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| Personal Safety Initiative (PSI)  Operational guidelines |
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| To receive this publication in an accessible format phone (03) 9194 3200, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email Family Safety Victoria](mailto:reception@familysafety.vic.gov.au) <reception@familysafety.vic.gov.au>  Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.  © State of Victoria, Australia, Family Safety Victoria September 2019.  Available on the [Family violence page](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence) of the DHHS Service Providers’ website <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/familyviolence>  In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.  The Victorian Government proudly acknowledges Aboriginal people as Australia’s First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and waterways upon which we depend. We acknowledge Victoria’s Aboriginal communities and culture and pay respect to their Elders past and present.  Aboriginal culture is founded on a strong social and cultural order that has sustained up to 60,000 years of existence. Victorian Aboriginal communities and peoples are culturally diverse, with rich and varied heritages and histories. The impacts of colonisation – while having devastating effects on the traditional life of Aboriginal Nations – have not diminished Aboriginal people’s connection to country, culture or community.  The Victorian Government recognises the long-standing leadership of Aboriginal communities in Victoria to prevent and respond to family violence, supported through self-determination and self-management, to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and families, whilst also acknowledging the devastating impacts and accumulation of trauma across generations as a result of colonisation and the dispossession of land and children. |
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# Preamble

These guidelines were produced by Family Safety Victoria in conjunction with other Victorian Government agencies and community service organisations to support the consistent delivery of personal safety, technology and security responses in Victoria under the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI).

These guidelines are subject to change.

# Terminology

## ****Accessible, inclusive and equitable service response****

Access is about ensuring that information, spaces, services and programs reach everyone and are responsive to everyone’s needs. Equity means that available information, spaces, services and programs should deliver outcomes that are equal for all. This requires that services are able to consider and respond to the intersecting forms of disadvantage and discrimination to truly cater to diverse needs.

## ****Agencies and organisations****

Collectively refers to all entities including government departments and organisations, funded agencies, community service organisations and individual professionals.

## Family violence

Family violence is defined under Section 5 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (the Act) as:

1. Behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour:
2. is physically or sexually abusive; or
3. is emotionally or psychologically abusive; or
4. is economically abusive; or
5. is threatening; or
6. is coercive; or
7. in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety and wellbeing or that family member or another person; or
8. Behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to above[[1]](#footnote-1).

*Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families* expands on the definition provided in the Act and acknowledges that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, family violence is an issue focused around a wide range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses that occur within families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities. It extends to one-on-one fighting, abuse of Indigenous community workers as well as self-harm, injury and suicide[[2]](#footnote-2).

### Family member

As defined under Section 8 of the Act, the meaning of family member is broad and includes a range of relationship types that are not limited to being of an intimate or biological nature[[3]](#footnote-3).

Family member includes a person who ‘under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tradition or contemporary social practice, is the person’s relative’[[4]](#footnote-4).

## Family violence flexible support packages (FSPs / packages)

PSI responses are funded via FSPs. This includes both safety and security audits and any security responses (including technology) or property modifications implemented on the basis of audit recommendations.

FSPs were introduced in 2015-16 to deliver personalised and holistic responses that assist child and adult victim survivors of family violence to access support, move out of crisis, stabilise and improve their safety, wellbeing and independence. Packages of up to $10,000 are available (with an average package size of $3,000) for counselling, wellbeing, education, employment, financial counselling, transport, housing stability, financial security, and other practical or material needs.

## Family violence intervention order (FVIO)

A family violence intervention order is a court order to protect a person (and children) from a family member or partner who is using family violence.

## Intersectionality

*Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement* provides the following definition of intersectionality:

Intersectionality describes how systems and structures interact on multiple levels to oppress, create barriers and overlapping forms of discrimination, stigma and power imbalances based on characteristics such as Aboriginality, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, colour, nationality, refugee or asylum seeker background, migration or visa status, language, religion, ability, age, mental health, socioeconomic status, housing status, geographic location, medical record or criminal record. This compounds the risk of experiencing family violence and creates barriers for a person to access the help they need[[5]](#footnote-5).

## Perpetrators

Refers to people who choose to use violence.

Different parts of the service system may use specific terms, such as respondent or Other Party as an alternative to perpetrator. Aboriginal people and communities may prefer to use the term ‘people who use violence’.

### ****Adolescents who use family violence****

For adolescents, the term ‘adolescent who uses family violence’ is used. This reflects that this is a form of family violence requiring distinct responses, given the age of the young person and their concurrent safety and developmental needs, as well as common co-occurrence of past or current experience of family violence by the adolescent from other family members[[6]](#footnote-6).

## Secondary consultation

The provision of specialised advice, knowledge or guidance to enhance the support provided to a victim survivor.

## Social housing

Social housing refers to short and long-term rental housing that is owned and run by the government or not-for-profit agencies. Social housing consists of two types of housing, public housing and community housing.

## Victim survivors

Refers to people, including children, young people and adults, who are experiencing, or who have experienced family violence.

Family Safety Victoria recognises the gendered nature of family violence, consistent with the Royal Commission into Family Violence which noted that ‘the significant majority of perpetrators are men and the significant majority of victim survivors are women and their children’. Women and children are therefore likely to be the primary recipients of responses under the PSI.

In recognition of the diverse experiences of family violence experienced by Aboriginal people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities, people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse and intersex community and older people experiencing elder abuse, victim survivors will be the exclusive term used throughout this document.

Different parts of the service system may use specific terms, such as applicant or Affected Family Member (AFM) as an alternative to victim survivor.

An older person who is experiencing family violence is often described as experiencing ‘elder abuse’.

# About these operational guidelines

## What is the purpose of these operational guidelines?

The purpose of these operational guidelines is to provide agencies, organisations, service providers and other stakeholders with detailed information about the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI), to ensure consistent delivery and access to personal safety, technology and security responses for victim survivors of family violence in Victoria. These guidelines are relevant to all agencies, organisations, service providers and other stakeholders responsible for the delivery of PSI responses in Victoria.

The guidelines outline:

* the principles that underpin the PSI
* the PSI model, and components of a PSI response
* roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in the delivery of the PSI
* operational and governance arrangements for the PSI.

The guidelines aim to:

* enable a shared understanding across Victoria of the purpose and role of PSI responses in supporting victim survivors of family violence
* provide detailed information for key stakeholders about the PSI model and its core components
* improve understanding and engagement of all stakeholders to increase safety and improve responses for victim survivors
* ensure a consistent statewide approach for victim survivors receiving a PSI response across Victoria.

