Family violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships.

Someone who is experiencing family violence may experience one or multiple types of violence, such as:
- physical abuse
- controlling or dominating behaviour
- spiritual or religious abuse
- stalking
- emotional or psychological abuse
- intimidation or threats
- verbal abuse
- financial abuse
- social abuse
- sexual abuse
- reproductive coercion
- damage to property

Monash University is committed to supporting students and staff who experience family violence.

What can I do?

Ensure safety
If you believe there is an immediate risk to yourself or another person, call:
- 9905 3333 for Security on campus
- 000 for an emergency off campus

Seek advice
You can seek confidential advice from Safer Community Unit. We’ll help to:
- keep you safe
- connect you with the most appropriate support services for your situation
- give you information on your formal reporting options so that you can make decisions that are right for you
- assist you with the reporting process, if you decide to make a formal report

How do I help someone else?
If someone you know has experienced family violence, you should encourage them to discuss the matter with Safer Community Unit, who can provide them with information, advice and support specific to their circumstances. Safer Community Unit can also provide advice for you to pass on, and they can also help you with any support you may need.
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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

WHAT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Family violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships.

Family violence can occur:
▶ in a single incident or a series of incidents;
▶ to all genders;
▶ in a marriage, de-facto relationship or civil union;
▶ in LGBTIQA+ relationships;
▶ to people with a disability;
▶ between parents, children and relatives; or
▶ between people in a ‘family-like’ relationship.

Family violence, assaults, threats, sexual assault and stalking are all against the law.

Family violence is any abusive behaviour towards a family member that is done to assert power, to control and to dominate.

1 in 4 women (23%) has experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner since age 15, and women are nearly three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner.


EXAMPLES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence is a broad term that can include conduct such as:
▶ physical abuse
▶ controlling or dominating behaviour
▶ spiritual or religious abuse
▶ emotional or psychological abuse
▶ intimidation or threats
▶ verbal abuse
▶ financial abuse
▶ social abuse
▶ sexual abuse
▶ reproductive coercion
▶ damage to property
▶ abuse of pets, or threatening to.

Family violence can be different, and often worse, for people who may face other types of discrimination:
▶ 1 in 3 LGBTIQA+ people experienced violence from a current or former partner or family member
▶ 36% of women with disability reported experiencing intimate partner violence since age 15 (compared to 21% of women without disability)
▶ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander women have experienced physical or sexual violence by a male intimate partner
▶ Trans & gender diverse people have experienced sexual violence or coercion at a rate four times higher than the general Australian population

Members of underrepresented communities have historically experienced – and continue to experience – additional barriers to accessing support. This guide provides information on a series of specialist support services, at Monash and external, from page 14.

1 ACON, (n.d), Domestic and Family violence
2 OurWatch (2018), Quick facts
3 OurWatch (2018), Quick facts
WHAT CAN I DO?

IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS

If you have experienced family violence, remember that:

▶ it was not your fault and that the perpetrator is solely responsible for their offending
▶ there is no right or wrong way to manage family violence, you need to do what feels right for you
▶ there is no timeframe for reporting or seeking help
▶ you do not have to report it but you can consider seeking other support

Your first point of contact should be Safer Community Unit for advice, to report, or to seek support. They are a specialist team who can talk you through your options, explain where you can get further support and provide you with information to help make decisions. They can also refer you to the other support services available - listed on page 10.

IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS EXPERIENCED THIS

If a friend tells you they have experienced family violence, they have taken a difficult step. They have chosen you because they trust you and need someone to confide in.

Your role is to:

▶ Listen to them without judgement and allow them to talk at their own pace.
▶ Believe their story as it is not your job to investigate. Only ask enough questions to establish if they are safe.
▶ Validate their feelings and reassure them that it was not their fault.

You may be concerned that you cannot cope with the information that your friend is sharing and that you will not be able to support yourself. Safer Community Unit can also provide advice for you to pass on, and they can also help you with any support you may need. It’s okay to step back and let experienced services continue the support, you only need to be a friend not an expert.

KEEPING YOU SAFE

IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE

Your safety and wellbeing is Monash University’s first priority. We will consider your needs and take steps to make sure you are safe.

For an emergency response on or off campus, call 000 for police or ambulance.

If you feel in danger on any campus, contact Security Services on 03 9905 3333 for an immediate response. They know the campus layout and, if necessary, will be able to contact Victoria Police and guide them to your location.

ON CAMPUS

If you are concerned about travelling around campus, you can arrange a security escort at any time of day by calling 03 9902 7777.

It may be possible to put in place measures to ensure your safety on campus, including to reduce the risk of you encountering the perpetrator on campus. Safety measures may include directions that restrict the perpetrator’s access to buildings or which prohibit them from speaking to or approaching you. To discuss safety measures further, speak with Safer Community Unit.

OFF CAMPUS

If you feel unsafe, you can seek an Intervention Order. This is a court order, made by a Magistrate, to help protect you (and/or your family) from the perpetrator. An Intervention Order sets rules or conditions about how the perpetrator must behave towards you. The conditions may stop them from harassing, threatening or intimidating you, or contacting you, or being near you.

You can apply for an Intervention Order yourself by attending a Magistrates Court and asking for an application. You can talk to the Registrar if you are unsure about how to fill out the application. In some cases, you can also ask the police to apply for an Intervention Order on your behalf.

For more information:
HELP AND SUPPORT

IF YOU ARE A STAFF MEMBER

The University recognises that staff may experience situations of violence or abuse in their personal life, constituting family violence, that may affect their attendance or performance at work.

The Family Violence Support Procedure articulates the University’s commitment to providing support to staff experiencing family violence. It also sets out the process for staff to access leave for absences due to family violence and/or flexible work arrangements.

There are also Monash University Family Violence Contact Officers in Safer Community Unit and in the Workplace Relations section of HR.

A Monash University Family Violence Contact Officer is an individual who has been nominated by the University, and has expertise in family violence and privacy issues. A Family Violence Contact Officer will provide advice and referrals in relation to:

- leave
- flexible work arrangements
- additional safety/security arrangements and safe accommodation
- counselling

They can also liaise between you and your supervisor if necessary.

For a list of Family Violence Contact Officers:

- visit monash.edu/safety
- contact Safer Community Unit

IF YOU ARE A STUDENT

Family violence may affect a student’s ability to study, attend classes or to meet the academic or attendance requirements for their course.

The Safer Community Unit can provide information and advice about the options that may be available, including in relation to study leave such as applying for an intermission.

ON CAMPUS

Safer Community Unit

If you have experienced family violence, you are encouraged to talk to Monash University’s Safer Community Unit.

Safer Community Unit can help you by providing:

- advice and referrals for your ongoing safety and wellbeing needs
- access to medical care, with your agreement
- preservation of evidence, with your agreement
- information about your formal reporting options, including connecting you with and transporting you to police with your agreement
- advice about external processes (e.g., police processes and court proceedings) and external safety measures that may be available
- assistance in making informed choices about your safety

SCU can also provide you with specific advice that is tailored to your individual circumstances, including strategies for keeping safe on- and off-campus. If you require a specialised safety plan, SCU will facilitate a referral to Safe Steps (see page 13).

You can also speak to a Monash University Family Violence Contact Officer when contacting the Safer Community Unit.

For more information:

- visit monash.edu/safety
- call 03 9905 1599

Monash Counselling Service

The Monash University Counselling Service has counsellors who are available at all campuses Monday to Friday. All Counselling Service counsellors have received specialised trauma training.

There are also counsellors from the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA) that are available within the University Health Services. You can make an appointment through their website or through the Monash University Counselling Services.

For more information:

- visit www.monash.edu/health/counselling
- call 03 9905 3020 to organise an appointment
Centres Against Sexual Assault
Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASAs) offer a range of services including counselling for victim/survivors of sexual and family violence. They also work with non-offending family members, partners, caregivers and support workers.

There are 14 CASAs in Victoria. Their services are free and include:
- follow-up short, medium and longer term counselling and support
- information and support during the police investigation process
- information and counselling for friends and family members
- medical assistance and follow-up medical treatment
- referrals for assistance with emergency housing and Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal applications

For more information:
- visit [https://www.secasa.org.au](https://www.secasa.org.au)
- call 03 9928 8741 (crisis)
- call 03 9594 2289 (admin)

Victims of Crime
Victims of Crime is a government organisation that provides information, advice and support to help you manage the effects of crime and guide you through the legal process.

They can help you:
- get advice about reporting a crime
- find other services that can help you
- get information about the court process
- get help applying for compensation and financial assistance

For more information:
- call 1800 819 817

Safe Steps
Safe Steps provide 24/7 specialist support services for anyone in Victoria who is experiencing or afraid of family violence.

Their services include:
- information and referral
- crisis response
- specialist family violence risk assessment
- safety planning
- access to supported crisis accommodation

They also provide specialist trauma counselling on behalf of the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service, 1800 RESPECT.

For more information:
- visit [https://www.safesteps.org.au/](https://www.safesteps.org.au/)
- call 1800 015 188

Safe Steps
The National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service (1800 RESPECT), is a 24/7 nation-wide telephone and online counselling service for survivors of both past and recent sexual assault and/or domestic and family violence.

1800 RESPECT provides telephone support by trained counsellors on information and referral services for all Australians, including:
- people who don’t speak English
- people who find it easier to speak through an interpreter or translator
- people who are blind or vision impaired
- people who are deaf or hearing impaired
- people who don’t speak or have difficulties with speech

For more information:
- call 1800 737 732
Thorne Harbour Health
Counselling support for LGBTIQA+ as well as Family Violence
Flexible Support Packages for those who are considering leaving or
have recently left a relationship violence circumstance.
For more information:
▶ visit https://thorneharbour.org/services/relationship-
  family-violence/
▶ call 1800 015 188

inTouch
Specialises in working with migrant and refugee women who have
experienced family violence and require culturally-specific services to
ensure their safety and assist them on their journey to recovery.
For more information:
▶ visit https://intouch.org.au/working-with-victim-
  survivors/
▶ call 1800 755 988

Djirra
Support for Aboriginal women and their children who are currently
experiencing family violence or have in the past and are still not safe.
For more information:
▶ visit https://djirra.org.au/what-we-do/legal-
  services/#support
▶ call 1800 105 303

For more information on your reporting and disclosure pathways:
▶ Make a report or disclose (including anonymously) to SCU:
  ▶ https://www.monash.edu/safer-community/
  ▶ reporting
  ▶ through the Monash bSafe app
  ▶ call 03 9905 1599
  ▶ email safercommunity@monash.edu
▶ Contact Safer Community Unit for information, advice or
  support referrals, call 03 9905 1599
▶ Report anonymously to CrimeStoppers by calling 1800 333
  000 or visiting https://www.crimestoppersvic.com.au/
  report-a-crime/
▶ Contact EDVOS to talk about your reporting options or if you
  have any questions.

You may already have told an Investigation and Risk
Assessment Specialist from the Safer Community Unit
something about your experience.

Safer Community Unit can explain your reporting options, assist
you to get all the support and advice you need, and can help
you connect with the police. They can also talk you through what
Monash University can do.

We understand it can be difficult to report your experience to
police. You may have already made some decisions about those
options, or you may still be considering what to do.

SPECIALIST SERVICES

Men’s Line
Free professional 24/7 online counselling support for men
experiencing family violence.
For more information:
▶ visit https://mensline.org.au/
▶ call 1300 78 99 78

QLife
Anonymous and free LGBTIQA+ peer support and referral for people
in Australia.
For more information:
▶ visit https://qlife.org.au/
▶ call 1800 194 527

The Orange Door
Specialist family violence services for adults, children and young
people experiencing family violence across Victoria.
For more information:
▶ visit https://www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au/

Rainbow Door
LGBTIQA+ family violence support.
For more information:
▶ visit https://www.rainbowdoor.org.au/family-violence
▶ call 1800 729 367

YOUR REPORTING OPTIONS
REPORTING TO POLICE

The police have protocols in place to assist you through the reporting process. You can report family violence to the police if you are:

▶ someone experiencing violence
▶ concerned friends or family
▶ neighbours or services

DECIDING TO REPORT

When deciding to report, you may wish to consider the following:

▶ the sooner you report, the easier it will be for police to investigate
▶ the police may be able to investigate and the perpetrator may be charged especially if there is other evidence or witnesses
▶ making a report may help you with your recovery

Depending on the circumstances, there are a range of actions police can take. If a crime has been committed police will investigate and may pursue charges.

Victoria Police can also assist you with immediate non-criminal actions to manage your risk and increase your safety by:

▶ issuing a Family Violence Safety Notice on the spot
▶ helping you to apply to the court for a Family Violence Intervention Order
▶ helping you apply to change an existing Intervention Order to increase protection

If the perpetrator breaches a Family Violence Safety Notice or Family Violence Intervention Order, it should be reported to police as soon as possible as it can result in criminal charges.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

If you do choose to report to the police and they attend a family violence incident, Victoria Police will make an assessment of the risk, taking into consideration past family violence and any recorded criminal history.

They will identify who is:

▶ being harmed most (the victim or ‘affected family member’)
▶ who is the main person harming others (the primary aggressor or ‘other party’).

A Police risk assessment includes:

▶ asking if everyone is safe
▶ speaking to each person on their own and they may speak to children
▶ asking what has been happening now and in the past
▶ checking if, due to the violence, anyone needs medical attention and taking note of any damage
▶ making referrals for each individual

Police may also ask if any of the parties who are involved:

▶ has a disability
▶ has any medical needs
▶ requires an interpreter

If anyone, including children, identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, they can indicate if they prefer mainstream or Indigenous-specific services.

When responding to family violence, Victoria Police follow a Code of Practice.
If you report family violence, know that you are not alone. Monash University wants to help you. Please remember:

▶ Monash University can provide expert help, advice and support to assist you to consider your decisions.

▶ You are always able to discuss your options and decisions with the Safer Community Unit. There is no timeframe for reporting or seeking help.

▶ The final decision about whether to report is an important personal choice, and is yours alone to make. You need to do what feels right for you.

There are some circumstances where Monash University may be obliged to take certain action, even if you don’t want to make a formal report. This might occur if, for example, a child is at risk, or there is a serious or imminent risk to the safety of another person.

Monash University follows the principles and processes in any applicable University policies and procedures, including the Sexual Misconduct Response Procedure and Family Violence Support Procedure. You can read these procedures on the Safer Community Unit web page.

Monash University’s internal disciplinary systems may not apply, and the University may not be able to investigate, if:

▶ the perpetrator was not a Monash University student or staff member at the time of the violence;

▶ the perpetrator is no longer a current student or staff member; or

▶ the violence happened off-campus and at a location or activity that is not connected to the University.

In these cases, the Safer Community Unit will still be able to help you by:

▶ giving you information about external reporting options that are available; and

▶ referring you to appropriate support services; and

▶ discussing measures that may be available to keep you safe on campus.

Where the family violence has also been reported to the police, Monash University will generally postpone any disciplinary action until after the police investigation and criminal justice process has finished. This is to avoid any risk of interference with the police investigation or court proceedings. Please note that, if the investigation is postponed, the University can still impose measures to keep you safe on campus.

WHERE THE PERPETRATOR IS A STUDENT

If the perpetrator is a current Monash University Student and the violence occurred on-campus or at an off-campus University activity, you can ask Safer Community Unit to refer the matter to the student general misconduct process. This will involve the allegation being formally investigated, usually by the Safer Community Unit. Evidence, where available, will be collected to show whether the perpetrator has engaged in an act of general misconduct.

The evidence gathered by the investigation will be provided to the Responsible Officer for General Misconduct (ROGM) in Student Conduct. The ROGM may deal with the allegations themselves or may refer the matter to a general misconduct panel to decide whether the allegations are proven.

As part of the general misconduct process:

▶ the perpetrator is required to be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations against them; and

▶ the ROGM or the general misconduct panel may invite you to answer questions about what happened; and

▶ arrangements can be made to ensure you do not have contact with the perpetrator during general misconduct proceedings.

WHERE THE PERPETRATOR IS STAFF MEMBER

If the perpetrator is a current Monash University staff member, you can ask Safer Community Unit to refer the incident to the Workplace Relations area of the University to consider staff disciplinary action. This involves the incident being investigated and any available evidence being gathered.

The evidence is provided to Workplace Relations, who is required to give the perpetrator an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

After this, if Workplace Relations considers there is enough evidence to take action, they will then determine how to proceed.