

# FACTORS THAT MIGHT IMPACT AN EMPLOYEE'S EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Access to housing, financial independence, personal factors, access to support services and life experiences can all impact a person's vulnerability to and experience of family and domestic violence.
- You can support employees by talking with them, and ensuring they know the leave entitlements, policies and support pathways available to them, regardless of whether or not they choose to disclose their experience to you.

Family and domestic violence can occur regardless of race, gender, religion, ability, education, socio-economic circumstances, or sexual orientation. Everyone's experiences are unique.

Understanding factors that might shape a person's experience of family and domestic violence can help you to better support your staff.

Certain factors can particularly impact a person's vulnerability to and experience of family and domestic violence. These include:

- Access to housing.
- Financial independence.
- Personal factors.
- Access to support services.
- Life experiences.





Experiencing multiple factors can increase risk and make it more complicated for employees to disclose their experience of family and domestic violence.

An overview of how these factors may impact people is below, with links to further reading and external supports to help you respond to the unique circumstances and experiences of employees.

**For more information, see [vic.gov.au/victorian-family-violence-data-collection-framework/intersectionality-and-family-violence](https://vic.gov.au/victorian-family-violence-data-collection-framework/intersectionality-and-family-violence)**

## **ACCESS TO HOUSING**

Family and domestic violence is the number one cause of homelessness for women.

A lack of housing options can make it harder for people to leave abusive situations, and may worsen experiences of trauma and dislocation.

**For more information, see [aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/responses-and-outcomes/housing](https://aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/responses-and-outcomes/housing)**

## **FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE**

Having no, limited or restricted access to money can make it harder for someone experiencing abuse to leave a violent relationship or access specialist support services.

Limited funds, existing debt, and poor credit can make it difficult to obtain rental housing and pay for other expenses like bills, groceries, and school fees.

**For more information, see [safesteps.org.au/understanding-family-violence/types-of-abuse/financial-abuse](https://safesteps.org.au/understanding-family-violence/types-of-abuse/financial-abuse)**



## PERSONAL FACTORS

Some people may face additional challenges understanding and accessing available supports.

- Concerns about whether support will be safe and inclusive may impact whether people choose to access supports.
- Factors like English language skills or disability may impact a person's ability to access and understand information and support services.
- Cultural norms may impact how people perceive family and domestic violence and whether they choose to access supports.

For more information, see:

- [1800respect.org.au/inclusive-practice/cald](https://1800respect.org.au/inclusive-practice/cald)
- [dfvbenchbook.aija.org.au/article/1080206](https://dfvbenchbook.aija.org.au/article/1080206)

## ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES

Factors like remoteness can impact the range and availability of support services that some people are able to access.

People with additional support needs may face greater challenges accessing support services.

For more information, see:

- [aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/domestic-and-family-violence-regional-rural-and-remote](https://aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/domestic-and-family-violence-regional-rural-and-remote)
- [1800respect.org.au/inclusive-practice](https://1800respect.org.au/inclusive-practice)



## LIFE EXPERIENCES

Significant life events may be additional stressors that impact people's experience of family and domestic violence.

Such life events may include:

- Pregnancy
- Caring responsibilities
- Relationship changes
- Serious accident or illness
- Court proceedings
- Moving home
- Death of a loved one
- Changes to employment

For more information, see:

- [aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/understanding-fdsv](https://aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/understanding-fdsv)
- [vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-foundation-knowledge-guide/evidence-based-risk-factors-and-maram-risk](https://vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-foundation-knowledge-guide/evidence-based-risk-factors-and-maram-risk)



## WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR EMPLOYEE IS EXPERIENCING FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

If you're worried about an employee, talk to them. The ["Tips for talking to your employee"](#) resource provides useful information to help you prepare for the conversation.

Remember, victim-survivors may not want to disclose their experience to you.

### You can support all employees by:

- Offering regular one-to-one check-ins where work and non-work topics are discussed providing information about the business's FDV leave policy and the confidentiality of their personal information.
- Building awareness of the signs of family and domestic violence.
- Building awareness of referral pathways.



## WHAT SUPPORTS CAN YOU REFER YOUR EMPLOYEES TO?

There are a range of specialised supports available that reflect the diverse experiences of victim-survivors.



### "Referral pathways for employees experiencing family and domestic violence"

1800RESPECT is the national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service.

If you or someone you know is affected by domestic, family or sexual violence, call 1800 737 732, text 0458 737 732 or visit [www.1800RESPECT.org.au](http://www.1800RESPECT.org.au) for online chat and video call services – available 24/7.

Phone: 1800 737 732 [1800respect.org.au](http://1800respect.org.au)



[10DaysPaidFDVLeave.com.au](http://10DaysPaidFDVLeave.com.au)

This resource is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).