



Family violence

WHAT IS IT?

WHERE CAN YOU GET SUPPORT?



We acknowledge the First Nations people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters throughout Australia.

This booklet has been produced by WIRE and Sakhi Saheli, as part of the COVID-19, Financial Capability and Intersectionality Project, generously supported by Ecstra Foundation.



WIRE offers free information, support and referral on any issue for all women, nonbinary and gender diverse Victorians.

Contact us (weekdays, 9am to 5pm)

Phone line: 1300 134 130

Web chat: www.wire.org.au

Email: support@wire.org.au

We would like to thank all the Advisory Team members for their contribution to this project.

This booklet was designed by Nishtha Bali.

“Family violence is not your fault. You are not responsible for the violent behaviour of others – not ever.” (WIRE)

We are here for you

Women, nonbinary, and gender diverse people from all kinds of circumstances and backgrounds may experience violence and abuse at home. They don't ask for it, they don't deserve it.

In Victoria there are laws that make many forms of family violence illegal. They are in place to help protect the rights, health and safety of victim-survivors of family violence, regardless of their age, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic condition, abilities, sexuality, or gender.

We know no matter how strong and resilient you are, sometimes you may need some support. This booklet is aimed at assisting you to find that support.



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What is family violence?

Family violence is when one person uses power and control over another in a relationship or family. It involves behaviour that is threatening and controlling, and that can cause you to fear for your own safety or for the safety of your family members.

Family violence can happen to anyone

It can happen between couples, parents, and children, as well as between relatives and in any family-like relationship, such as with carers or housemates.

Abuse of any kind within a relationship is family violence. Sometimes it includes physical abuse, but not always. Sexual, emotional, social, spiritual and financial abuse are also forms of family violence and can be equally harmful. **In Victoria forced marriage and dowry coercion are also recognised as forms of family violence.**

Family violence can affect you in many ways

Living with family violence can really impact your emotional and physical health. It can also affect your relationships with other family members, friends and colleagues, and reduce your confidence and ability to leave the violent person.

FAMILY VIOLENCE MAY INCLUDE:

- Emotional abuse, e.g. manipulation, isolation, put-downs, mind games
- Financial abuse, e.g. forcing you to hand over control of income or assets, coercing you to take on debt or sign a contract, or preventing you from earning an income
- Sexual abuse, i.e. any unwanted sexual activity
- Social abuse, e.g. insulting you in public, deciding when and where you socialise
- Threats of physical violence and revenge
- Any kind of abuse that makes you live in fear
- Property damage, e.g. smashing belongings
- Harming or threatening to harm your pets
- Complex forms of violence such as forced marriage, dowry abuse or trafficking/slavery

FINANCIAL ABUSE IS A FORM OF VIOLENCE

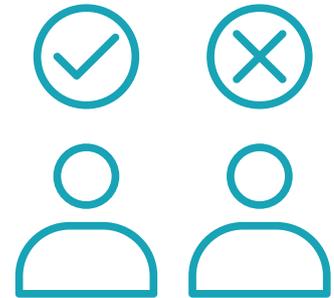
In Victoria, financial abuse is considered a form of family violence. It includes behaviours such as withholding money, controlling all the household spending or refusing to include you in financial decisions.

It can happen with other forms of abuse, like physical or emotional abuse, but it can also be happen on its own. To learn more about financial abuse or to get help, check WIRE's website at www.wire.org.au/financial-abuse/

What if you are on a temporary partner visa?

If you are on a temporary partner visa and you experience violence from your partner, **you may be eligible for Permanent Residency under special provisions of the Australian Migration Regulations.**

Your partner may threaten to cancel your visa to try to make you stay silent. It is important to know the facts and search for legal help. Contact a Community Legal Centre near you (see legal aid below).



MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth: The abuser can cancel your partner visa and get you deported.

Fact: Only the Australian Government has the power to refuse or cancel a visa, or to deport people. A perpetrator of family violence cannot do that. In fact, the visa of the abuser may be refused or cancelled due to family violence.

Myth: A victim-survivor of family violence will have their temporary partner visa automatically cancelled due to change in their relationship status.

Fact: Victims-survivors of family violence will not have their temporary partner visa automatically cancelled if their relationship breaks down because of family violence. The Migration Act has protection for these cases, and you may be eligible for permanent residency.

General support

All services listed under General Support are free, including for temporary visa holders.

If your life or the life of others is being threatened, or you are at risk of serious injury, you can call 000.