The guidelines should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

* Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services
* Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) Minimum Technology Standards
* National Police Alarm Activation Response Guidelines
* Code of Practice for Specialist Family Violence Services for Women and Children [under redevelopment by Domestic Violence Victoria in 2019]

## How do these guidelines relate to existing policies and practices?

These guidelines should be read in the context of relevant legislation and organisational policy in relation to family violence. The guidelines do not replace or override individual or collective responsibilities of agencies, organisations or individuals. Agencies are required to continue to operate within existing legal, policy and practice frameworks.

The *Service agreement information kit* provides guidance for organisations who hold a service agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services. Organisations are required to comply with the specific departmental policies contained in the kit.

* [Service agreement information kit](https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/service-agreement-information-kit) - <https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/service-agreement-information-kit>

A broad range of family violence reforms are currently underway in Victoria which will inform future service delivery and practice approaches across family violence and community services, including the PSI. These reforms include:

* information sharing
* multi-agency approaches to risk assessment and management
* enhanced perpetrator responses
* design and delivery of The Orange Door
* integration with other service system responses such as mental health, housing and homelessness, child and family services, and drug and alcohol services.

### Information sharing and risk management reforms

#### Child Information Sharing (CIS) Scheme

This scheme enables prescribed organisations and services to share information with each other to promote the wellbeing and safety of children, including in situations where family violence is suspected or established as being present.

#### Family Violence Information Sharing (FVIS) Scheme

This scheme enables prescribed organisations and services to share relevant information to facilitate assessment and management of family violence risk to children and adults.

Further information, including a copy of the Family Violence Information Sharing Ministerial Guidelines, is available on the [Victorian Government website](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme>.

#### Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework

The MARAM Framework provides policy guidance to organisations that have responsibilities in assessing and managing family violence risk, including those that have been prescribed under regulation as Framework organisations.

The MARAM Framework aims to establish a system-wide shared understanding of family violence. It will provide information and resources that professionals need to keep victim survivors safe, and to keep perpetrators in view and hold them accountable for their actions.

Further information, including a copy of the MARAM Framework and Practice Guides, is available on the [Victorian Government website](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management>.

# Policy context

## Safe at home

Due to a perpetrator’s use of family violence, a victim survivor can be forced to leave their home to maintain their own and their children’s safety. Family violence is the major reason for women seeking assistance from homelessness support services in Australia[[7]](#footnote-7). Being forced to leave their home and community can create a situation where a victim survivor becomes disconnected from local services and support networks, including family, friends and employment, and where their children are dislocated from familiar surroundings and routines, including their school.

Safe at home refers to interventions aimed at helping victim survivors to remain safely in, or return safely to, their homes and communities, thus transferring responsibility for leaving the family home to the perpetrator of the violence[[8]](#footnote-8).

The Royal Commission into Family Violence (Royal Commission) recognised[[9]](#footnote-9) that technology alone is not sufficient to enable victim survivors to stay safely in their own homes, and that a number of elements are necessary to ensure that safe at home strategies can be effective, including:

* Broader practical and emotional support
* Effective risk management and justice system responses
* Case management
* Good information sharing between service providers

The Royal Commission made the following recommendation (recommendation 13) regarding safe at home responses:

*‘The Victorian Government give priority to supporting victims in safely remaining in, or returning to, their own homes and communities through the expansion of Safe at Home-type programs across Victoria [within two years]. These programs should incorporate rental and mortgage subsidies and any benefits offered by advances in safety devices, with suitable case management as well as monitoring of perpetrators by police and the justice system’.*

## PSI Pilot

A PSI pilot commenced in December 2015 in Inner and Outer Eastern Melbourne and Inner Gippsland. A consortium of providers was selected to deliver the pilot, including specialist family violence agencies and security providers. The pilot provided victim survivors with access to specialist family violence case management, safety audits and installation of technology such as CCTV and alarm systems, personal safety devices and ongoing monitoring and support of technology by a security provider.

## Evaluation

An evaluation of the PSI pilot was completed in mid-2017. The PSI pilot indicated that technology facilitated interventions are successful in increasing the safety of victim survivors of family violence. The evaluation found that victim survivors in the pilot felt an increased sense of safety, particularly due to access to a monitored personal safety device, and there was a decrease in perpetrator breaches of intervention orders.

## Statewide rollout of the PSI

Following the success of the PSI pilot, and in response to the Royal Commission’s recommendation to expand safe at home programs, the statewide rollout of the PSI was announced in April 2017.

To support the statewide rollout, Local PSI Coordinators positioned in specialist family violence agencies were established in each of the 17 Department of Health and Human Services Local Areas in 2016-17. A Statewide Coordinator based at Domestic Violence Victoria, the peak body for family violence victims’ services, was also established.

# Principles

Family violence is a deeply gendered issue rooted in structural inequalities and an imbalance of power between women and men. Family violence is a choice by a perpetrator to use behaviours for the purposes of power and control. Perpetrators of family violence use coercive tactics and violent, controlling behaviour to gain power over one or more victim survivors. Responsibility for the use of violence rests solely with the perpetrator, and victim survivors are not to be blamed, held responsible or placed at fault[[10]](#footnote-10).

The following principles provide a framework for the Personal Safety Initiative and should be read in conjunction with the MARAM Framework principles.

## Prioritising safety and stability

Prioritising safety and stability for victim survivors (including children and young people) is paramount. The PSI aims to support victim survivors to remain safely in, or return safely to, their own home and community, or to increase their safety and stability by relocating them to a new home.

In practice this means:

* a victim survivor who is receiving a case management response can be supported in identifying how a PSI response will address safety and security goals and sustainably assist in managing family violence related risk
* a victim survivor can be supported through a PSI response to remain in, or return to, their home, where appropriate and safe to do so
* where it is not possible for a victim survivor to remain in their existing home, but an alternative stable housing option is available, a PSI response can be activated at the new residence to support and maintain safety and stability
* consideration and support are provided to victim survivors in a diverse range of housing situations, including private rentals, social housing and home owners
* where it is not possible for a victim survivor to be supported to safely remain in a residential property, alternative options such as emergency accommodation and refuge should be explored.

## Upholding the agency of victim survivors

Agencies acknowledge, respect and uphold the strengths, choices and best interests of victim survivors, where it is safe and possible to do so.

In practice this means:

* victim survivors are treated with dignity and respect
* victim survivors have choice and are supported to remain safely in, or return safely to, their home and community, where suitable and appropriate
* victim survivors are listened to and their perspective and concerns about the level of risk posed to them are key considerations when assessing risk and the appropriateness of a PSI response
* victim survivors are provided with clear, relevant and easy to understand information to assist them in understanding the impact of a PSI response and to give informed consent for a PSI response
* agencies and practitioners operate from a victim survivor-focused perspective that is responsive to individual life circumstances and vulnerabilities
* victim survivors are supported to get the best safety outcomes from their PSI response, including ensuring that they are adequately trained to use the technology provided to them, and know how their technology can be used to support in reporting breaches or to provide evidence in a criminal justice process
* victim survivors are empowered to regain or build their sense of agency and independence.

## Holding perpetrators accountable for their use of violence

The use of violence is a choice and it is important that people who use violence are held accountable for their behaviour through informal and formal social and legal sanctions.

In practice this means:

* service system responses focus on actions that hold perpetrators to account for their use of violence rather than place responsibility on victim survivors
* stakeholders work reflectively and collaboratively to ensure that the language and practices of the service system avoid victim survivor blaming
* police and courts are key partners in supporting the successful implementation of the PSI and utilise available justice system responses, such as Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIOs), to enhance the efficacy of PSI responses and the safety of victim survivors
* PSI responses have the potential to act as a protective factor in deterring perpetrators from using further violence
* PSI responses can act as a mechanism for the collection and provision of evidence to support the justice system in holding perpetrators to account for their use of violence.

## Providing an inclusive service response

All victim survivors have the right to access system and service responses that are inclusive and respectful of their history, background, culture and individual circumstances and experiences.

In practice this means:

* services and responses provided to people from Aboriginal communities should be culturally responsive and safe, recognising Aboriginal understanding of family violence, and rights to self-determination and self-management, and take account of their experiences of colonisation, systemic violence and discrimination and recognise the ongoing and present-day impacts of historical events, policies and practices
* cultural factors that may impact on the assessment and management of risk are considered (for example, additional factors that may affect victim survivors from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds can include visa status, language barriers, and limited access to extended support networks)
* consideration of barriers to help-seeking due to previous experiences of discrimination or non-inclusive services (for example, people from LGBTI communities, people with disabilities, sex workers or women who have been in prison)
* additional time may sometimes be required to undertake assessment, planning and referral
* not underestimating a person’s capacity to assess their own safety because they may have a disability or mental illness
* secondary consultation with relevant staff and/or external organisations when required, including with relevant cultural expertise, about individual cases or inclusive practice more generally
* use of interpreter services, including Auslan interpreters or communication aids, as and when required.

## Focusing on children and young people

Family violence may have serious impacts on the current and future physical, spiritual, psychological, developmental and emotional safety and wellbeing of children, who are directly or indirectly exposed to its effects[[11]](#footnote-11).

In practice this means:

* children and young people should be recognised as victim survivors in their own right
* individual risk assessments will be completed for all children and young people identified in the family where family violence risk is present
* agencies will acknowledge the unique experiences of children and young people, and their vulnerabilities and needs, including the effects of trauma and cumulative harm arising from family violence
* specific risks for children and young people will be considered when assessing the suitability of a PSI response for a family.
* the potential impacts of the surveillance and monitoring of any children or young people in the home associated with implementing a PSI response will be assessed before enacting a technology response such as CCTV.

# Personal Safety Initiative (PSI)

## Overview and purpose

The statewide implementation of the PSI has provided a platform to strengthen the appropriateness, suitability and quality of personal safety, security and technology responses delivered in Victoria and ensure they are used consistently and effectively as part of a broader plan for the safety, stability and wellbeing of victim survivors.

The purpose of the PSI is to:

* utilise safety and security responses, including property modifications and technology, to:
  + enable victim survivors of family violence to remain safely in, or return safely to, their own homes and communities, or relocate to a new home
  + increase safety and feelings of safety for victim survivors
* deter breaches of Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIOs)
* facilitate the collection of admissible evidence where breaches occur to hold perpetrators accountable for their use of violence.

## Scope

The PSI is a non-crisis response that provides eligible victim survivors with:

* Coordination of personal safety, security and technology responses, through the collaboration of case managers and local PSI agencies, supported by the Statewide PSI Coordinator
* A safety and security audit completed by a suitably qualified security provider
* A family violence flexible support package (FSP) to fund personal safety, security and technology responses
* Access to property modifications and personal safety technology (including personal safety devices and CCTV) which meets Minimum Technology Standards, as recommended by a safety and security audit, delivered by suitably qualified security providers and other contractors

### Common components of a PSI response

Noting the following is not an exhaustive list, common components of a PSI response include:

* Safety and security audit (*mandatory*)
* Locks and lock changes
* Repairs to broken doors and windows
* Security doors and screens
* Windows and blinds
* Sensor lighting
* Roller shutters
* Landscaping
* Fences and fence repairs
* Mobile phones
* Bug detection
* CCTV (camera/s and monitoring)
* Personal safety / duress devices (device and monitoring)
* Property alarms (alarm and monitoring)

### Responding to immediate safety needs

The PSI is not intended to be a crisis response. Typically it may take several weeks from identification of the need for a PSI response to seek appropriate approvals, undertake an audit and implement recommended safety and security responses.

To ensure a timely response to any immediate risks to safety, a small number of basic safety and security responses can be implemented outside the scope of a PSI response and do not require a safety and security audit. These include repairs to broken doors and/or windows, lock changes and installation of security doors.

Requests for repairs, lock changes and security doors can be applied for separately in an FSP application where alternative funding sources are not available. This does not preclude repairs, lock changes and security doors being recommended in a safety and security audit and implemented as part of a broader PSI response.

Where a victim survivor living in a community or public housing property requires an immediate safety and security response, an urgent maintenance request should be made to the relevant housing agency, Housing Call Centre or local DHHS Housing office.

## Eligibility and suitability for a PSI response

### Eligibility

To be eligible for a PSI response, victim survivors must:

1. Have recently experienced, or be experiencing, family violence, as defined in the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*
2. Have received a comprehensive risk and needs assessment, aligned with the MARAM Framework
3. Be receiving case management support, from a specialist family violence agency or related agency (such as a housing service or Child Protection) that identifies how a PSI response will address safety and security goals and sustainably assist in managing family violence related risk
4. Meet the eligibility criteria for a family violence flexible support package
5. Have, or be in the process of applying for, a Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO) with exclusion conditions\* (victim survivors cannot receive a PSI response while cohabiting with the perpetrator)
6. Provide informed consent for a PSI response

#### \* Family Violence Safety Notices (FVSN) and Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIO)

Before a PSI response is implemented for a victim survivor, a FVIO should be sought to exclude the perpetrator from the property. Where a risk assessment has indicated that a FVIO could place the victim survivor at further risk, or there are additional barriers to the victim survivor accessing a FVIO, the case manager should discuss this with the PSI Coordinator who will consider each situation on a case-by-case basis and determine whether a PSI response is appropriate at that time.

Further information regarding FVIOs is available from:

* [Victoria Legal Aid](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders) <http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders>
* [Safe at home: how to get a family violence intervention order](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/free-publications-and-resources/safe-home-how-to-get-family-violence-intervention-order-english) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/free-publications-and-resources/safe-home-how-to-get-family-violence-intervention-order-english>
* [Magistrates’ Court of Victoria](https://familyviolence.courts.vic.gov.au/online-form) <https://familyviolence.courts.vic.gov.au/online-form>

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| **Case management delivered by a non-specialist family violence agency** |
| Where a victim survivor is being case managed by a non-specialist family violence service, a secondary consultation with a PSI Coordinator must be undertaken before a safety and security audit is sought or any property modifications or technology responses are enacted, to discuss the suitability of a PSI response. |

### Suitability

Though a victim survivor may meet the eligibility criteria outlined above, this will not always mean that a PSI response is suitable for the victim survivor in their current circumstances.

A perpetrator’s history and patterns of behaviour must be considered when assessing a victim survivor’s suitability for a PSI response. Where a risk and needs assessment identifies that a perpetrator poses an immediate risk to the life or safety of an individual or family, the appropriateness of a PSI response should be carefully considered, and alternative options explored. Justice system responses and/or potential relocation may be more appropriate in these circumstances.

In circumstances where a victim survivor is relocated, a PSI response can be implemented in the new residence to support the victim survivor’s safety if appropriate and required.

The PSI Coordinator will provide case managers with a rationale if they have determined that a victim survivor does not meet the eligibility and suitability requirements for a PSI response.

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| **Questions for case managers to explore with victim survivors before seeking a PSI response:** |
| * What perpetrator patterns of behaviour have been identified in the risk assessments undertaken with any victim survivors who will reside in the property, including children and young people, or through information obtained via an Information Sharing Scheme request? * What safety and security goals have been identified in the victim survivor’s case plan? * What housing supports have been enacted to secure the victim survivor’s tenancy if they are residing in a rental property? * What justice system responses have been activated to support the victim survivor? Is there an FVIO, with exclusion provisions, in place? Is it an interim or final FVIO? Who is listed as a protected person on the FVIO? When does the FVIO expire? * Has the perpetrator breached a current or previous FVIO? If so, what were the breaches and when was the most recent breach? * Are family law court orders in place? * What is the perpetrator’s current location? If the perpetrator has been sentenced and incarcerated, or is currently in remand, when is their release date? What is the anticipated risk once they are released? * Have any other persons attended the property on behalf of the perpetrator? What is their relationship to the perpetrator? * Is the perpetrator on a Community Corrections Order (CCO)? What are the terms of the CCO and have there been any contraventions to date? * What (if any) property modifications / upgrades have already been implemented at the property? * Were any of these modifications implemented by the perpetrator? Could the perpetrator have access to any existing technology-based security measures (such as CCTV footage)? * Is the perpetrator suspected to be tracking the victim survivor? If so, what information is being captured and how? * Are children or young people spending time with the perpetrator? Are any devices being used in both properties that the perpetrator may be accessing? * Have technology safety measures been adopted when safety planning with the victim survivor? * Has the victim survivor provided informed consent for their information to be shared for the purposes of implementing a PSI response? * Is the victim survivor aware that footage collected by CCTV could be subpoenaed by agencies (such as Child Protection, Police, the Courts), or individuals (such as the perpetrator’s legal representation)? * If the victim survivor resides in a rental property, are they aware that permission from the landlord must be sought and provided before any property modifications take place? |

## Consent

A victim survivor who is eligible and suitable for a PSI response must provide informed consent for all components of the response being implemented. For a victim survivor to provide informed consent, their case manager must ensure they understand the potential impacts and outcomes of a PSI response. These include:

* the potential cost of a PSI response (including a safety and security audit) in the context of an FSP;
* the requirement for a safety and security audit which involves an auditor attending their property;
* information about the installation of security technologies and options relating to leasing and/or external monitoring of these technologies;
* the potential for recordings or other evidence to be subpoenaed (by parties including Police, Child Protection, and the perpetrator’s lawyer);
* that information about the perpetrator and victim survivor will be shared between agencies for the purposes of assessing and managing risk and increasing safety (this may include requesting further information via the Information Sharing Scheme if required);
* consideration of the potential impacts of the surveillance and monitoring of any children or young people in the home associated with implementing a technology response such as CCTV;
* that victim survivors receiving a PSI response that includes leasing and/or external monitoring of technology (such as CCTV, a personal safety device or property alarm) must consent to a reassessment of their eligibility and suitability no longer than three months after the initial date of installation if the costs of leasing and/or external monitoring are being addressed through the use of FSP funds.

#### Technology safety

When safety planning with a victim survivor, case managers should consider how technology safety measures could be implemented to enhance safety and support a PSI response. [SmartSafe](http://www.smartsafe.org.au/smartsafe_home) <www.smartsafe.org.au> provides a range of advice related to technology safety planning and privacy as well as a smartphone app which supports victim survivors to collect and store evidence safely.

## Application and approval for a safety and security audit

When preparing an FSP application, the case manager will work with the victim survivor to consider the relative priority of a PSI response (including the safety and security audit and any responses that may be recommended in the audit) against any other goods or services that are being sought through the FSP.

Before submitting an FSP application that includes a request for a safety and security audit (audit), the case manager must refer to the FSP program guidelines and engage their local PSI Coordinator to discuss the case and seek their recommendation about the appropriateness of a PSI response for the victim survivor(s).

Once a PSI Coordinator has reviewed the eligibility and suitability of a PSI response for the victim survivor and provided a recommendation that an audit is appropriate, this recommendation should be provided to the FSP provider with the FSP application.

Before approving the release of funds for an audit to be undertaken, or the implementation of audit recommendations, the FSP provider will need to assess the application in accordance with:

* Eligibility criteria in the FSP program guidelines
* Eligibility criteria for a PSI response set out in these guidelines
* The recommendation of the local PSI Coordinator
* Demand and prioritisation of FSP funds for other eligible victim survivors
* Capacity to approve the release of further funds to implement some, or all, of the recommendations made in the audit
* The relative priority of other non-PSI components of the victim survivor’s FSP application and the budget capacity to approve those components should the PSI audit be approved and some, or all, of the audit recommendations be implemented.

An FSP provider must receive a copy of a completed safety and security audit before they can approve the release of FSP funds for a PSI response, including where the audit has been funded by an alternative funding source.

#### Statewide and divisional FSP providers

Before statewide and divisional FSP providers approve the release of FSP funds for a PSI response (including the safety and security audit and any security responses (including technology) or property modifications that may be recommended in the audit) a recommendation from the local PSI Coordinator based in the area where the victim survivor resides should be sought, where this hasn’t been provided with the FSP application.

## Safety and security audit

### Engaging a security provider to deliver an audit

Once the FSP provider has approved the release of funds for an audit, the case manager will engage a security provider to undertake the audit. This will include:

* Confirming with the local PSI agency which security providers have been assessed as compliant
* Seeking quotes from one or more compliant security providers
* Logging a request for an audit to be undertaken with the security provider
* Liaising with the auditor and victim survivor to coordinate a suitable time for the audit to be undertaken

### Scope of an audit

The case manager will provide relevant risk information pertaining to the victim survivor and perpetrator to the security provider contracted to undertake the audit.

A safety and security audit shall include:

* a review of risk information provided in the audit form;
* an assessment of the entire property and immediate surroundings;
* consideration of the perpetrator’s (and any known associates assessed as posing a potential risk) history and patterns of behaviour to identify specific security risks and inform recommendations;
* a review of the victim survivor’s entry and exit from the property, to identify security gaps as related to their experience of family violence
* de-bugging check (only where this has been specifically approved by the PSI Local Coordinator)
* development of recommendations to address safety, security and technology needs to address the family violence risk posed by a perpetrator, using a safety and security audit form.

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| **Wherever possible, the same security provider should not be contracted to deliver both the audit and installation / external monitoring response for an individual victim survivor.** |

### Delivery of an audit

Where possible, case managers should attend a victim survivor’s property when safety and security audits are undertaken to provide emotional support and facilitate a discussion between the auditor and victim survivor regarding risk and perpetrator behaviour.

Where a case manager is not available to attend the audit, they should consider alternative arrangements to support the victim survivor, such as being available to provide phone-based support before, during and/or after the audit takes place.

If based on a risk assessment and concerns for worker safety, a case management agency determines that attendance at the victim survivor’s residence is not safe, the suitability and safety of a PSI response for the victim survivor should be reviewed and alternative options such as relocation considered.

## Review and approval of audit recommendations

Following completion of the safety and security audit, the security provider will submit a completed audit form to the case manager and local PSI Coordinator that outlines:

* Recommended property modifications (e.g. landscaping, security upgrades to doors / windows, fencing, lock changes)
* Recommended technology (e.g. CCTV, personal safety device, home alarms)
* Prioritisation of recommended technology and property modifications.

### Review and quotes

The case manager and local PSI Coordinator will review the completed audit and following consultation with the victim survivor, will provide a recommendation to the FSP provider for approval of required funds. To support the timely approval of funds, case managers are encouraged to seek quotes for the recommended responses, and/or review standard cost lists where these have been provided and include these with the FSP application.

### Approval

A safety and security audit must be undertaken before a PSI response can be approved and FSP funds released. Where a safety and security audit has been undertaken by Victoria Police in line with existing local arrangements, or is funded by an alternative source to an FSP (such as financial assistance awarded by the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) or Orange Door brokerage funds), the FSP provider must still receive a copy of the audit before they can approve the release of FSP funds for a PSI response.

When initially approving the release of funds for a PSI response which includes a leasing and/or external monitoring component, FSP providers can approve a maximum of three months of leasing and/or external monitoring. If after three months further leasing and/or external monitoring are required, the case manager must seek the recommendation of their local PSI Coordinator and make a subsequent application to the FSP provider.

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| **A safety and security audit must be undertaken before an FSP provider approves the release of FSP funds for the implementation of any PSI components (*note the exceptions outlined in section 4.2 of these guidelines)*.** |

## Implementation of audit recommendations

Once the FSP provider has approved the release of funds for recommended property modifications and/or technology, the case manager will engage a security provider(s) and/or other contractors as required to deliver the relevant services. This will include:

* Confirming with the local PSI agency which security providers have been assessed as compliant
* Confirming with the victim survivor whether they have a preference regarding the type of personal safety device supplied (if recommended and approved)
* Confirming quoted costs provided by compliant security providers and/or other contractors for all works (including for costs of installation, monitoring, maintenance and decommissioning of technologies if applicable)
* Logging a request for works to be undertaken with the appropriate security provider and/or other contractors
* Liaising with the security provider and/or other contractors and victim survivor to coordinate a suitable time for works to be undertaken
* Notifying the housing team leader / manager (for social housing installations) once the works are complete.

Installation and monitoring services should be delivered in line with the minimum standards outlined in the *PSI Minimum Technology Standards*. Installation and monitoring include but are not limited to:

* Security upgrades / modifications to a victim survivor’s property
* Installation, monitoring, maintenance and decommissioning of CCTV, property alarms and personal safety devices and property alarms.

### Housing permissions

The *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)* requires that a tenant obtain written permission from their landlord before additional safety features are added to the rental property. A tenant who has installed additional safety features must also restore the premises to their original condition before the tenancy ends, unless they have the landlord’s consent in writing that they don’t have to remove them when they leave.

Case managers should support victim survivors to seek written permission from their landlord before any PSI related changes are made to their property.

Further information, resources and factsheets regarding family violence and tenancies are available from:

* [Consumer Affairs Victoria](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/resources-and-tools/family-violence) <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/resources-and-tools/family-violence>
* [Tenants Victoria](file:///\\internal.vic.gov.au\DHHS\HomeDirs4\tcol0403\Documents\Offline%20Records%20(DP)\PSI%20~%20VIOLENCE%20PREVENTION%20&%20SUPPORT%20SERVICES(4)\Tenants%20Victoria) <https://www.tuv.org.au/family-violence-protection/?v=1&l=en>

#### Staying on in rental housing

For victim survivors residing in rental properties, including social housing, various options are available to secure their housing and limit any financial loss.

*Changing the locks*

If the victim survivor is a protected person under a FVSN or FVIO (interim or final), and the FVSN or FVIO says the excluded tenant cannot enter the home, the victim survivor can change the locks to the rental property. Where the property is social housing, the landlord *might* agree to pay for the locks to be changed.

*Changing the lease*

If the victim survivor wants to stay in their rental property without the excluded tenant, they can apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative tribunal (VCAT) to end the existing lease and start a new lease (with the same conditions and rent) with the landlord.

The victim survivor can only do this if they are a protected person and have a final FVIO that says the excluded tenant cannot enter the home. The new lease will be for the remaining lease period. The victim survivor can apply for a new lease if they live at the rental property (they do not have to be listed on the lease agreement).

VCAT can decide:

* how the bond (if any) will be refunded
* who will be responsible for paying any outstanding expenses on the existing lease - for example, bills or repairs
* A full waiver of VCAT fees are available for a protected person or affected family member who is the applicant in a residential tenancies case arising from family violence.
* [VCAT](https://www.vcat.vic.gov.au/steps-to-resolve-your-case/fees-at-vcat/fee-relief) <https://www.vcat.vic.gov.au/steps-to-resolve-your-case/fees-at-vcat/fee-relief>

#### Social housing residents

Social housing landlords understand that sustaining tenancies prevents homelessness and will welcome a case manager’s early advice about the appropriateness of a PSI response to support a victim survivor to remain in their home.

