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## Family violence services for women

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### Summary

- Family violence is a crime. Every woman and child has the right to be safe.
  - Family violence is a complex issue and women need individual support to meet their needs.
  - Victoria has a range of services available to help women experiencing or escaping from family violence.
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### **CALL POLICE 000 QUICK ESCAPE BUTTON**

Family (or domestic) violence is a crime and everyone has the right to be safe. Research shows that women are much more likely to be victims of family violence than men, though men and boys can be victims too. Family violence is characterised by one person (usually a male) wanting to be dominant and have control over other family members (usually women and children) and includes emotional, psychological, physical, sexual and financial abuse. It has an enormous impact on the physical and mental health of women and children, and the effects can be felt for many years.

Family violence is a complex issue and women experiencing it need individual support and access to support services. A range of services is available in Victoria to help women make changes and choices for the future.

### **safe steps Family Violence Response Centre (formerly Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service)**

This is a statewide 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 service can act quickly in urgent situations and can provide transport for women without a car or money. Support can be requested via:

- the 24-hour Toll free helpline Tel. **1800 015 188** (keep trying if busy)
- email: **safesteps@safesteps.org.au**
- or the safe steps website: **<https://www.safesteps.org.au>**

### **1800 RESPECT: National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Service**

This is an Australia-wide 24-hour, 7-days-a-week telephone and online counselling service for anyone who has experienced, or is at risk of, family violence or sexual assault.

This service provides telephone and online information, counselling, referrals and support. Tel. **1800 737 732** or visit their **website** or **chat online 24/7**.

### **inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence**

inTouch provides information, support and referrals to women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in their first language. The service operates Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Tel. **(03) 9413 6500** or Toll Free **1800 755 988** or visit their **website**.

### **Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Service**

This service provides support to Aboriginal women and children, non-Aboriginal women who are mothers of Aboriginal children, and non-Aboriginal women who have Aboriginal partners, who are experiencing family violence. It provides urgent crisis services and ongoing support. Phone **(03) 9482 5744** during office hours or visit their **website**.

### **Djirra - Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria**

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This service provides legal advice, information, referral and support to Aboriginal victims/survivors or people at immediate risk of family violence and sexual assault as well as to parents/carers of Aboriginal children. It is open from 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday. Tel. **03 5021 3200** or freecall **1800 105 303**, or visit their [website](#).

### **Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV)**

DVRCV provides a [list of local domestic and family violence-related services and supports across Australia](#).

### **The Orange Door**

**The Orange Door** is a free 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. **The Orange Door** brings together workers from specialist family violence services, family services, Aboriginal services, and services for men who use violence.

You can access a range of family violence and family services through **The Orange Door** in person or over the phone. You don't need a referral.

- **North Eastern Melbourne** - Tel. **1800 319 355**
- **Bayside Peninsula** - Tel. **1800 319 353**
- **Mallee** - Tel. **1800 290 943**
- **Inner Gippsland** - Tel. **1800 319 354**
- **Barwon** - Tel. **1800 312 820**

### **Family violence outreach workers**

Family violence outreach workers are located throughout Victoria to support women who are experiencing or escaping from family violence. They work with women to develop safety plans to enhance the safety of themselves and their children.

Support includes:

- information on options and resources
- referral to other services
- case management support
- counselling and financial counselling.

Referral to local outreach workers is via **Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre** (previously the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service).

### **Refuges and shelters**

Many organisations provide safe and secure refuges, shelters, or emergency accommodation for women and children escaping family violence. They assist women with emotional support, legal assistance, help with finding permanent housing and applying for appropriate benefits.

The location of some refuges is kept secret to protect the safety and security of women and children residents. For this reason, referral to refuges and shelters is via **Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre** (previously the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria).

### **Other emergency housing**

Additional emergency housing is provided independently by various community and church-based organisations. This accommodation varies in the level of support provided, the length of stay allowed, and what is required of residents.

### **Where to get help**

- In an emergency, if you, a child, or another person is in immediate danger, always call triple zero (000) for police or ambulance services
- **National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence** Counselling Line Tel. 1800RESPECT (**1800 737 732**) (24 hours a day, seven days per week)

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**[betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://betterhealth.vic.gov.au)**

- **Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre** (previously the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service) Tel. **(03) 9322 3555** or **1800 015 188** (24 hours a day, seven days per week)
- **inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence** Tel. **(03) 9413 6500** or **1800 755 988**
- **Dijirra - Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service** Tel. **(03) 9244 3333** or **1800 105 303**

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Women's Health Victoria

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