
Domestic violence - services for women

Domestic violence is a crime. Every woman and child has the right to be safe. Research shows that women are much more likely to be victims of domestic violence than men. It has an enormous impact on the physical and mental health of women and children. The effects of violence can be felt for many years.

This is a complex issue and women experiencing domestic violence need individual support and access to a variety of services. 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.

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria

This is a 24-hour, seven days 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 Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service can act quickly if your situation is urgent and can help you with transport if you don't have a car or money. This service is busy, but keep trying and you will get through.

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.

Crisis line: Tel. (03) 9322 3555
Freecall: Tel. 1800 015 188
Email: admin@wdvcs.org.au
Website: www.wdvcs.org.au

Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service

This service provides information, support and referrals to women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in their first language. The service operates Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.

Telephone: Tel. (03) 8413 6800
Freecall: Tel. 1800 755 988
Email: iwdvs@infoxchange.net.au
Website: www.iwdvs.org.au

Elizabeth Hoffman House – Aboriginal Women's Service

This service provides support to Aboriginal women and children experiencing family violence, from urgent crisis services to ongoing support. It is open from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday, or call the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria after hours (see contact details above).

Telephone: Tel. (03) 9482 5744
Freecall: Tel. 1800 796 112
Website: www.ehhaws.org.au

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria

This service provides legal services and counselling to Aboriginal women who have experienced family violence. It also provides support to non-Aboriginal carers or parents of Aboriginal children. It is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Telephone: Tel. (03) 9244 3333
Freecall: Tel. 1800 105 303
Email: information@fvpls.org
Website: www.fvpls.org

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 don't have to do it alone. The Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service can give you the telephone number of your local outreach worker.

Refuges and shelters

Refuges and shelters provide safe and secure accommodation for women and children escaping violence. They usually assist women to get back on their feet by providing emotional support, legal assistance, help with finding permanent housing and 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 mean you have to move a long way from where you previously lived and 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

- In an emergency, always call triple zero (000)
- 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, 9.30 am to 5.00 pm – for support and information in your first language
- Elizabeth Hoffman House Aboriginal Women's Service – provides services for Aboriginal women. Tel. (03) 9482 5744
- Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service – provides support and legal services for Aboriginal women. Tel. (03) 9244 3333 or 1800 105 303.

Things to remember

- Domestic violence is a crime. Every woman 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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