*Making early contact with the social housing provider*

Case managers should contact the housing team leader / manager at the social housing agency that is responsible for the management of the victim survivor’s tenancy / property before a safety and security audit is undertaken, noting that this may be a community housing organisation or the local Department of Health and Human Services Housing Office. This will ensure the tenancy manager can be made aware of what is occurring at the property and can proactively and sensitively manage any related tenancy matters.

*Obtaining permission for additional safety features*

Once the audit is completed, the case manager must obtain the housing agency’s permission to proceed with the recommended safety and security modifications. This request should be formalised through the completion of the housing agency’s internal / external works permission form which should be submitted to the housing team leader / manager. Each housing agency is likely to have its own internal / external works permission form.

The case manager will be required to detail a range of information in the form including the compliant security provider’s details, a list of the proposed works, and whether a council permit is required. The housing agency may also require information about the compliant security provider’s compliance with the *Surveillance Devices Act 1999* as well as public and product liability insurances before approving the request.

*Clarifying ongoing obligations*

The case manager should obtain the housing agency’s consent to leave some or all of the additional safety features in the property at the end of the tenancy by striking out any conditions included in the permission form that require the tenant to restore the property to its original condition when vacating. This will avoid the victim survivor having to pay to have the safety features removed when they leave, and the potential for additional costs to the PSI and FSP programs. While a social landlord is under no obligation to agree to such a request, most social landlords will have policies in place in relation to goods left behind.

Social landlords may be prepared to pay for certain additional safety features that would not ordinarily be contemplated by a private landlord. Examples may include changing the locks, replacing broken windows where the perpetrator caused the damage, and the installation of security doors. The case manager should confirm with the housing team leader / manager which of the additional safety features the social landlord will pay for when submitting the permission form. Again, most social landlords will have policies in place in relation to paying for non-standard items that support a person in their home.

*Additional considerations*

Housing agencies must abide by body corporate rules and / or may require the owner’s permission (if the housing agency leases the property in question) before approving the installation of additional safety features to a property. Some housing agencies will also have specific policies in place around fire safety that must be adhered to. These factors may delay the approval process and may also limit the extent of works that can be approved.

The FSP provider cannot approve the release of funds until the housing team leader / manager has formally approved the installation of the additional safety features.

## Technology responses

Technology alone is not sufficient to enable victim survivors to stay safely in their own homes and should only be implemented as part of a broader plan for the safety, stability and wellbeing of an individual or family. The suitability of technology responses such as CCTV, personal safety devices and property alarms should be carefully considered and explored with victim survivors (including children and young people residing in the property). Victim survivors should be provided with information and choice about the options available to them.

### Leasing and external monitoring

Agencies are encouraged to explore leasing options with security providers and victim survivors when implementing technology responses such as personal safety devices, property alarms and CCTV, as an alternative to buying equipment outright. This can support case managers to frame the intervention as a time-limited response when discussing the suitability and sustainability of a PSI response with a victim survivor.

If a leasing option is implemented, the victim survivor should be made aware that devices and equipment may be decommissioned and retrieved at the point that the PSI response ceases. If devices and equipment are leased, and the victim survivor disengages from their case management service and cannot be contacted to retrieve devices and equipment, FSP funds may need to be utilised to pay for the costs of buying the equipment outright.

**Where CCTV is being implemented alongside other technologies, such as a monitored personal safety device and/or property alarm**, external monitoring of CCTV is recommended as this approach can improve the efficacy of the response for the victim survivor. This applies both where devices and equipment are leased and where they are bought outright.

**Where CCTV is being implemented without other technologies,** external monitoring of CCTV is an option that should be explored. In collaboration with victim survivors, case managers and PSI Coordinators should carefully consider the role and purpose of CCTV in situations where no other technologies are being implemented and how CCTV sustainably supports the victim survivor’s safety.

When initially approving the release of funds for a technology-based PSI response, FSP providers can approve a maximum of three months of leasing and/or external monitoring.

### Setting up a device

Case managers will liaise with the security provider/s and victim survivor to ensure that all devices and equipment (including personal safety devices, property alarms and CCTV) have been appropriately setup and configured. The verification process to be followed should a device or alarm be activated will be agreed with the victim survivor at this point and clearly communicated to the monitoring centre. This verification process will need to be consistent with the *National Police Alarm Activation Response Guidelines.*

Clear, written instructions for operation of any devices and equipment should be provided to the victim survivor, along with adequate training in how to use the technology provided to them if an incident occurs, and how to use their technology to support in reporting breaches or to provide evidence in a criminal justice process. Victim survivors should only activate their device if an incident occurs.

As per the *PSI Minimum Technology Standards*, all personal safety devices should be configured with one-way voice recording (outgoing from the device). Monitoring centres must be able to hear and record what is happening to verify an incident and capture information for police prosecution. Voice recording cannot be two-way as it may place the victim survivor at risk if the perpetrator does not know that the personal safety device is in use.

Victim survivors should be informed that active monitoring of CCTV cameras by an external monitoring centre is on an as-required basis only (i.e. in case of an alarm or incident). Cameras are not required to be on continuous display within the monitoring centre.

### If an incident occurs

If a personal safety device or property alarm is activated and verified (as per the verification process agreed with the victim survivor when the device or alarm were set-up) the monitoring centre will contact Victoria Police, providing location and incident details, to request an immediate response (in accordance with the *National Police Alarm Activation Response Guidelines*).

### Evidence gathering

Collection of evidence from personal safety devices and CCTV, for the purposes of prosecuting alleged breaches of intervention orders and/or criminal charges, should be managed in collaboration with police.

Following an incident, the case manager should support the victim survivor to report the incident to police and assist them to request and/or provide a suitable copy of all relevant audio recordings and CCTV footage for use by police and the court, within 24 hours as standard.

An incident includes but is not limited to:

* A breach, or alleged breach, of an intervention order
* A physical altercation involving the perpetrator, or someone suspected of acting on their behalf
* Concerns regarding a perpetrator attending the property
* Concerns other parties are attending the property on behalf of the perpetrator
* Unexplained damage to property related to family violence (e.g. attempts to damage CCTV or break windows)

Police are responsible for investigating breaches of intervention orders in line with the *Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence (2014)*.

### Ongoing review and exit

Following three months of leasing and/or external monitoring, a case manager should conduct a review of the PSI response with the victim survivor and assess the appropriateness and suitability of further leasing and/or external monitoring.

**If further leasing and/or external monitoring are required**, the case manager must seek the recommendation of their local PSI Coordinator and make a subsequent application to the FSP provider.