If you are experiencing, or are afraid of family violence and **need an interpreter**, call Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) on [131 450](tel:131450) and ask them to contact [Safe Steps on 1800 015 188](tel:1800015188), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

1800RESPECT

A free national counselling service (phone, online chat) to support victims-survivors of sexual assault and domestic or family violence. www.1800respect.org.au | Phone: 1800 737 732 (interpreting services available)

1800 MY OPTIONS

A service of Women's Health Victoria, offering free information about contraception, pregnancy options and sexual health. 1800 My Options also offers referral based on your individual sexual and reproductive health needs. www.1800myoptions.org.au | Phone: 1800 696 784 (interpreting services available)

INTOUCH

A specialist family violence service that works with women from migrant and refugee backgrounds and their families and communities in Victoria. InTouch provides case management to victims-survivors of family violence, and has a legal team and a migration agent within their service, who provides **integrated support that includes assistance to temporary visa holders.**

www.intouch.org.au | Phone: 1800 755 988 (interpreting service available)

THE ORANGE DOOR

A Victorian Government service for **adults, children and young people** who are experiencing or have experienced family violence, and families who need extra support with the care of children, **regardless of migration status.** You can seek support if you are a migrant or a refugee or do not have permanent residency. Staff can also connect you with support on financial, legal, health, substance misuse, housing, employment, and education issues.

www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au

SAFE STEPS

Offers 24/7 specialist support services for anyone in Victoria who is experiencing or afraid of family violence. Services include information and referral, crisis response, specialist family violence risk assessment, safety planning and access to supported crisis accommodation.

www.safesteps.org.au | Phone: 1800 015 188 (interpreting services available)

SAKHI SAHELI

A women's organisation based in Melbourne's west region. Sakhi Saheli supports migrant victim-survivors of domestic violence to become financially independent with guidance on how to start their finance journey and gain employment.

www.sakhisaheliinc.org | Email: sakhisaheli16@gmail.com

SHAKTI AUSTRALIA

Multilingual staff offer culturally safe domestic violence support services for women, children and families of Asian, African and Middle Eastern origins.

www.shaktiinternational.org/shakti-australia | Phone: 03 9753 4324 | After hours: 0432 611 688. If you need urgent information call 1800 SHAKTI (1800 742 584)

THE SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS LINE

An after-hours, confidential telephone crisis counselling service for people who have experienced both past and recent sexual assault. The website contains information brochures in various languages.

www.sacl.org.au | Phone: 1800 806 292 (weeknights, 5pm–9am, and throughout weekends and public holidays) (interpreting services available).

SWITCHBOARD

Runs Rainbow Door, a free service for all LGBTIQ+ people in Victoria, their friends, family and peers. It provides advice and referrals to other services, including FREE counselling, and support in other languages and Auslan through connection to an interpreter (7 days a week, from 10am–6pm)

www.switchboard.org.au

WIRE

Offers information, support and referral on any issue for all women, nonbinary and gender diverse Victorians. WIRE can provide information about financial supports in your local area and offers a range of programs and services such as job coaching, employment workshops, and financial and legal clinic.

www.wire.org.au | Phone: 1300 134 130 (weekdays, 9am–5pm) | Web chat: www.wire.org.au/chat-with-wire | Email: support@wire.org.au | Walk-In Centre (interpreting service available)

WOMEN'S HEALTH WEST

Delivers family violence services and promotes health in Melbourne's Western region.

www.whwest.org.au | Phone: 03 9689 9588 (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm) (interpreting service available)

Legal aid

COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

Can help with legal information and advice. Some centres also provide advice and representation at court. **Most services are free, others depend on eligibility.** To locate your nearest CLC (including many in the **Western region**) check www.fclc.org.au/find_a_community_legal_centre

VICTORIA LEGAL AID

Provides information about family violence intervention orders. **Depending on your financial circumstances and eligibility**, they can also assist you with a lawyer to help you run a case, and to help you at court. <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders/get-help>

REFUGEE LEGAL

Provides FREE and confidential immigration legal advice, including for **temporary visa holders**. An immigration lawyer is available on Wednesdays and Fridays between 10am-2pm through the telephone advice line.

Phone: (03) 9413 0100 | Email: refugeelegal@refugeelegal.org.au

Financial support

THE NATIONAL DEBT HELPLINE

Offers FREE independent and confidential financial counselling service with professional financial counsellors, **who provide assistance with debt problems and financial hardship**. It's website also contains information about issues such as financial abuse, mental health and financial hardship, and family violence and financial hardship.

www.ndh.org.au | Phone: 1800 007 007



FAMILY VIOLENCE FLEXIBLE PACKAGES

These are financial aid for victims-survivors of family violence who have a case management plan or support plan, including children. Talk to your case manager or contact WIRE for more information. Family Violence Flexible Packages are managed through your support agency.

