

Domestic violence - services for women

Every woman and child has the right to be safe. Violence is a crime. Evidence indicates that women are much more likely to be victims of domestic violence, which has an enormous impact on the physical and mental health of women and children.

This is a complex issue and women experiencing domestic violence need individual support and access to a variety of services. The effects of violence can be felt for many years. There is a range of services available in Victoria that can help women make changes and choices for the future.

In an emergency, call the police

In an emergency situation, dial triple zero (000) to call the police for urgent attention.

Twenty-four hour crisis help

The **Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria (WDVCSV)** is a 24-hour, seven day a week, confidential telephone service that provides information, support and access to safe accommodation or refuges for women and their children. This is the best first point of contact for someone who wants to leave a violent partner or family situation.

The WDVCS can act quickly if your situation is urgent and can help you with transport if you don't have a car or money.

Staff at the service will talk with you to develop an understanding of your situation and assess what to do first and how to go about it. The best time for a woman to leave a violent situation will depend on the urgency of the situation and the woman's care needs. Contact with the service is confidential.

This service is busy and may be hard to get on to, but keep calling and you will get through.

Crisis line: (03) 9322 3555

Freecall: 1800 015 188

Administration: (03) 9928 9600

Email: wdvcs@wdvcs.org.au

Website: <http://www.wdvcs.org.au>

Domestic Violence Outreach Workers

Domestic Violence Outreach Workers are located throughout Victoria and can offer support to women escaping domestic violence. The workers understand that women in this situation need practical, emotional, financial and legal support. Once you have made the decision to leave, you will not be doing it alone.

Call the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service for the telephone number of your local outreach worker.

Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service

This service provides support and information to women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in their first language. The service operates Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.00pm.

Telephone: (03) 8413 6800

Administration: (03) 8413 6899

Email: iwdvs@infoxchange.net.au

Website: <http://www.iwdvs.org.au>

Refuges and shelters

Refuges and shelters provide safe and secure accommodation for women and children escaping violence. They usually help women get back on their feet by providing emotional support, legal assistance, help to find permanent housing and assistance with applying for appropriate benefits.

Many different organisations provide refuges or emergency housing for women and children leaving domestic violence situations. Some need to have secret locations to protect women from threats by partners or other violent family members. Living in secret locations can have disadvantages. You may have to move a long way from where you previously lived and you can't tell anyone where you are staying.

You can contact refuges and shelters through the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria.

Other emergency housing

Various community and church-based groups provide emergency housing. The accommodation varies from shared housing to single flats. It is worth finding out what these organisations require of you while staying in their accommodation because expectations vary and so does the support provided and the length of stay allowed.

Where to get help

- If your situation needs urgent attention, dial triple zero (000) to call the police
- Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service Tel. (03) 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188 – contact this service to discuss your situation and the support and accommodation you need
- Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service Tel. (03) 8413 6800, Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.00pm – for support and information in your first language

Things to remember

- Domestic violence is a crime. Every women and child has the right to be safe.
- Domestic violence is a complex issue and women need individual support to meet their needs.
- There is a range of support and accommodation services that can help women leaving situations of domestic violence.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Women's Health Victoria

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