**If further leasing and/or external monitoring are not required**, the case manager will undertake exit planning with the victim survivor and liaise with the appropriate security provider to decommission devices and equipment as required (if these were leased) and return the property to the original condition.

**If devices and equipment were purchased outright and further external monitoring is not required or will not be purchased via FSP funds**, this should be confirmed in writing with the victim survivor (including if possible where they have disengaged from their case management service). It should be emphasised that should the victim survivor choose to continue receiving an external monitoring response, they will become responsible for the costs associated with external monitoring.

**If devices and equipment were leased, and the victim survivor has disengaged from their case management service and cannot be contacted to undertake a review or retrieve devices and equipment**, FSP funds will need to be utilised to pay for the costs of buying the equipment outright.

## Interface with security providers and other contractors

Under the statewide PSI model, security providers and other contractors will be engaged at the local level for the delivery of auditing, installation and monitoring services and property modifications, with oversight from local PSI agencies.

To strengthen the consistency and quality of PSI responses provided to victim survivors, the following documents have been developed:

* *PSI Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services*

This document sets out the minimum requirements for security providers contracted to deliver auditing, installation and monitoring services under the PSI in areas such as skills and experience, licenses and checks including public and product liability insurances, and occupational health and safety.

Security providers will need to demonstrate their compliance with the minimum requirements to their local PSI agency. Any sub-contractors engaged by a security provider must also comply with the minimum requirements.

Where a security provider requires a period of transition to become fully compliant, they are expected to outline what further action/s will be undertaken to reach compliance and within what timeframe.

The Victoria Police website has a public register of persons and businesses licensed and/or registered to carry out activities under the Private Security Act 2004, (the Act) which may assist local PSI agencies in assessing the compliance of security providers.

* + [Public register](https://www.police.vic.gov.au/register-licence-registration-and-permit-holders) - <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/register-licence-registration-and-permit-holders>
* *PSI Minimum Technology Standards*

This document sets out the minimum technology standards for all installation and monitoring services delivered under the PSI, including CCTV, personal safety devices, remote monitoring systems and installation standards.

**The Minimum Technology Standards will be reviewed and revised in mid-late 2019 to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and that victim survivors are accessing appropriate and effective technology responses that offer value for money without compromising on quality.**

**Alignment with the existing Minimum Technology Standards is encouraged.**

An independent security expert may be periodically engaged by Family Safety Victoria to review and assess the compliance of some or all security providers with the *PSI* *Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services* and the *PSI Minimum Technology Standards*.

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| **Other contractors** |
| Where property modifications are approved as a component of a PSI response and are of a nature not specifically related to security responses (such as landscaping and fence repairs), it is not expected that the contractor undertaking these works must meet the *PSI* *Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services*. |

## Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) pathway – flowchart

Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) pathway flowchart

Flowchart of the Personal Safety Initiative (PSI) model. Text description is available under the headings ‘Eligibility and suitability for a PSI response’, ‘Consent’, ‘Application and approval for a safety and security audit’, ‘Safety and security audit’, ‘Review and approval of audit recommendations’, ‘Implementation of audit recommendations’, ‘Technology responses’ and ‘Interface with security providers and other contractors’. 

# Roles and responsibilities

The following provides a description of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in the delivery of PSI responses.

## Case managers

The key responsibilities of case managers are to:

* Identify how PSI responses will address safety and security goals and sustainably assist in managing family violence related risk within a broader plan for the safety and wellbeing of victim survivors.
* Assess the eligibility and suitability of a PSI response for victim survivors, including any children or young people.
* Seek the informed consent of victim survivors, ensuring they understand the potential impacts and outcomes of a PSI response.
* Consult with their Local PSI Coordinator regarding the appropriateness of PSI responses for individual victim survivors.
* Complete FSP applications to seek funds for safety and security audits, and home modifications and technology recommended by audits.
* Confirm with their local PSI agency which security providers have been assessed as compliant
* Seek quotes from compliant security providers and log requests for audits and installation works to be undertaken, if required.
* Liaise with security providers and victim survivors to coordinate suitable times for audits, installation works and property modifications to be undertaken.
* Provide relevant risk assessment information pertaining to victim survivors and perpetrators to security providers contracted to undertake audits.
* Attend a victim survivor’s property when safety and security audits are undertaken to provide emotional support and facilitate a discussion between the auditor and victim survivor regarding risk and perpetrator behaviour or consider alternative arrangements to support the victim survivor, such as being available to provide phone-based support before, during and/or after the audit takes place.
* Conduct a review of a PSI response that includes leasing and/or external monitoring with the victim survivor no later than three months after being implemented to assess the appropriateness and suitability of further leasing and/or external monitoring.
* Undertake exit planning with victim survivors and liaise with security providers to decommission devices and equipment as required.

## Local PSI agency

The key responsibilities of Local PSI agencies are to:

* Assess compliance of security providers against the *PSI Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services* and alignment with the *PSI Minimum Technology Standards.*
* Maintain an up-to-date list of compliant security providers and other contractors that offer auditing, installation and monitoring services, and other property modifications, in the local area.
* Maintain an up-to-date record of all auditing, installation and monitoring personnel delivering PSI responses in the local area, along with evidence of their training, licences and checks (this information should be provided by security providers).
* Capture data about PSI responses in the local area and report to the department and Family Safety Victoria on a quarterly basis via agreed reporting mechanisms.

## Local PSI Coordinators

The key responsibilities of Local PSI Coordinators are to:

* Provide security providers with information and resources about the PSI using content developed by Family Safety Victoria and the Statewide PSI Coordinator.
* Provide secondary consultations about the role and suitability of PSI responses in addressing safety and security goals and sustainably assisting in managing family violence related risk.
* Provide recommendations to case managers and FSP providers about the appropriateness of PSI responses for individual cases (including where further leasing and/or external monitoring is identified as being required by a case manager following a three-month review of an existing PSI response).
* Review completed safety and security audits with case managers and provide recommendations to FSP providers for approval of required funds to implement audit recommendations.

## Statewide PSI Coordinator

The key responsibilities of the Statewide PSI Coordinator are to:

* Provide leadership and support to Local PSI Coordinators, including through facilitation of a Community of Practice.
* Develop and foster sound working relationships with external agencies and providers (including security providers and FSP providers) to promote and strengthen the initiative.
* Maintain an up-to-date contact list of all Local PSI Coordinators and PSI agencies.
* Maintain an up-to-date list of compliant security providers that offer auditing, installation and monitoring services across Victoria.
* Develop training material to facilitate a coordinated and consistent service response statewide.
* Provide strategic advice and guidance to support the operation of the PSI statewide in accordance with these guidelines.

## Family violence flexible support package (FSP) providers

The key responsibilities of FSP providers are to:

* Assess the eligibility of FSP applications for PSI responses in accordance with these guidelines and the FSP program guidelines.
* Administer FSP funds in accordance with the FSP program guidelines.
* Manage demand and prioritisation of FSP funds for other eligible victim survivors.
* Consider the capacity to approve the release of further funds to implement some, or all, of the recommendations made in the audit.
* Consider the relative priority of other non-PSI components of the victim survivor’s FSP application and the budget capacity to approve those components should the PSI audit be approved and some, or all, of the audit recommendations be implemented.

## Security providers

The key responsibilities of security providers are to:

### Auditing services

* Comply with the *PSI Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services.*
* Deliver safety and security audits and audit recommendations in a timely manner.
* Undertake an assessment of a victim survivor’s property and surroundings including their entry and exit from the property to identify security gaps as related to their experience of family violence. This will be informed by risk information about the perpetrator’s history and patterns of behaviour to identify specific security risks.
* Develop recommendations to address security and technology needs to address the family violence risk posed by a perpetrator, using a safety and security audit form.
* Provide completed audits to case managers and local PSI Coordinators that outline:
  + recommended property modifications (e.g. landscaping, security upgrades to doors / windows, fencing, lock changes)
  + recommended technology (e.g. CCTV, personal safety device, home alarms)
  + prioritisation of recommended technology and modifications.

### Installation and monitoring services

* Comply with the *PSI Minimum requirements for auditing, installation and monitoring services.*
* Provide goods and services that align with the *PSI Minimum Technology Standards* in a timely manner.
* Implement approved recommendations made in a safety and security audit, including:
  + security upgrades and modifications to a victim survivor’s property
  + installation, monitoring, maintenance and decommissioning of personal safety devices, property alarms and CCTV.
* Contact Victoria Police and provide location and incident details if a personal safety device or property alarm is activated and verified to request an immediate response (in accordance with the *National Police Alarm Activation Response Guidelines*).
* Provide any relevant audio recordings and/or CCTV footage requested by case managers or police (suitable for use by police and the court) as standard within 24 hours.

### Other contractors

* Provide goods and services in a timely manner.
* Implement approved recommendations made in a safety and security audit, including:
  + modifications to a victim survivor’s property, such as landscaping and fence repairs.

# Accountability and monitoring

## Compliments and complaints

The term ‘department’ is used in the following section to refer to both the Department of Health and Human Services and Family Safety Victoria.

The department is committed to listening to and responding to compliments and complaints. This important feedback informs the development and delivery of policies, programs and services that support and enhance the well-being of all Victorians.

The department aims to ensure services provided and funded are effective and responsive to the people accessing them and therefore encourages transparent feedback processes.

The ‘Compliment and complaint management policy’ set out in the department’s [Service agreement information kit](file:///\\internal.vic.gov.au\DHHS\HomeDirs4\tcol0403\Documents\Offline%20Records%20(DP)\PSI%20~%20VIOLENCE%20PREVENTION%20&%20SUPPORT%20SERVICES(4)\Service%20agreement%20information%20kit) <https://fac.dhhs.vic.gov.au/service-agreement-information-kit> outlines the requirements of funded organisations in relation to the management of compliments and complaints.

### Organisation requirements

It is important that all compliments and complaints are managed in line with the department’s guiding principles of visibility and accessibility, responsiveness, assessment and investigation, feedback, improvement focussed and service excellence.

Compliments and complaints related to funded organisation services should be handled by the funded organisation in the first instance. Funded organisations must have an accessible, responsive and transparent compliments, complaints and feedback framework to ensure continuous improvement.

Each funded organisation needs to decide how their compliments, complaints and feedback framework will work most effectively in the context of their service delivery while adhering to the department’s principles.

### Further information

The Department of Health and Human Services, Complaints Unit provides support and assistance in the management and development of complaints policies, guidelines and processes.

The Complaints Unit provides a complaints line for departmental staff, clients and members of the public to register their feedback and complaints.

Complaints line: 1300 884 706  
Email: [complaints.reception@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:complaints.reception@dhhs.vic.gov.au)  
Complaints Unit  
GPO Box 4057  
Melbourne VIC 3001

The department's website includes a guide to [Making a complaint to the Department of Health and Human Services](https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/making-complaint) <https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/making-complaint>.

## Governance

The following governance mechanisms are in place to support the statewide implementation of the PSI.

* Family Safety Victoria provides program management oversight and strategic and operational policy development for the Personal Safety Initiative, including the development and revision of these operational guidelines.
* Service agreement management is the responsibility of Department of Health and Human Services’ Agency Performance and System Support teams in each local area.
* Family Safety Victoria and Domestic Violence Victoria will convene regular meetings with all agencies that are funded to deliver a PSI Coordinator function, and agencies that administer FSPs.
* Agencies and organisations are accountable to the Department of Health and Human Services and Family Safety Victoria through their respective service agreements.

Governance will be complemented by existing sector partnerships and Family Violence Regional Integration Committees, which provide regional leadership to improve integration of family violence services and coordination with other key services.

## Data collection and reporting

Data will be collected to support monitoring and evaluation of the PSI.

PSI agencies will be required to capture data about PSI responses in their area and report to the department and Family Safety Victoria on a quarterly basis via a standard reporting template. This will include recording the following:

* Number of secondary consultations
* Number of PSI applications reviewed
* Number of PSI applications that meet eligibility and suitability requirements
* Number of PSI applications that do not meet eligibility and suitability requirements

As the PSI is supported through both State and Commonwealth funding, PSI agencies are required to fulfil the following Commonwealth reporting obligations:

* Entering client and service delivery data into the Data Exchange System (or ‘DEX’) in line with the [Data Exchange Protocols](https://dex.dss.gov.au/data-exchange-protocols/dex_data_exchange_protocols/) < https://dex.dss.gov.au/data-exchange-protocols/dex\_data\_exchange\_protocols/> within 30 days of the completion of a reporting period.
* Providing input to support the completion of an annual progress report, to be coordinated by Family Safety Victoria.

Family Safety Victoria will support PSI agencies in understanding their DEX reporting obligations.

Reporting requirements of PSI agencies are in addition to data reporting obligations of FSP providers.

1. Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic), s 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. State of Victoria, Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families, 2018, p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic), s 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., s 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. State of Victoria, Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement, 2018, p. 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. State of Victoria, Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework, 2018, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. State of Victoria, Royal Commission into Family Violence: Report and recommendations, Vol II, Parl Paper No 132 (2014-16), p. 38 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid., p. 77 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid., p. 37 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. State of Victoria, MARAM Practice Guides: Foundation Knowledge, 2019, p. 20 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. MARAM Framework, 2018, p. 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)