and support line.  | 1800 737 732 (24 hours). |
| **safe steps** **Family Violence Response Centre** | 24-hour family violence response line providing access to professional support and referral to safe accommodation. | 1800 015 188 (24 hours). |
| **inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence** | Information for women in their own language. | 1800 755 988 (Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm). |
| **Djirra** | Legal advice, counselling and support for Aboriginal victim survivors. | 1800 105 303 (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm). |
| **Women’s Legal Service Victoria** | Free legal advice, assistance and referrals. | 1800 133 302 (Tue & Thu 5.30–7.30pm). |
| **Men’s Referral Service** | Information, counselling support and referral to behaviour change programs for perpetrators of family violence. | 1300 766 491 (Mon–Fri, 8am–9pm; Sat–Sun, 9am–5pm). |
| **Sexual Assault Crisis Line** | After-hours, telephone crisis counselling service for victim/survivors of both past and recent sexual assault.  | 1800 806 292 (Mon-Fri 5pm weeknights through to 9am the next day and throughout weekends and public holidays). |
| **w|respect**  | w|respect is a specialist LGBTIQ family violence service supporting both people in LGBTIQ communities and their families affected by family violence.  | 1800 542 847(After hours counselling is available on Wed, between 5pm-11pm, Sat and Sun 10am-10pm). |
| **Women’s Information and Referral Exchange Inc** | A generalist information, support and referral service run by women and non-binary people for women, non-binary and gender-diverse people. | 1300 134 130 (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm). |

### Specialist family violence services

All practitioners are able to make referrals to specialist family violence services. The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria maintains an online services directory. For access to the directory, see [the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria website](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/support-services/victorian-services) <<http://www.dvrcv.org.au/support-services/victorian-services>>.

## Tools and Resources addressing gender and family violence in emergencies

### Gender & Disaster (GAD) Pod

The GAD Pod has produced a wide range of resources since they began the first Australian research on domestic and family violence in disasters in 2009[[9]](#footnote-9). Relevant resources include the ‘Disaster is no excuse for family violence’ postcard which uses ‘4-steps’ to address the issue with current referral options, a 2-minute video ‘Actions and Support’ to raise awareness,[[10]](#footnote-10) and the Community Service Announcement produced in collaboration with 1800 RESPECT[[11]](#footnote-11).

An additional key resource is the National Gender and Emergency (GEM) Guidelines. The National GEM Guidelines are high level and strategic guidelines, devised specifically as a gender-sensitive approach to the planning for and delivery of disaster relief and recovery, with one of the three focus areas being “Addressing domestic violence before, during, and following an emergency”. Specific examples are provided to indicate ways that states and territories can operationalise them within their own context. The National GEM Guidelines can be accessed at [the Gender and Disaster Pod website](https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/info-hub/national-gem-guidelines/) <<https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/info-hub/national-gem-guidelines/>>.

### Macedon Ranges Shire Council: Prevention of Violence Against Women in Emergencies Action Plan (2018–19)

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council has also developed the Prevention of Violence Against Women in Emergencies Action Plan (2018–19) which identifies a range of multi-agency actions that aim to prevent violence before it occurs in the context of emergencies. The plan can be accessed through [the Macedon Ranges Shire Council website](https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/About-Council/Our-Council/Strategies-Plans/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women-in-Emergencies-Action-Plan) <<https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/About-Council/Our-Council/Strategies-Plans/Prevention-of-Violence-Against-Women-in-Emergencies-Action-Plan>>.

### 1800 Respect Frontline Workers Toolkit

The 1800RESPECT Frontline Workers Toolkit, developed in collaboration with the GAD Pod, contains resources for workers who come into contact with people affected by sexual assault, domestic and family violence in the course of their day-to-day work. The toolkit provides good practice resources include apps, videos and digital content for organisations and workers in a variety of sectors. The toolkit can be accessed at [the 1800RESPECT website](https://goshare.realtimehealth.com/1800respect/users/sign_up) <<https://goshare.realtimehealth.com/1800respect/users/sign_up>>.

## Research on violence against women and children

### Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety (ANROWS)

ANROWS is a national, independent research organisation established to produce research and resources on violence against women and their children for uptake into policy and practice. Their research and resources can be accessed at [the Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety website](https://www.anrows.org.au/) <<http://anrows.org.au/>>.

### Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe)

MAEVe is an initiative of the University of Melbourne that brings together researchers from across the University in partnership with community, industry and government agencies, to undertake research regarding violence against women and their children. Further information regarding the wide range of current research projects into violence against women can be accessed at [the University of Melbourne website](https://maeve.unimelb.edu.au/research) <<https://maeve.unimelb.edu.au/research>>.

## General training on domestic and family violence

### Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV)

DVRCV is a state-wide resource centre working to prevent and respond to family violence, with a particular focus on men’s violence against women in intimate relationships. DVRCV delivers cross sector training in order to ensure that workforces associated with responding to family violence have the requisite skills to perform the roles required of them under Victoria’s Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework (MARAM). For access, see [the DVRCV website](https://www.dvrcv.org.au/) <<https://www.dvrcv.org.au/>>.

### The Lookout

The Lookout is an online information hub developed by DVRCV and Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) with funding from the Victorian Government as part of its commitment to addressing violence against women and children. The website provides a training directory, a service directory, information, evidence-based resources and tools for both family violence workers and other professionals in universal and mainstream services to help them respond to family violence. For more information, see [the Lookout website](http://www.thelookout.org.au/other-professionals) <[http://www.thelookout.org.au/other-professionals](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.thelookout.org.au_other-2Dprofessionals&d=DwMGaQ&c=JnBkUqWXzx2bz-3a05d47Q&r=kYACnGbfhEbdwLpsf0qCCG_Grcsa7BpT4BjxNgYsbco&m=X3qu_vw4QwYqiHytW5wsF9_eVA-JPH9CpbTlMuAgrxI&s=x3nsW15B-TaiggqpyF_6IgT1b-p10kQp77LlkP5rLw0&e=)>.

### No to Violence (NTV)

NTV is the peak body for organisations and individuals working with men to end their violence and abuse towards family members in Victoria and New South Wales.

The Men’s Referral Service is a men’s family violence telephone counselling, information and referral service operating in Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania and is the central point of contact for men taking responsibility for their violent behaviour. NTV also provides support and referrals for women and men seeking information on behalf of their male partners, friends or family members, and workers in a range of agencies seeking assistance for their clients who are men.

NTV provides resources and opportunities for service providers to enhance their capacity to successfully engage with men who use violence and to work with men to prevent further violence. Resources, publications and toolkits regarding men who use family violence, and the Men’s Referral Service can be accessed at [the No to Violence website](https://intranet.dhhs.vic.gov.au/create-accessible-word-documentshttps%3A/www.ntv.org.au/training-resources/useful-links/) <<https://www.ntv.org.au/training-resources/useful-links/>>.

### Blue Knot Foundation

Blue Knot Foundation is the National Centre of Excellence for Complex Trauma. The foundation provides trauma-informed, vicarious trauma and complex trauma training and resources. Training and resources are targeted across sectors for all staff and practitioners working with victims of family violence in specialist family violence services or within generalist services to which people with experiences of interpersonal violence present for support. For more information, see [the Blue Knot Foundation website](https://www.blueknot.org.au/Training-Services/Calendar-of-Events/Public-TICP-Domestic-Family-Violence-Services) <https://www.blueknot.org.au/Training-Services/Calendar-of-Events/Public-TICP-Domestic-Family-Violence-Services>.

## Initiatives addressing gender and family violence in emergencies

### The Women’s Chainsaw Program

The Women’s Chainsaw Club Program is an initiative of Macedon Ranges Shire Council, following funding from the Victorian Government’s Safer Together Program. The Women’s Chainsaw Program provides women with the opportunity to build skills in chainsaw use, safety, design and carving, and emergency preparedness. In addition to chainsaw skills, the program aims to build the confidence and independence of women. Further information regarding the program can be accessed at [the Macedon Ranges Shire Council website](https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Healthy-Living/Violence-Against-Women#section-6) <https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Healthy-Living/Violence-Against-Women#section-6> or directly from Macedon Ranges Shire Council by phone on 03 5422 0206.

### The rural challenge

The Rural Challenge Gender Equality Leadership Program works with rural institutions such as CFA brigades and sporting clubs to embed principles of gender equality and help to prevent violence against women. Participants attend a gender equality workshop where they are supported to develop resources to meet the needs of their organisation including a member survey, gender equality checklist and Gender Equality Action Plan. Post-program support is also provided by the program. The program was originally developed by the Macedon Ranges shire Council is now led by Women’s Health Loddon Mallee. It has been running in the Bendigo and Macedon Ranges regions free of charge since 2016 with the support of the Victorian State Government. For more information regarding the program, see [the Rural Challenge website](https://www.theruralchallenge.com/) <<https://www.theruralchallenge.com/>>.

## Further reading

The Gad Pod website contains a wide range of research and resources, including fully developed training and train-the-trainer modules to support an increased awareness of and education regarding family violence and disasters. Resources and materials can be accessed at [the Gender and Disaster Pod website](https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/) <<https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/>>.

Enarson, E., (2012), *Does violence against women increase in disasters?: A fact sheet*, US Gender and Disaster Resilience Alliance, Tampa, Florida, USA.

Eriksen, C., Gill, N., and Head, L., (2010), *The gendered dimensions of bushfire in changing rural landscapes in Australia*. Journal of Rural Studies, 26 (4), 332-342.

*Gender in emergency management policy* [online].Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013: 38-39.

Hazeleger, T., *Gender and disaster recovery: Strategic issues and action in Australia* [online].Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013: 40-46.

Houston BJ & First JM 2017. ‘[The mental health impact of major disasters like Harvey, Irma, and Maria’. The Conversation](http://theconversation.com/the-mental-health-impact-of-major-disasters-like-harvey-irma-and-maria-83764), <<http://theconversation.com/the-mental-health-impact-of-major-disasters-like-harvey-irma-and-maria-83764>>.

Parkinson, D., Zara, C., *The hidden disaster: Domestic violence in the aftermath of natural disaster* [online]. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013: 28-35.

Parkinson, D. [*Investigating the increase in domestic violence post-disaster: An Australian case-study*](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260517696876). <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260517696876> Journal of Interpersonal Violence, March 2017.

Parkinson, D., Lancaster, C., Stewart, A., (2011) *A numbers game: lack of gendered data impedes prevention of disaster-related family violence.* Health Promotion Journal of Australia, 22:S42-S45.

Parkinson, D. (2011). The Way He Tells It – Vol. 1 [Relationships After Black Saturday. Wangaratta: Women’s Health Goulburn North East](https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/info-hub/research-resources/). <https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/info-hub/research-resources/>.

*[Minimum standards for protection, gender and inclusion in emergencies](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/minimum-standards-protection-gender-inclusion-emergencies/),* <<https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/minimum-standards-protection-gender-inclusion-emergencies/>>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Second Edition (2018).

The standards aim to ensure dignity, access, participation and safety for all people affected by disasters and crises. They address protection, gender and inclusion concerns by providing practical ways to engage with all members of the community, respond to their differing needs, and draw on their capacities in the most non-discriminatory and effective way.

1. Parkinson, D. Investigating the increase in domestic violence post-disaster: An Australian case-study. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, March 2017. <<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260517696876>>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Parkinson, Debra and Zara, Claire. The hidden disaster: Domestic violence in the aftermath of natural disaster [online]. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Parkinson, Debra and Zara, Claire. The hidden disaster: Domestic violence in the aftermath of natural disaster [online]. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Parkinson, Debra and Zara, Claire. The hidden disaster: Domestic violence in the aftermath of natural disaster [online]. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Royal Commission into Family Violence Final Report 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. 7.4.2.6 Family Violence services and information [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Parkinson, D. (2011). The Way He Tells It – Vol. 1Relationships After Black Saturday. Wangaratta: Women’s Health Goulburn North East. <<https://www.genderanddisaster.com.au/info-hub/research-resources/>>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Further information regarding [Family violence flexible support packages program](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence-flexible-support-packages-program-requirements-word) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence-flexible-support-packages-program-requirements-word>> can be accessed at the Vic.gov.au website. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Parkinson, D., Zara, C., *The hidden disaster: Domestic violence in the aftermath of natural disaster* [online]. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, The, Vol. 28, No. 2, Apr 2013: 28-35. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The GAD Pod. ‘Actions and Support’ video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYUVFGTOHhw&feature=youtu.be [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. 1800 RESPECT in collaboration with the GAD Pod: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1wiG1VeEW8 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)