GOOD SHEPHERD

Runs the **Wellbeing and Financial Capability Program Vic**. It is a free, non-judgmental, confidential service for people to build their money management skills, knowledge and confidence: www.goodshep.org.au/services/financial-counselling-financial-capability-and-wellbeing/

CARERING

Run by Kildonan Uniting Care, is a centralised, coordinated point of contact to assist customers of ANZ, NAB, Western Water and Yarra Valley Water who are struggling to pay a bill, deal with a family situation or address a health issue. The service include information and referrals to other support. To **check if you are eligible**, call 1800 545 366.

If you've experienced a family or domestic violence incident, you may be eligible for a Centrelink one-off crisis payment. You must contact a Centrelink social worker within 7 days from the change in your living arrangement:

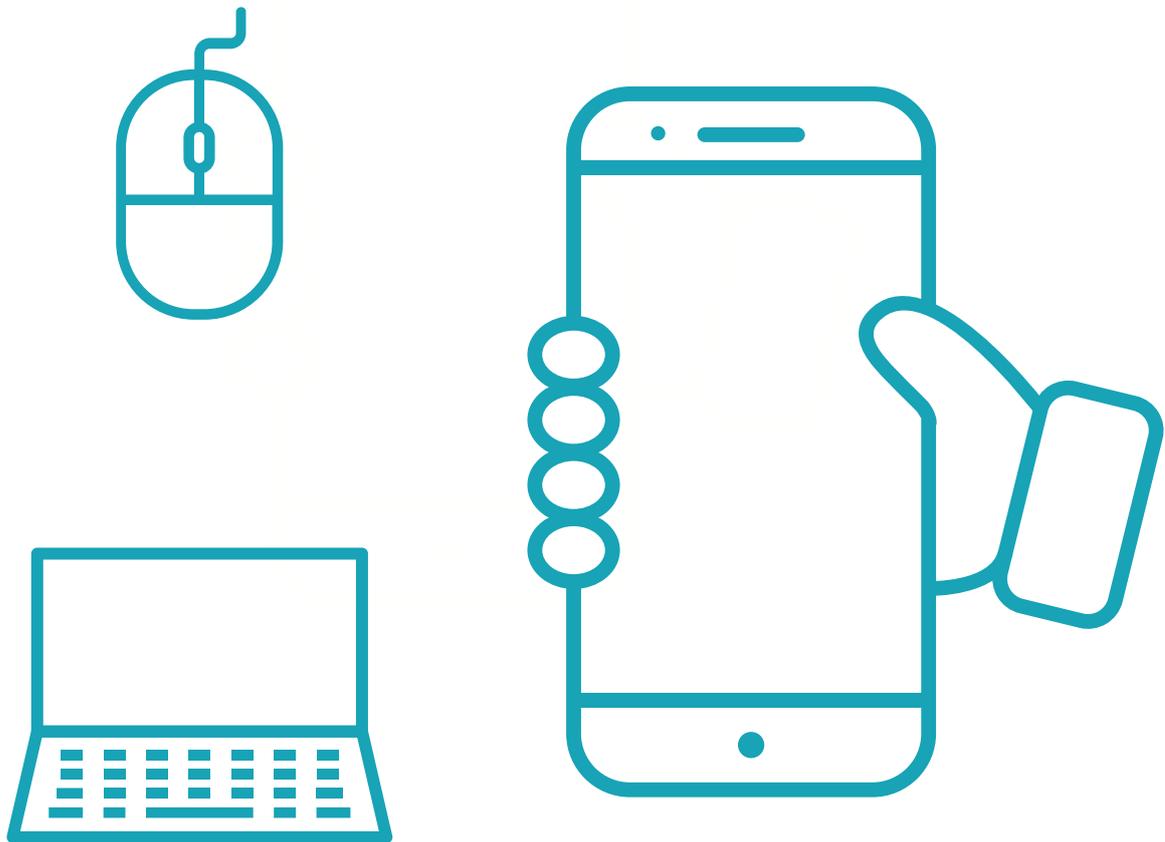
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/crisis-payment-extreme-circumstances-family-and-domestic-violence>

Technology and your safety

Technology can help you, but it can also be used to monitor you, control you and as a way to threaten you. For more information and recommendations on how to protect your privacy and safety online, see:

eSafety for women: www.esafety.gov.au/women

WESNET's toolkit: <https://techsafety.org.au/resources/resources-women/>



For more information

WIRE's **Family Violence Information Booklet** has detailed information on family violence and a list of services that can support you, which you can use in addition to this booklet. Download it for free at www.wire.org.au/resources/family-violence/

WIRE's **Money Problems with your Partner Information Booklet** explains financial abuse, and gives ideas on how to regain control of your money, as well as available support. Download it for free at www.wire.org.au/resources/money-problems/

Women's Health West has a **Safety Plan booklet** that you can download with ideas and information that others have found useful when they have left a violent relationship. Download it for free at whwest.org.au/resource/safety-plan/



Produced by:



Generously funded by:

