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| Ending family violence: annual report (2021)  OFFICIAL |
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Contents

[Ending family violence: annual report 9](#_Toc99104450)

[Terminology and language used in this report 10](#_Toc99104451)

[Overview 12](#_Toc99104452)

[How we are tracking 12](#_Toc99104453)

[Significant progress has been made 13](#_Toc99104454)

[Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic 14](#_Toc99104455)

[Understanding our impact 14](#_Toc99104456)

[Family violence incidents recorded by police are rising in line with our expectations 15](#_Toc99104457)

[Looking ahead 16](#_Toc99104458)

[The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic 17](#_Toc99104459)

[Increased risk and perpetration of violence against victim survivors 17](#_Toc99104460)

[Challenges in service delivery and impacts 17](#_Toc99104461)

[How we responded 18](#_Toc99104462)

[Family Violence Outcomes Framework measures 20](#_Toc99104463)

[The Family Violence Outcomes Framework 20](#_Toc99104464)

[Data availability and improvements 21](#_Toc99104465)

[Domain 1: Prevention 22](#_Toc99104466)

[Data availability 23](#_Toc99104467)

[Domain 2: Victim survivors 24](#_Toc99104468)

[Families are safe and strong 25](#_Toc99104469)

[Indicator: Reduction in children and young people who experience or witness family violence 25](#_Toc99104470)

[Measure: Number/proportion of unique affected family members who are children 25](#_Toc99104471)

[Indicator: Reduction in family violence among women who are pregnant or have a newborn 26](#_Toc99104472)

[Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘pregnancy or new birth’ is recorded 26](#_Toc99104473)

[Indicator: Reduction in level of risk for victim survivors immediately post-separation 27](#_Toc99104474)

[Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘recent or imminent separation’ is recorded 27](#_Toc99104475)

[Victim survivors are safe 29](#_Toc99104476)

[Indicator: Decrease family violence deaths 29](#_Toc99104477)

[Measure: Number of family violence-related deaths 29](#_Toc99104478)

[Victim survivors rebuild lives and thrive 30](#_Toc99104479)

[Indicator: Increase in victim survivors who have safe, secure, stable and affordable housing 30](#_Toc99104480)

[Measure: Proportion of victim survivors who are homeless or without a permanent place to live 30](#_Toc99104481)

[Measure: Proportion of victim survivors who experience an improvement in their housing situation after receiving a service 31](#_Toc99104482)

[Domain 3: Perpetrators 33](#_Toc99104483)

[Perpetrators stop all forms of family violence behaviour 34](#_Toc99104484)

[Indicator: Reduction in all family violence behaviours 34](#_Toc99104485)

[Measure: Number/proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders 34](#_Toc99104486)

[Measure: Number/proportion of individuals identified as the respondent in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within 12 months 35](#_Toc99104487)

[Domain 4: System 37](#_Toc99104488)

[The family violence system is integrated 38](#_Toc99104489)

[Indicator: Increased sharing of information to assess and respond to needs and risks 38](#_Toc99104490)

[Measure: Number of Central Information Point reports provided to services 38](#_Toc99104491)

[The family violence and broader workforces across the system are skilled, capable and reflect the communities they serve 40](#_Toc99104492)

[Indicator: Increase workforce diversity 40](#_Toc99104493)

[Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who identify as from a priority community – ATSI, CALD, LGBTIQ+, disability 40](#_Toc99104494)

[Indicator: Increase workforce skills and capabilities 41](#_Toc99104495)

[Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report confidence they have enough training and experience to perform their role effectively 41](#_Toc99104496)

[Indicator: Increase in health, safety and wellbeing of the family violence workforce 42](#_Toc99104497)

[Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report work-related stress 42](#_Toc99104498)

[Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023 activities 45](#_Toc99104499)

[Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023 activity progress 46](#_Toc99104500)

[Overarching priorities 47](#_Toc99104501)

[Overarching priorities – What has happened 47](#_Toc99104502)

[Overarching priorities – Lived experience 47](#_Toc99104503)

[Overarching priorities – Sexual violence and harm 48](#_Toc99104504)

[Overarching priorities – Children and young people 49](#_Toc99104505)

[Overarching priorities – Intersectionality 49](#_Toc99104506)

[Overarching priorities – Reform oversight and governance 50](#_Toc99104507)

[Overarching priorities – What is next 51](#_Toc99104508)

[Overarching priorities – What is next – Intersectionality 51](#_Toc99104509)

[Overarching priorities – What is next – Reform oversight and governance 51](#_Toc99104510)

[Overarching priorities – What is next – Sexual violence and harm 51](#_Toc99104511)

[Overarching priorities – What is next – Children and young people 51](#_Toc99104512)

[Overarching priorities – What this means for outcomes 52](#_Toc99104513)

[Overarching priorities – Domain 1: Prevention 52](#_Toc99104514)

[Overarching priorities – Domain 2: Victim survivors 52](#_Toc99104515)

[Overarching priorities – Domain 3: Perpetrators 52](#_Toc99104516)

[Overarching priorities – Domain 4: System 53](#_Toc99104517)

[Courts priority area 54](#_Toc99104518)

[Courts – What has happened 54](#_Toc99104519)

[Courts – Specialist Family Violence Courts 54](#_Toc99104520)

[Courts – Services and programs 56](#_Toc99104521)

[Courts – Culturally safe and inclusive 57](#_Toc99104522)

[Courts – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 57](#_Toc99104523)

[Courts – What is next 58](#_Toc99104524)

[Courts - What this means for outcomes 58](#_Toc99104525)

[Courts – Domain 2: Victim Survivors 58](#_Toc99104526)

[Courts – Domain 3: Perpetrators 59](#_Toc99104527)

[Courts – Domain 4: System 59](#_Toc99104528)

[Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way priority area 60](#_Toc99104529)

[Dhelk Dja – What has happened? 60](#_Toc99104530)

[Dhelk Dja Agreement 60](#_Toc99104531)

[Dhelk Dja – Statewide access and engagement 61](#_Toc99104532)

[Dhelk Dja – Programs and services 61](#_Toc99104533)

[Dhelk Dja – Government commitments 62](#_Toc99104534)

[Dhelk Dja – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 62](#_Toc99104535)

[Dhelk Dja – What is next 63](#_Toc99104536)

[Dhelk Dja – What this means for outcomes 63](#_Toc99104537)

[Dhelk Dja – Domain 1: Prevention 63](#_Toc99104538)

[Dhelk Dja – Domain 2: Victim survivors 63](#_Toc99104539)

[Dhelk Dja – Domain 3: Perpetrators 64](#_Toc99104540)

[Dhelk Dja – Domain 4: System 64](#_Toc99104541)

[Housing priority area 65](#_Toc99104542)

[Housing – What has happened 65](#_Toc99104543)

[Housing – Statewide access and engagement 66](#_Toc99104544)

[Housing – Culturally safe and inclusive 67](#_Toc99104545)

[Housing – What is next 67](#_Toc99104546)

[Housing – Domain 2: Victim survivors 68](#_Toc99104547)

[Housing – Domain 3: Perpetrators 68](#_Toc99104548)

[Housing – Domain 4: System 68](#_Toc99104549)

[Legal assistance priority area 69](#_Toc99104550)

[Legal assistance – What has happened 69](#_Toc99104551)

[Legal assistance – Programs and services 69](#_Toc99104552)

[Legal assistance – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 70](#_Toc99104553)

[Legal assistance – What is next 71](#_Toc99104554)

[Legal assistance – What this means for outcomes 71](#_Toc99104555)

[Legal assistance – Domain 2: Victim survivors 71](#_Toc99104556)

[Legal assistance – Domain 3: Perpetrators 71](#_Toc99104557)

[Legal assistance – Domain 4: System 71](#_Toc99104558)

[MARAM and information sharing priority area 73](#_Toc99104559)

[MARAM Framework 73](#_Toc99104560)

[MARAM and information sharing – What has happened 74](#_Toc99104561)

[MARAM and information sharing – Programs and services 74](#_Toc99104562)

[MARAM and information sharing – Government commitments 76](#_Toc99104563)

[MARAM and information sharing – Enabling our workforce and improving out systems 76](#_Toc99104564)

[MARAM and information sharing – What is next 77](#_Toc99104565)

[MARAM and information sharing – What this means for outcomes 78](#_Toc99104566)

[MARAM and information sharing – Domain 2: Victim survivors 78](#_Toc99104567)

[MARAM and information sharing – Domain 3: Perpetrators 78](#_Toc99104568)

[MARAM and information sharing – Domain 4: System 78](#_Toc99104569)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence priority area 79](#_Toc99104570)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – What has happened 79](#_Toc99104571)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Programs and services 80](#_Toc99104572)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Government commitments 81](#_Toc99104573)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Culturally safe and inclusive 82](#_Toc99104574)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 82](#_Toc99104575)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – What is next 83](#_Toc99104576)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – What this means for outcomes 84](#_Toc99104577)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Domain 2: Victim survivors 84](#_Toc99104578)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Domain 3: Perpetrators 84](#_Toc99104579)

[Perpetrators and people who use violence – Domain 4: System 84](#_Toc99104580)

[Primary prevention priority area 85](#_Toc99104581)

[Primary prevention – What has happened 85](#_Toc99104582)

[Primary prevention – Statewide access and engagement 85](#_Toc99104583)

[Primary prevention – Programs and services 88](#_Toc99104584)

[Primary prevention – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 90](#_Toc99104585)

[Primary prevention – Government commitments 90](#_Toc99104586)

[Primary prevention – What is next 91](#_Toc99104587)

[Primary prevention – What this means for outcomes 91](#_Toc99104588)

[Primary prevention – Domain 1: Prevention 91](#_Toc99104589)

[Primary prevention – Domain 4: System 92](#_Toc99104590)

[Research and evaluation priority area 93](#_Toc99104591)

[Research and evaluation – What has happened 93](#_Toc99104592)

[Research and evaluation – Statewide access and engagement 93](#_Toc99104593)

[Research and evaluation – Government commitments 94](#_Toc99104594)

[Research and evaluation – Culturally safe and inclusive 94](#_Toc99104595)

[Research and evaluation – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 95](#_Toc99104596)

[Research and evaluation – What is next 95](#_Toc99104597)

[Research and evaluation – What this means for outcomes 96](#_Toc99104598)

[The Orange Door network priority area 97](#_Toc99104599)

[The Orange Door network – What has happened 97](#_Toc99104600)

[The Orange Door network – Culturally safe and inclusive 98](#_Toc99104601)

[The Orange Door network – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 99](#_Toc99104602)

[The Orange Door network – What is next 100](#_Toc99104603)

[The Orange Door network – What this means for outcomes 101](#_Toc99104604)

[The Orange Door network – Domain 2: Victim survivors 101](#_Toc99104605)

[The Orange Door network – Domain 3: Perpetrators 101](#_Toc99104606)

[The Orange Door network – Domain 4: System 101](#_Toc99104607)

[Workforce development priority area 103](#_Toc99104608)

[Workforce development – What has happened 103](#_Toc99104609)

[Workforce development – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems 103](#_Toc99104610)

[Workforce development – What is next 105](#_Toc99104611)

[Workforce development – What does this mean for outcomes? 106](#_Toc99104612)

[Workforce development – Domain 1: Prevention 106](#_Toc99104613)

[Workforce development – Domain 2: Victim survivors 106](#_Toc99104614)

[Workforce development – Domain 3: Perpetrators 106](#_Toc99104615)

[Workforce development – Domain 4: System 106](#_Toc99104616)

[Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations 107](#_Toc99104617)

[Glossary of terms 108](#_Toc99104618)

[References 112](#_Toc99104619)

[Explanatory notes 113](#_Toc99104620)

[Explanatory notes – Domain 2: Victim Survivors 113](#_Toc99104621)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of unique affected family members who are children 113](#_Toc99104622)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘pregnancy or new birth’ is recorded 113](#_Toc99104623)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘recent separation’ is recorded on L17 form 114](#_Toc99104624)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number of family violence-related deaths 114](#_Toc99104625)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of victim survivors who are homeless/without a permanent place to live 115](#_Toc99104626)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Proportion of victim survivors who experience an improvement in their housing situation after receiving a service 116](#_Toc99104627)

[Explanatory notes – Domain 3: Perpetrators 119](#_Toc99104628)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders 119](#_Toc99104629)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of individuals identified as the respondent in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within [12 months] 119](#_Toc99104630)

[Explanatory notes – Domain 4: System 121](#_Toc99104631)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number of Central Information Point reports provided to services 121](#_Toc99104632)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who identify as from a priority community – ATSI, CALD, LGBTIQ+, disability 121](#_Toc99104633)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report confidence they have enough training and experience to perform their role effectively 122](#_Toc99104634)

[Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report work related stress 123](#_Toc99104635)

# Ending family violence: annual report

Reporting on the 2020 and 2021 progress of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework and the Rolling Action Plan 2020-2023

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| Video: A message from the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence I’m pleased to present the Ending family violence: annual report, an important account of the work across government to prevent and respond to family violence in Victoria.  Six years ago, the Royal Commission into family violence handed down its final report. We committed to implement all 227 of its recommendations and began the task of building a new, stronger and more coordinated family violence system. We committed to ending family violence here in Victoria. We knew it wouldn’t be easy and we knew it wouldn’t be quick, but it has to be done.  Since then, we’ve invested more than $3.5 billion to prevent and respond to gendered violence here in Victoria.  With only 23 recommendations outstanding, we have made substantial progress.  The Orange Door network has assisted more than 200,000 people across Victoria and has fundamentally changed the way our system responds to family violence. We’ve opened new Specialist Family Violence Courts and embedded nation-leading Respectful Relationships education in every Victorian government school. We’re ensuring a community-led, self-determined response to preventing and responding to family violence within Aboriginal communities through our Dhelk Dja Agreement. Perpetrators are being kept in view with expanded community-based interventions and accommodation programs, informed by comprehensive view of risk through the Central Information Point. Most importantly, every step of the way, we are keeping the voices of victim survivors central to the design and implementation of this reform.  The Ending family violence: annual report shows how far we’ve come and it reveals the sobering truths about just how far we still have to go. Family violence remains the leading cause of homelessness for women and children in Victoria. As a result of increased awareness and enforcement, we have seen year-on-year increases in recorded family violence incidents and with that, unprecedented demand on services.  Too many children still suffer the devastating impacts of family violence. We know there is still more work to do in strengthening our data to give a more comprehensive picture of the impact of our reforms. And we have seen the profound impact of COVID-19 on victim survivors of family violence and the services that support them.  The challenges of the last two years have only strengthened our resolve. The Ending family violence: annual report allows us to continue our work to build a nation leading family violence system, with transparency and accountability.  This work isn’t easy, and it’s a long way from finished but we are dedicated to the task. To build a nation-leading family violence system and a life free from violence for every Victorian.  Source: ‘A message from the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence’ <https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-annual-report> |

**Aboriginal acknowledgement**

We proudly acknowledge Victoria’s Aboriginal communities and their ongoing strength in practising the world’s oldest living culture. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live, work, learn and play, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the ongoing leadership role of the Aboriginal community in addressing and preventing family violence. We join with First Peoples to eliminate family violence from all communities.

**Acknowledgment of victim survivors of family violence**

We pay our respects to victims and victim survivors of family violence and violence against women. We acknowledge their resilience and courage. They remain at the forefront of our work.

In 2015, the Victorian Government established the [Royal Commission into Family Violence](https://www.rcfv.com.au/) <https://www.rcfv.com.au/> following a series of family violence-related deaths in Victoria. In its final report, the Royal Commission set out the case for focused, coordinated leadership backed by new investment and approaches. Its recommendations aim to prevent family violence, support victim survivors and hold perpetrators to account.

The government committed to implementing all 227 recommendations, setting out its plan in [*Ending family violence: Victoria’s plan for change* (the *10-year plan*)](https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change) <https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change>. The plan’s goal is to establish a nation-leading family violence system. It also seeks to create a Victoria where all people live free from family violence, and where women and men are treated equally and respectfully.

In 2022, only [23 of the 227 Royal Commission recommendations](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-recommendations) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-recommendations> remain to be implemented.

This report is part of the Victorian Government’s annual reporting commitments on the progress and impact of the family violence reform. It uses the [*Family Violence Reform Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023* (the *Rolling Action Plan*)](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023> and the [Family Violence Outcomes Framework (the Outcomes Framework)](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-outcomes-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-outcomes-framework> to do this.

This website, which will be updated annually, helps ensure accountability to the community for the commitments made in the *10-year plan* and the impact of the reform.

Momentum for this once-in-a-generation reform cannot be lost.

## Terminology and language used in this report

Language relating to family violence is always evolving and varies between communities and government and non-government agencies.

It is important to use language that community members who may use the system are comfortable with, as this can help build trust. This section provides an overview of language used commonly in the family violence sector and throughout this report. The [‘Glossary](#_Glossary_of_terms) of terms’ provides a more detailed list of terminology.

While acknowledging that family violence is gendered, this report does not use gendered language to describe every form of family violence. This is to capture the full array of victim survivors who may experience family violence, including those who historically may have had difficulty being recognised.

The family violence system is diverse, and different language is used to refer to people who experience or use family violence. This report adopts, where possible, the terminology used by government and non-government agencies across the family violence sector. However, it uses the terms **victim survivor** and **perpetrator**, because these are the terms most widely used in the community.

* The term **victim survivor** refers to adults, children and young people who experience family violence. Under the Family Violence Protection Act, children are considered victim survivors if they experience family violence directed at them, or they are exposed to the effects of family violence. This includes being present at or witnessing a family violence incident.
* The term **perpetrator** refers to an adult who uses violence or threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour against family members (as defined in the [Family Violence Protection Act](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008>) in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships.

Variations of language this report uses to describe family violence include the following:

* Aboriginal people and communities may prefer to use the term ‘people who use violence’. In this report, the term Aboriginal people is used to refer to both Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.
* This report uses the term ‘adolescent or young person who uses violence’ rather than ‘perpetrator’ for children aged 10–17. Young people who use family violence need distinct responses, tailored to their age, safety and developmental needs. Young people who use family violence are often also victim survivors.

Other terms for different functions or points in time within the family violence system include the following:

* Police use the terms ‘**affected family member**’ or ‘victim’ to refer to the person deemed to be most harmed and affected by events occurring during a family violence incident. Police make an assessment of risk, considering past family violence and any recorded criminal history to identify who is being harmed and affected the most during an incident.
* Police use the term ‘**respondent**’ to describe the main person who is harming others. The term ‘respondent’ is also used in family violence intervention order applications to describe the person against whom an order is sought. The term ‘offender’ describes a person who has been found guilty of an offence.

# Overview

Reform activity across the Family Violence Outcomes Framework

The [Royal Commission into Family Violence](https://www.rcfv.com.au/) <https://www.rcfv.com.au/> revealed the devastating prevalence and impact of family violence across Victoria. It cuts lives short, inflicts unspeakable trauma, creates cycles of intergenerational trauma and violence1, and costs more than $5.3 billion a year2.

Ending family violence in Victoria is a huge challenge. It requires a holistic, joined-up approach, sustained over a generation. We must continue to work together to prevent and respond to all forms of family violence. This work is informed by victim survivors, and it takes place in our schools and hospitals, our courts and our community centres, across specialist family violence workforces.

The [Family Violence Outcomes Framework](https://www.rcfv.com.au/) <https://www.rcfv.com.au/> provides a common set of goals that unite this diverse group of people and organisations. The Outcomes Framework has four domains:

1. **Prevention** – family violence and gender inequality are not tolerated.
2. **Victim survivors** – victim survivors, vulnerable children and families are safe and supported to recover and thrive.
3. **Perpetrators** – perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence.
4. **System** – preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring.

Each year, this website will be updated to reflect progress against the Family Violence Outcomes Framework and against the *Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023.*

## How we are tracking

To understand how we are tracking, we must first understand the intent of the [Royal Commission recommendations](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-recommendations) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-recommendations>. These lay the foundation for short, medium and long-term change.

The Royal Commission noted that its task was to make practical recommendations on the most effective ways to:

* prevent family violence
* improve early intervention to identify and protect those at risk
* support victims – particularly women and children – and address the impacts of violence on them
* make perpetrators accountable
* develop and refine systemic responses to family violence – including in the legal system and by police, corrections, child protection, legal and family violence support services
* better coordinate community and government responses to family violence
* evaluate and measure the success of strategies, frameworks, policies, programs and services introduced to put a stop to family violence.

Having a theory of change is vital to this work and informs what we do. We understand that to see change occurring we must first improve the system that supports our prevention of, responses to and understanding of family violence.

This is why we are:

* developing a coordinated family violence system
* investing in prevention, early intervention and response
* prioritising evaluation, learning and continuous improvement.

This approach will support victim survivors and hold perpetrators to account, with the goal of ending family violence in Victoria.

This website combines the progress report on the *Rolling Action Plan* with the latest data on the Outcomes Framework. Our assumption is that if we implement the *Rolling Action Plan*, we will see changes occurring that support the achievement of our outcomes.

The final 23 of the 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission are on track to be implemented in 2022.

With these recommendations in place, the foundations of our system are strong. However, our efforts to build the system continue, as does our long-term prevention work to change the attitudes, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to family violence.

While it is still early in this generational reform, we remain committed to sharing our progress and challenges.

### Significant progress has been made

The [*Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023*](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023> outlines our focus for this phase of the reform. This report shows progress against the actions committed to in the *Rolling Action Plan*, including:

* the continued establishment of [The Orange Door network](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/>, a free service for adults, children and young people experiencing family violence, where they can access the support they need from a range of specialist services. Two new Orange Door sites opened in 2020 and another six in 2021. Since its commencement in May 2018, The Orange Door has received more than 200,000 people, including more than 80,000 children (as at February 2022).
* the establishment of another three Specialist Family Violence Courts, with five now in operation and plans for another nine across Victoria
* the construction of 349 new homes in line with the [Big Housing Build](https://www.vic.gov.au/homes-victoria-big-housing-build) <https://www.vic.gov.au/homes-victoria-big-housing-build> and nine new core and cluster refuges completed and operational by October 2021
* the continued implementation and training for the [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework> to ensure an effective and consistent approach to assessing and managing the risk of family violence. With the roll out of Phase 2 of the MARAM over 370,000 practitioners (as at April 2021) are now prescribed from organisations across the health, education, justice and social service system
* the development of primary prevention practice across key settings including local government, TAFEs, universities and perinatal settings
* investment in innovative prevention initiatives led by diverse communities, including Aboriginal-led organisations, multicultural and faith-based organisations and other community groups in Victoria
* more than 1,950 government, Catholic and independent schools signing on to a whole-school approach to [Respectful Relationships](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx) <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx> education, and more than 35,000 school staff and 3,500 early childhood educators participating in Respectful Relationships professional learning
* high-impact public campaigns conducted by [Respect Victoria](https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/) <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/> to raise awareness of family violence and how to prevent it. Evaluation of these campaigns demonstrated a high level of community recognition and understanding of the key messages
* equipping those working in family violence services, as well as those whose work requires them to be aware of the risks of family violence, with the training they need to do their jobs effectively. Workforce census data indicates that at least half of those who responded from specialist family violence services and from across the primary prevention workforce felt very or extremely confident in their level of training and experience to complete their role.

### Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic

Some of our activities have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, our focus was on supporting those most in need, given the heightened risk of family violence. To limit the impact of the pandemic, we have:

* provided $20 million for short-term accommodation for victim survivors who did not feel safe isolating or recovering from COVID-19 at home
* provided $20.2 million to help Victorian family violence services meet the expected increase in demand during the coronavirus pandemic and provide critical help for victim-survivors
* implemented the Multicultural COVID-19 Family Violence Program, which provided one-off funding to 20 multicultural, faith-based and ethno-specific organisations to help raise awareness of the drivers of family violence and support early intervention activities
* continued to provide crisis accommodation and all family violence, sexual assault and The Orange Door services. We worked with the sector to strengthen these services during the pandemic
* launched Operation Ribbon, where police proactively reached out to victim survivors to check on their safety and wellbeing, and to perpetrators to monitor their behaviour and keep them in view
* established the Men’s Accommodation and Counselling Service for men who use violence, providing crisis accommodation, wrap-around support to address immediate concerns and link men to services to address their offending behaviour
* increased the accessibility of Men's Behaviour Change Programs by moving to online groups and one-on-one engagement to keep men who use violence in view. We also continued to provide support when face-to-face groups were suspended.

### Understanding our impact

With the foundational elements of the reform in now in place, we can begin to use the Outcomes Framework to demonstrate our impact.

We have strong data across our family violence and justice system that tells a story about the incidence of family violence and use of services.

However, we know we have more work to do to strengthen the consistency of data across government and the family violence sector, so that it gives a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the impact of our reforms.

The data that has informed this first report is just the starting point. We will update this data annually as we continue to work with stakeholders to improve its availability and quality. Through this process, we will identify and develop new measures. We will also apply an increasingly sophisticated analysis to existing measures to help us better understand the impact of the reforms.

Our immediate focus is on linking existing datasets. This will help us better understand the different points of contact and engagement victim survivors and perpetrators have across the service system and how this affects their outcomes.

Visit the [Victorian Family Violence Data Portal](https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal) <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal> for more on data collection.

### Family violence incidents recorded by police are rising in line with our expectations

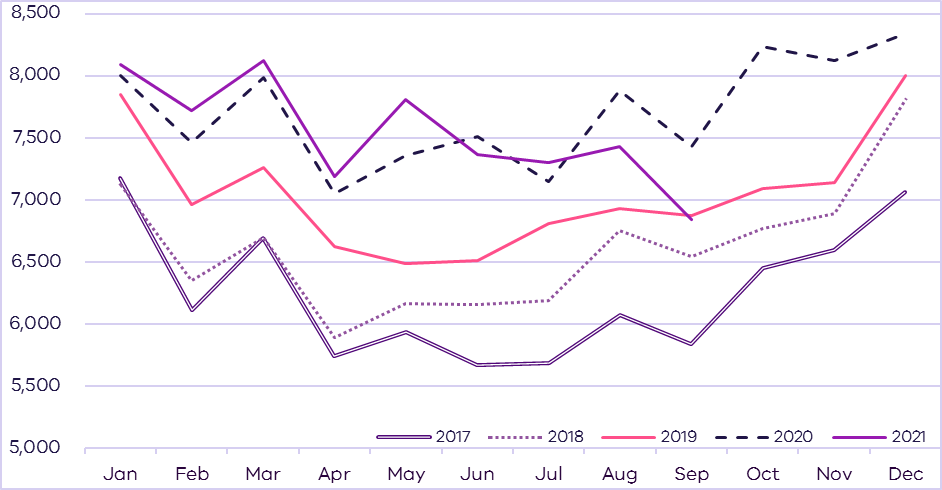
There has been a general trend of increased reporting of family violence incidents to police since 2016. This is in line with what we expected to see at this stage of our *10-year plan.* The COVID-19 pandemic has also likely impacted the significantly higher numbers of incidents in 2020.

There were 91,144 family violence incidents in 2021, a 1.5 per cent reduction on 2020 (92,513). Despite this modest decrease, the number of incidents in 2021 was still 7.8 per cent higher than in 2019.Our investment and reforms have:

* helped raise awareness of family violence across the Victorian community
* made services more accessible to those who need them
* supported victim survivors to report violence committed against them.

These year-on-year increases are likely to continue in these early stages of changing the way we address family violence. This is because community awareness is growing, women are beginning to feel safer and more confident in support systems, and, importantly, we are improving justice responses for victim survivors and hold perpetrators to account.

Incidences of family violence by month – 2017 to 2021



## Looking ahead

At just over halfway in the implementation the *10-year plan*, more than $3.5 billion has been invested to prevent family violence, support victim survivors and hold perpetrators to account.

Victorians are more aware than ever of what family violence is and the help that is available to them. Sadly, many people will still need to access that help in the years to come.

This is why we must maintain our focus and investment to realise the full intent of the Royal Commission and bring an end to family violence.

In 2022, we will continue to deliver the *Rolling Action Plan* and implement the remaining 23 recommendations of the Royal Commission. We will continue to be informed by the lived experiences of victim survivors. We will also apply an inclusive lens that recognises how factors such as race, age, disability, culture and gender affect people’s experience.

We will begin to implement the [*Free from Violence Second Action Plan*](https://www.vic.gov.au/free-violence-second-action-plan-2022-2025) <https://www.vic.gov.au/free-violence-second-action-plan-2022-2025> and finalise the *Sexual violence and harm strategy*, which will respond to the Victorian Law Reform Commission’s report on *Improving the justice system response to sexual offences*.

We will continue to work closely with the family violence sector to ensure victim survivors and people who use violence receive more consistent, better integrated services. The goal of this work is to end the cycle of violence and minimise retraumatisation.

This will help build a family violence system that is responsive and resilient to further shocks. It will also equip us to better understand the impact of our efforts and continually strengthen them.

# The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Like many things, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on family violence.

We know that family violence is driven by expressions of gender inequality: the unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunities between men and women.3 Gender inequality is the outcome of and is exacerbated by rigid gender stereotypes such as men’s control of decision making.

Other factors including financial pressure, alcohol and drug abuse, mental illness and social and economic exclusion can also increase the risk or severity of family violence, but are not the underlying drivers.1, 3

**There is strong evidence that the gendered drivers and factors that exacerbate gendered violence are heightened during and following emergencies and crises, resulting in increases in violence, particularly against women.**

## Increased risk and perpetration of violence against victim survivors

During the pandemic, public health directions requiring home isolation exacerbated the risk of family violence, with the restrictions increasing opportunities for perpetrators to monitor and control victim survivors.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we consistently communicated that victim survivors could leave home to escape family violence at any time regardless of restrictions. However, we know victim survivors found it more challenging to access support securely and discretely.4

Victoria Police reported an increase in family violence incidents during 2020 and 2021. Significantly higher numbers of incidents were recorded in June and October 2020. There was also an increase in first-time reporting and new forms of violence, which included tactics to achieve social isolation and forms of violence specifically relating to the threat and risk of COVID-19 infection. 4, 5, 6

Service providers also reported seeing:

* increased complexity in client presentations, with victim survivors needing higher levels of psychosocial support. This included a loss of control due to the public health directions and stress from managing work, schooling and childcare responsibilities4
* an increase in clients presenting with factors that exacerbate family violence. This included financial stress, drug and alcohol misuse, mental health issues and social isolation
* longer stays in emergency accommodation for victim survivors
* an increase in first-time service users, fewer referral options and the need to provide support for longer periods of time. This resulted in increased wait times for clients to access services such as Men's Behaviour Change Programs.

## Challenges in service delivery and impacts

Frontline services continued to adapt to support women, children and families at risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. These services include crisis accommodation, police and courts, and sexual assault services. Maintaining contact and safe engagement with victim survivors was often especially challenging if they were isolating at home with the perpetrator.4

Remote working arrangements also had a detrimental effect on family violence practitioners.7 This increased stress and vicarious trauma. Practitioners felt greater responsibility for clients, worked longer hours to meet demand, and felt a blurring of boundaries between work and home.

A survey of family violence practitioners by the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre found that responding to family violence from home during COVID-19 had a detrimental impact on practitioner wellbeing. Of survey respondents, 69 per cent reported suffering moderate levels of burnout, and 37 per cent reported moderate levels of secondary stress symptoms.7

The prevention workforce also reported increasing demands to redirect resources away from prevention activities towards response as the rate of family violence increased, and physical distancing requirements limited opportunities for face-to face delivery of prevention programs.

Conversely, the pandemic created opportunities to adopt technological innovations and new service delivery models to manage the safety of victim survivors and keep perpetrators in view. These changes also increased accessibility of services to people living in regional, rural and remote areas.

Some service providers integrated family violence support into essential services. These included doctors’ clinics, Centrelink and childcare. This assisted victim survivors who may have otherwise been unable to seek help.

Organisations also created new alert systems, such as code words in telephone and text communication as well as physical signals, for victim survivors to discreetly signal when they needed support.4

Many of these adaptations are still in use, as they have enabled victim survivors to seek support in challenging and dangerous settings.

## How we responded

As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family violence became apparent, we responded rapidly. We funded new initiatives and bolstered existing services to protect and support victim survivors and meet the increased demand for services.

This included:

* providing $20 million for short-term accommodation for victim survivors who did not feel safe isolating or recovering from COVID-19 at home
* provided $20.2 million to help Victorian family violence services meet the expected increase in demand during the coronavirus pandemic and provide critical help for victim-survivors
* implementing the Multicultural COVID-19 Family Violence Program. This funded 20 multicultural, faith-based and ethno-specific organisations to raise awareness of the drivers of family violence and support early intervention
* ensuring the continued provision of crisis accommodation and all family violence, sexual assault and [The Orange Door services](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/> working with the sector. This strengthened the system’s capacity to continue providing these services throughout the pandemic
* launching Operation Ribbon. This involved police proactively checking on victim survivors’ safety and wellbeing, and monitoring perpetrators’ behaviour to keep them in view
* increasing the accessibility of Men's Behaviour Change Programs by moving to online groups and one-on-one engagement to keep men who use violence in view. This also ensured support continued when face-to-face groups were suspended
* established the Men’s Accommodation and Counselling Service for men who use violence, providing crisis accommodation, wrap-around support to address immediate concerns and link men to services to address their offending behaviour
* fast-tracking the Magistrates’ Court’s Family Violence Intervention Order Online Form in 2020 to enable applicants to apply online, a critical innovation to help maintain access to justice
* improving accessibility for perpetrators and people at risk of using violence to move into short-term or long-term accommodation. This allowed victim survivors to remain in the family home
* building the capacity of family violence and sexual assault services, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, to provide dedicated support to adolescents who use violence and their families
* establishing a Family Violence System and Operations Group with representatives across government. This group monitored the impacts of COVID-19-related family violence responses and ensured strong information sharing and coordination
* developing the COVID-19 Family Violence Data Portal launched on 2 November 2020 by the Crime Statistics Agency.

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# Family Violence Outcomes Framework measures

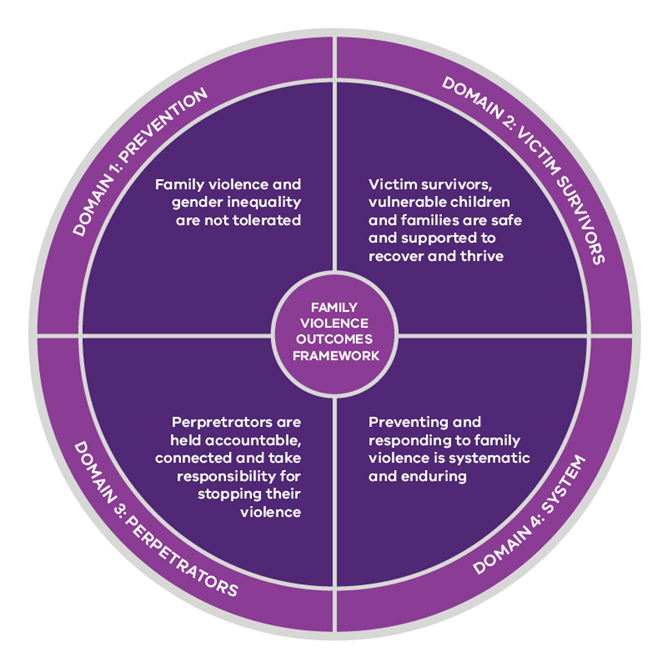
****Translating our vision of a Victoria free from family violence into a quantifiable set of outcomes, indicators and measures****

The Family Violence Outcomes Framework (the Outcomes Framework) translates our vision of a Victoria free from family violence, outlined in our [*10-year plan*](https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change) <https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change>, into a framework that will enable us to measure and understand the impacts of our efforts.

## The Family Violence Outcomes Framework

The four domains that make up the Outcomes Framework are:

1. Family violence and gender inequality are not tolerated.
2. Victim survivors, vulnerable children and families, are safe and supported to recover and thrive.
3. Perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence.
4. Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring.



The [Family Violence Outcomes Framework Measurement and Monitoring implementation strategy](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-outcomes-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-outcomes-framework> outlines the whole of government approach to annual reporting on the outcomes of the family violence reform.

## Data availability and improvements

Data in this report was collected and analysed through consultation with departments and agencies across government. This included the Crime Statistics Agency, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and from publicly available surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety.

The foundational measures in this report provide a starting point.

About half of the measures in this report are Victorian crime and justice data sourced via the Crime Statistics Agency. We know family violence is far reaching and not just limited to policing (as the breadth of priorities in this website’s Rolling Action Plan section shows). As more and more parts of the reform are implemented, we can expand the measures under the Outcomes Framework, so we have a better sense of the impact our work has had on people’s lives across all parts of the reform.

To get there, we know we have more work to do to continue to strengthen the availability and consistency of data across government and the family violence sector. Although the impact of COVID-19 delayed our outcomes measurement and monitoring program in 2021, over the next few months we are working to improve data by:

* linking data sets and identifying new data sources to test new outcomes measures related to victim survivors and perpetrators
* disaggregating data for priority communities, for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse communities
* developing a tracking system to support the collection of data relating to the outcomes of perpetrator interventions and family violence therapeutic interventions
* developing short to medium-term prevention measures to tell us how we are tracking as we work towards our long-term vision of a Victoria free from violence.

# Domain 1: Prevention

Family violence and gender inequality are not tolerated

To prevent family violence and other forms of violence against women, we must challenge the underlying social norms, structures, systems, attitudes and practices that create and perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination.

We must also address the intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage that compound the impact of gender inequality to increase rates of violence and influence patterns of violence for diverse community groups. These forms of discrimination include racism, ableism, ageism, classism, heterosexism, homophobia and the continuing impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal people.

Effective prevention strategies will progressively reduce future prevalence of violence against women and family violence. Ending this violence at the population-level requires long-term, sustained investment over many years to achieve positive generational, cultural and attitudinal shifts in gender inequality and the gendered drivers of violence.

We can even expect to see some increase in prevalence rates for indicators of family violence. This is because as there is greater awareness of the issue, those experiencing it are more likely to recognise it, report it and seek help from response services.

Ultimately, however, our investments in prevention aim to reduce the incidence of family violence and all forms of violence against women. This will lead to new generations of Victorians growing up with changed values and behaviours in a more equal society.

We know short- and medium-term change is possible, but sustaining this change requires coordinated and mutually reinforcing activities across a wide number of sectors and settings. However, this will require adequate investment in prevention, a generational commitment to see the task through and continual refinement of the most effective prevention strategies. Only then will we begin to see a decrease in the prevalence of family violence and all forms of violence against women.



## Data availability

Data for the prevention domain measures published in the baseline report in December 2020 is not yet available. This is because the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed collection and reporting for the 2020 Personal Safety Survey (conducted by the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](https://www.abs.gov.au/) <https://www.abs.gov.au/>) and the National Community Attitudes Survey (undertaken by [Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s S](https://www.anrows.org.au/)afety <https://www.anrows.org.au/>). We expect data will be available in the 2023 edition of the Ending Family Violence report.

The [Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform](https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html) <https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html> is aligned with the ‘Prevention’ domain of the Outcomes Framework. It features a wide range of data from 34 existing sources which are collected at regular intervals by a range of external organisations.

# Domain 2: Victim survivors

****Victim survivors, vulnerable children and families, are safe and supported to recover and thrive****

The Royal Commission found that the service system did not make it easy for victim survivors and families to know what support was available. When they sought help, they encountered a system that was almost impossible to navigate.

Since the Royal Commission, we have worked to ensure victim survivors’ voices are central to our efforts to prevent and respond to family violence. The establishment of the [Victim Survivors Advisory Council](https://www.vic.gov.au/victim-survivors-advisory-council) <https://www.vic.gov.au/victim-survivors-advisory-council> in 2016 enabled victim survivor experiences to frame the development of reform.

All four domains of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework integrate lived experience as an essential element.

People with lived experience also co-designed [The Orange Door](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/>, a key service delivery reform to keep victim survivors safe.

The Orange Door provides victim survivors and people affected by family violence with access to services and specialist family violence workers. This includes ‘service navigators’ who assist people through the system to access the support they need. Through these and other changes, victim survivors are beginning to access more timely and responsive assistance, tailored to their own individual circumstances and experiences of family violence.

The data in this domain is sourced primarily via the Crime Statistics Agency. For the 2023 version of the Ending family violence annual report, we expect to include a broader set of measures, including measures where data between different datasets are linked, to provide a broader picture of the reform. We recommend you read this data alongside the breadth of activity in this website’s Rolling Action Plan section.



# Families are safe and strong

## Indicator: Reduction in children and young people who experience or witness family violence

The safety of children is paramount to family violence reform. Children are the most vulnerable members of any family.

Victoria’s family violence reforms recognise children as victim survivors in their own right. Any exposure they may have to family violence, even if it is not directed at them, is considered a family violence incident.

Children who are both directly and indirectly exposed to family violence can be affected by it. It can affect their physical and mental wellbeing, development and schooling. Family violence is the leading cause of children’s homelessness in Australia.8

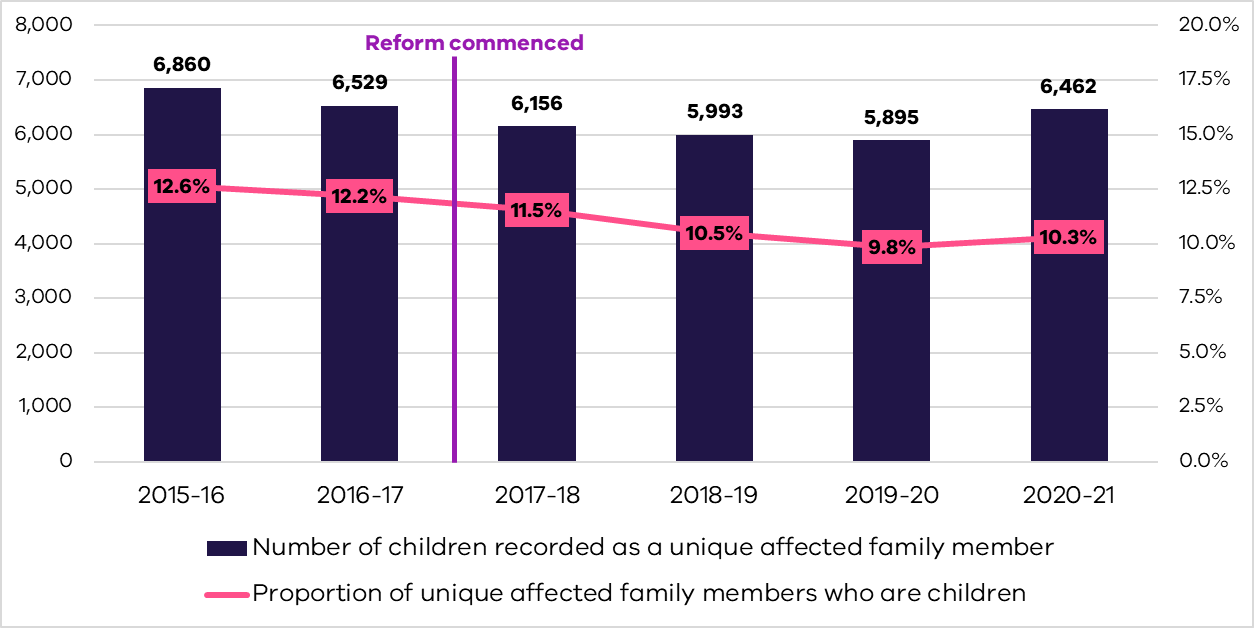
### Measure: Number/proportion of unique affected family members who are children

The number of unique affected family members[[1]](#footnote-2) who are children decreased between 2015–16 and 2019–20, before increasing in 2020–21. This reflects the impact of public health restrictions with the closure of social gatherings and outdoor activities. Families were locked down together in their homes, and children were not physically attending school. These restrictions may have increased stressors on families.

The increase in children recorded as affected family members during the COVID-19 pandemic may also have been impacted by proactive policing initiatives. These include Operation Ribbon, which monitors the behaviour of high-risk family violence offenders. Operation Ribbon may have contributed to increases in the number of recorded incidents,9 including those involving children.

In 2020–21, children represented 10.3 per cent of unique family members recorded by Victoria Police. This compares with 12.6 per cent in 2015–16. There was a slight yet consistent downward trend in the number and proportion of children affected by family violence until the slight increase in 2020–21. We will continue to monitor these trends.

Number/proportion of unique affected family members who are children – 2015-16 to 2020-21



**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

## Indicator: Reduction in family violence among women who are pregnant or have a newborn

Family violence during pregnancy is a significant indicator of future harm to the woman and child victim. Family violence often commences or intensifies during pregnancy. It is associated with increased rates of miscarriage, low birth weight, premature birth, foetal injury and foetal death.

Pregnancy and early parenthood are opportune times for early intervention, as women are more likely to have contact with health and other professionals.

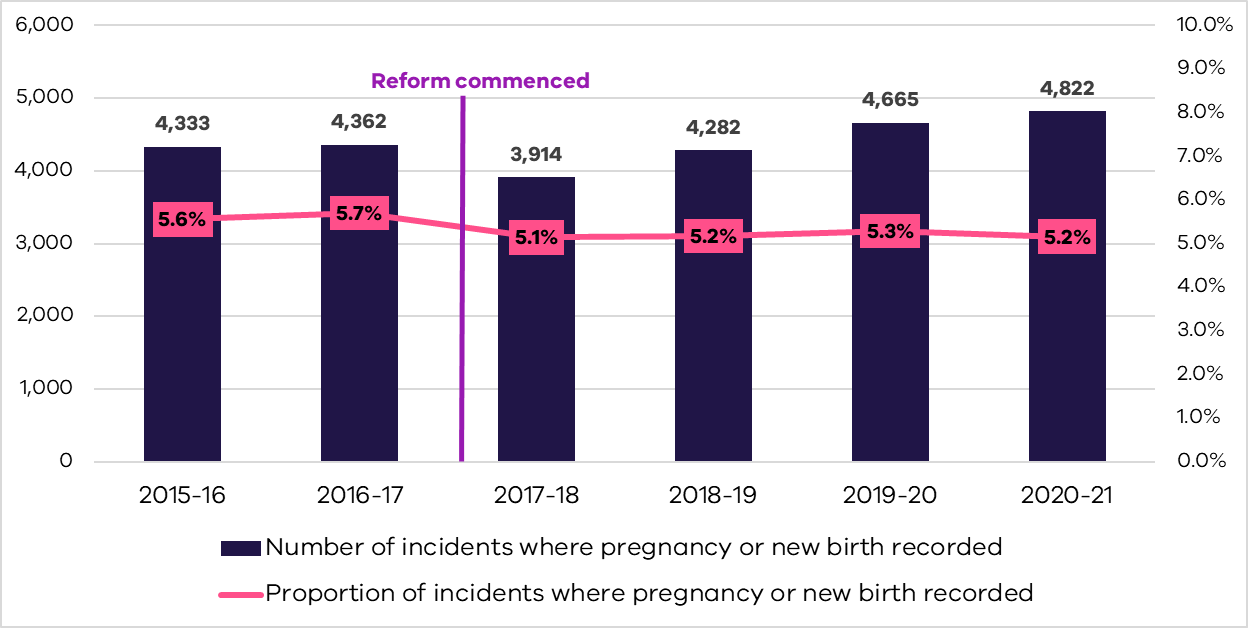
### Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘pregnancy or new birth’ is recorded

In 2020–21, there were 4,822 family violence incidents where pregnancy or new birth was recorded as a risk factor, reflecting 5.2 per cent of total 2020-21 family violence incidents. This compares to 2015-16 when 4,333 or 5.6 per cent of total family violence incidents recorded pregnancy or new birth

Time series data shows the proportion of incidents where pregnancy or new birth is recorded remained stable over the past six financial-years (between 5.1 per cent and 5.7 per cent).

Victoria Police reported a common factor in some incidents during COVID-19 restrictions was new or expecting parents were under greater pressure and/or stress, particularly those living in smaller residences, with these stress points compounded by other impacts of the restrictions such as working from home, loss of employment and mental health.

Number and proportion of family violence incidents where ‘pregnancy or new birth’ is recorded – 2015-16 to 2020-21



**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

## Indicator: Reduction in level of risk for victim survivors immediately post-separation

High-risk periods for people experiencing family violence include when a victim survivor starts planning to leave, immediately prior to taking action, and during the initial stages of, or immediately after, separation.

It is common for perpetrators to continue, and often escalate, their violence after separation. This may be as an attempt to gain or reassert control over a victim survivor, or as punishment for leaving the relationship.

### Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘recent or imminent separation’ is recorded

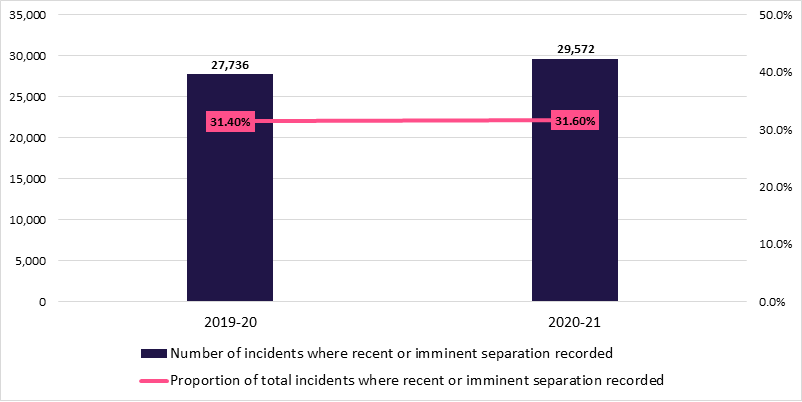
If a family violence incident involves current or former partners, police will record whether the couple recently separated.

In 2020–21, recent separation was recorded in almost one-third (31.6 per cent) of family violence incident reports. The proportion of incidents where recent or imminent separation was recorded has remained stable since 2019–20 (31.4 per cent).

In 2019–20, Victoria Police introduced statewide changes to family violence recording practices through a new Risk Assessment and Risk Management report (L17). The new assessment report was accompanied by training, resulting in an overall uplift in frontline police knowledge. It is structured with conversational rather than tick-box questions.

These changes to recording practices mean that it is not practical to compare data prior to 2019. This is because there is no way to accurately measure population-level change over time.

Number and proportion of family violence incidents where recent or imminent separation recorded – 2019-20 to 2020-21



**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

# Victim survivors are safe

## Indicator: Decrease family violence deaths

### Measure: Number of family violence-related deaths

Family violence, in particular intimate partner violence, contributes to more death, disability and illness in adult women than any other preventable risk factor.10

The Coroners Court of Victoria identifies how many homicides each year are related to family violence.

It is difficult to assess changes in the number of family violence homicides over time, in part due to the small number of incidents. There may be large fluctuations over time that are not significant.

The lag between when a homicide is reported to the register and when an investigation concludes (and thus identifies whether a homicide was related to family violence) further limits our ability to assess change. For 2019–20 and 2020–21 data, the higher number of ‘unknowns’ reflects this lag.

Noting the above limitations, data from 2020–21 does not indicate that the number of family violence homicides is decreasing. In 2020–21, 25 homicides related to family violence were reported to the VHR, with a further 19 yet to be determined whether they are related to family violence.

This number of family violence homicides is the highest reported since 2015–16.

Number of family violence-related homicides by financial year – 2015-16 to 2020-21

| Number of homicide deceased | 2015–16 | 2016–17 | 2017–18 | 2018–19 | 2019–20 | 2020–21 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Family violence related | 33 | 24 | 21 | 15 | 21 | 25 |
| Not family violence related | 38 | 31 | 37 | 31 | 37 | 19 |
| Other | ≤3 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 23 | 19 |

**Source:** Coroners Court of Victoria data extracted from the Victorian Homicide Register (VHR) by the Crime Statistics Agency

# Victim survivors rebuild lives and thrive

## Indicator: Increase in victim survivors who have safe, secure, stable and affordable housing

Family violence is recognised as a leading cause of homelessness, especially for women and children.

Homelessness can occur as a direct result of experiencing family violence – for example, having to leave the home for safety from a perpetrator’s use of violence. Structural barriers including gender inequality, a lack of affordable housing, and limited social support can also prevent victim-survivors from finding a safe and secure place to live.

### Measure: Proportion of victim survivors who are homeless or without a permanent place to live

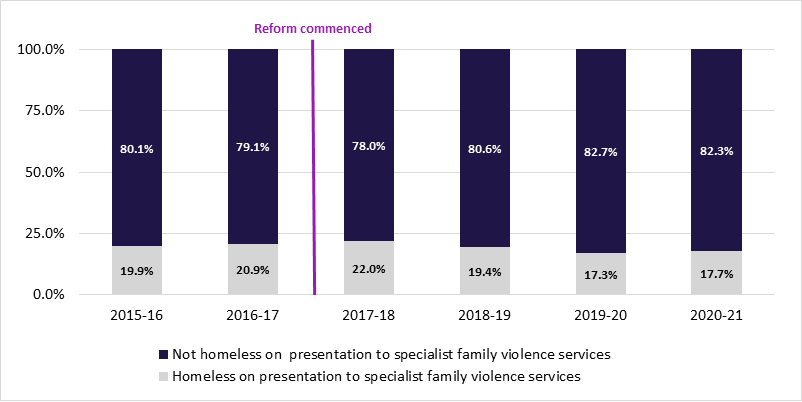
In 2020-21 there were 5,472 family violence service cases[[2]](#footnote-3) where victim survivors identified themselves as homeless. This was an increase from 4,693 in 2015–16.

Despite the increase in numbers, the proportion of family violence cases where victim survivors identified as homeless decreased slightly from 19.9 per cent in 2015–16 to 17.7 per cent in 2020–21.

Data shows that clients accessing refuges make up the greatest proportion of victim survivors experiencing homelessness. This cohort also tends to be at highest risk as they are often forced to leave their homes to escape the violence.

Family violence is the number one cause of homelessness for women. Stable housing is identified as a critical protective factor in promoting safety, wellbeing and recovery for victim survivors of family violence.

Proportion of cases presenting to specialist family violence services with victim survivors who were homeless at presentation – 2015-16 to 2020-21



**Source:** Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Homelessness Data Collection (HDC) dataset

### Measure: Proportion of victim survivors who experience an improvement in their housing situation after receiving a service

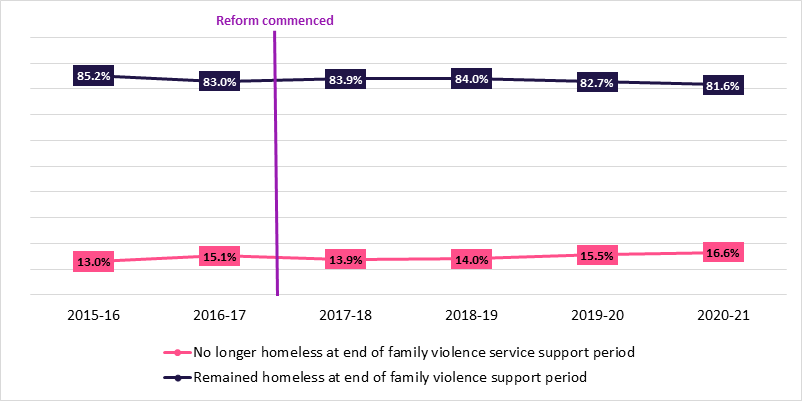
There has been an increase in the number and proportion of victim survivors receiving family violence support who indicated they were homeless at the start of their support period and were in secure housing by the end of their support period.

In 2020–21, there were 877 family violence service cases where victim survivors who identified as homeless on presentation were recorded in secure housing at the end of their support period. This represents 16.6 per cent of total family violence service cases and compares with 590, or 13.0 per cent, in 2015–16.

Despite the above improvement, in 2020–21 about 80 per cent of family violence service cases with victim survivors who indicated homelessness when they initially accessed family violence support services remained homeless when their support period ended.

Many family violence refuge clients exit the system to transitional housing and other temporary accommodation arrangements (which fall within the definition of homelessness) while they await a more stable and secure housing pathway.

Proportion of cases where homelessness indicated at first presentation where client no longer homeless at end of support period – 2015-16 to 2020-21



**Source:** Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Homelessness Data Collection (HDC) dataset.

# Domain 3: Perpetrators

****Perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence****

Perpetrator accountability is everybody’s business.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence recommended a response that links all parts of the service system, including government, justice and social services sectors.

This needs to be done to overcome the existing fragmented and episodic response to perpetrators. It will also create a mutually reinforcing ‘web of accountability’ that:

* stops perpetrators from committing further violence
* keeps them in view
* holds them to account
* supports them to change their behaviour and attitudes.

The system can and should hold perpetrators responsible for their behaviour. However, only perpetrators themselves can choose to end their use of violence.

Every time a perpetrator interacts with the service system, there is an opportunity to effect behaviour change. If interventions are targeted to the right perpetrators at the right time, it can avoid significant costs to victim survivors, the community and government.

The outcomes and indicators in this domain were refreshed through a consultation process in 2020. The refresh focused on broadening the scope of the domain to ensure it reflects whole-of-system accountability, in line with recommendations by the Expert Advisory Committee on Perpetrator Interventions.

We are focused on strengthening this domain, with refreshed measures presently in development. We have also commenced work to develop and implement client outcomes measurement for perpetrators participating in interventions, including perpetrator accommodation support services and behaviour change programs. This work is supported by the development of a whole-of-Victorian Government theory of change and monitoring and evaluation framework for perpetrator interventions.



# Perpetrators stop all forms of family violence behaviour

## Indicator: Reduction in all family violence behaviours

### Measure: Number/proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders

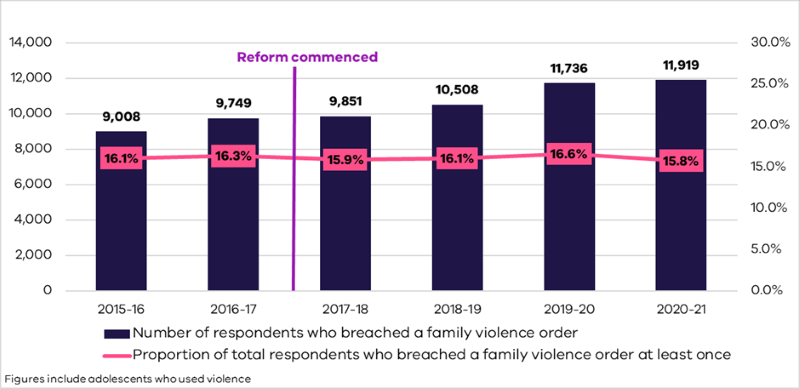
Family violence orders are a key mechanism to help keep victim survivors, including children, safe and hold perpetrators accountable. Perpetrators who breach an order can be charged with a criminal offence.

Most people on a family violence order[[3]](#footnote-4),[[4]](#footnote-5) are not recorded by police for a breach of order offence. In 2020–21, 63,711, or 84.2 per cent of people on an active order were not recorded with a breach.

Although most people do not breach, in 2020-21, 11,919 people were recorded with at least one breach of a family violence order. This was an increase from 9,008 in 2015–16.

Despite the increase in numbers, the proportion of people who breach a family violence order has remained consistent (between 15.8–16.6 per cent) during this time.

Number and proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders – 2015-16 to 2020-21



**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

Proportion of people on a family violence protection order who breach the order – by number of breaches

| Family violence protection orders and breaches | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Number of people on active family violence protection orders | 56,047 | 59,722 | 62,045 | 65,460 | 70,799 | 75,630 |
| 0 (did not breach) | 83.9% | 83.7% | 84.1% | 83.9% | 83.4% | 84.2% |
| 1 breach | 7.6% | 7.3% | 7.0% | 7.0% | 7.3% | 6.6% |
| 2 breaches | 2.9% | 2.9% | 3.0% | 3.0% | 3.0% | 2.8% |
| 3 breaches | 1.5% | 1.5% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.4% | 1.3% |
| 4 breaches | 0.9% | 1.1% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 1.0% | 1.0% |
| 5 or more breaches | 3.2% | 3.5% | 3.6% | 3.7% | 3.8% | 4.1% |
| Proportion of people who breached (combined) | 16.1% | 16.3% | 15.9% | 16.1% | 16.6% | 15.8% |

**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

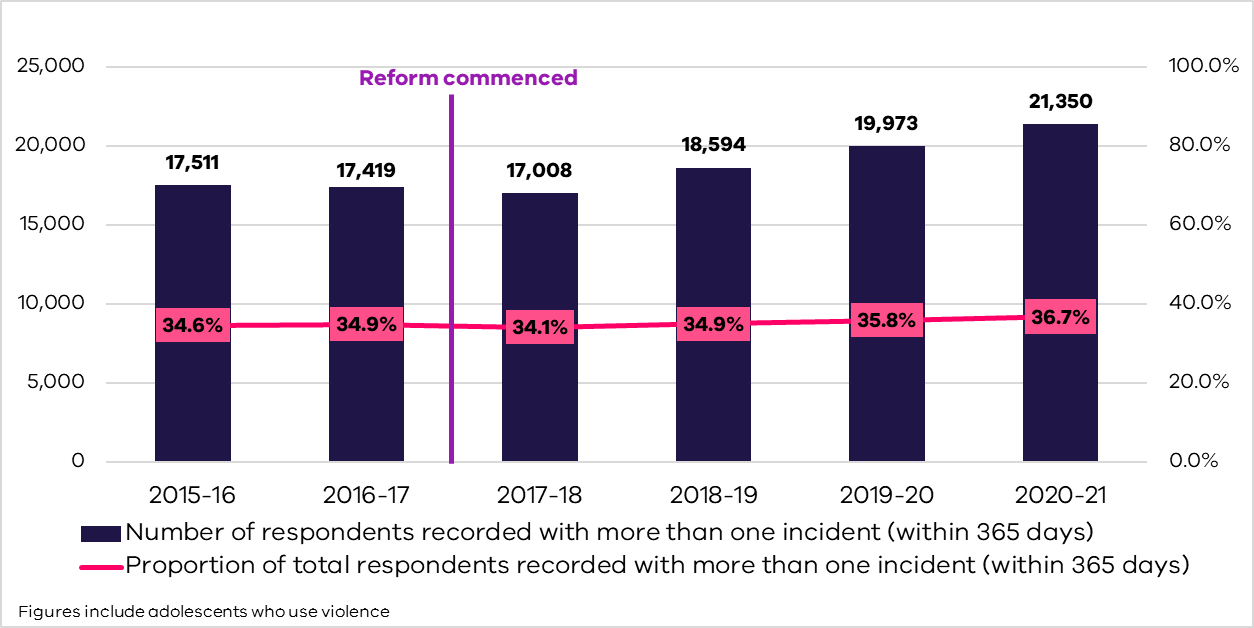
### Measure: Number/proportion of individuals identified as the respondent in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within 12 months

In 2020–21, just over one-third of perpetrators (36.7 per cent) were associated with more than one family violence incident over a 365-day period.

The proportion of unique perpetrators with more than one family violence incident has not changed substantially over time.

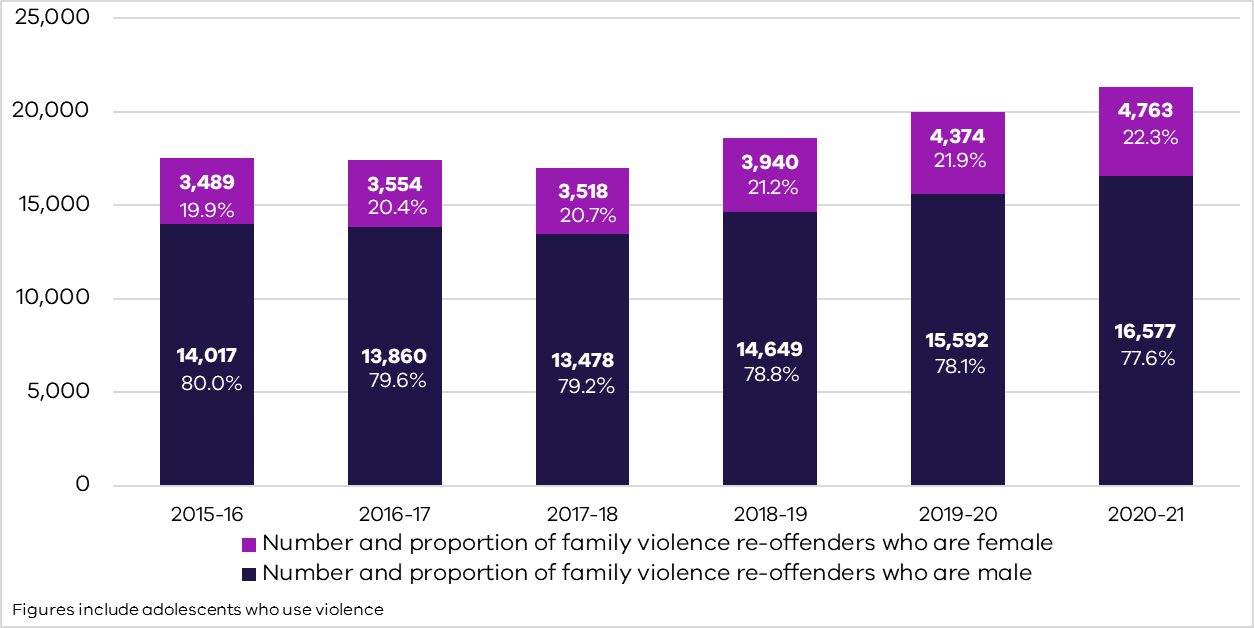
During the six-year period, male perpetrators were more likely to be recorded with subsequent incidents.

Number and proportion of respondents with more than one family violence incident within 12 months – 2015-16 to 2020-21



**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

Number and proportion of male and female respondents who receive a subsequent L17 report within 12 month – 2015–16 to 2020–21



**Source:** Victoria Police LEAP data collected by Crime Statistics Agency

# Domain 4: System

****Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring****

The Royal Commission found the family violence system was complex and difficult to navigate across the many services and systems. This included the justice system, legal services, police, specialist family violence services, housing, child protection and health services.

A whole of government approach is required to transform how we prevent and respond to family violence. This involves fundamental changes to ensure all service systems are able to:

* identify, assess, manage and respond to victim survivors and perpetrators
* deliver better outcomes for those affected by family violence.



# The family violence system is integrated

## Indicator: Increased sharing of information to assess and respond to needs and risks

Having a shared understanding supports successful system integration. This includes having workforces who understand their responsibilities to identify and respond to family violence. It also means having an accessible, equitable and effective system response.

The [Central Information Point](https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point) <https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point> is one way we are increasing collaboration between services through information sharing.

The Central Information Point is a targeted, cross-government information sharing service. It aims to improve access to risk-relevant information to support victim survivors.

It also helps to keep those who use violence in view and more accountable for their actions. The Central Information Point consolidates critical information about a perpetrator into a single report. This assists with family violence risk assessment and management.

Central Information Point reports enable family violence frontline workers, such as at [The Orange Door](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/> and Risk Assessment and Management Panels, to access information about a perpetrator. Sources include Court Services Victoria, Victoria Police, Corrections Victoria and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Child Protection).

Information provided through the Central Information Point also allows victim survivors to be more empowered to make decisions about their safety and increases accountability of perpetrators for their decisions and actions.

### Measure: Number of Central Information Point reports provided to services

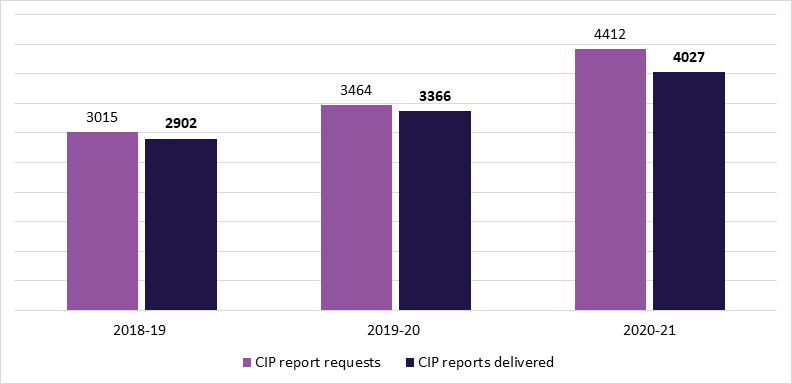
The Central Information Point continues to respond to demand from The Orange Door in existing areas and as the network expands across Victoria. The number of Central Information Point reports delivered annually has increased from 2,902 in 2018–9 to 4,027 in 2020–21 (a 39 per cent increase).

The difference between the number of requests received and the reports delivered is due to a number of administrative processes.

These include the request being cancelled or withdrawn. This may occur if a Central Information Point report has recently been delivered for the same perpetrator, and the practitioner already has access to that information.

A request may also be withdrawn or cancelled if it is incomplete or inaccurate and a new request is submitted.

Number of Central Information Point requests and delivered reports – 2018-19 to 2020-21



**Source:** The Orange Door (TOD) record of Central Information Point

# The family violence and broader workforces across the system are skilled, capable and reflect the communities they serve

## Indicator: Increase workforce diversity

### Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who identify as from a priority community – ATSI, CALD, LGBTIQ+, disability

The Royal Commission highlighted the lack of detailed knowledge and essential workforce data about family violence workers in Victoria.

To address this gap, we undertake the [family violence workforce census](https://www.vic.gov.au/summary-findings-report-2019-20-workforce-census/introduction) <https://www.vic.gov.au/summary-findings-report-2019-20-workforce-census/introduction> every two years. The census collects data and information about family violence workforces.

The following indicators and measures use the survey results from the 2019–20 census. Subsequent results will be compared with these to identify any progress made.

In 2019–20, most family violence workers identified as female (85–87 per cent), with 1 per cent identifying as non-binary (self-described).

Between 7 per cent and 13 per cent of the specialist family violence response and primary prevention workforces are classified as having a disability. This means they experience difficulties or restrictions which affect their participation in work activities.

Between 3–4 per cent of workers identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Between 6–7 per cent of workers spoke languages other than English at home.

Family violence workforce diversity 2019–20: specialist family violence response workforce

| Priority community | Number of responses | Total responses to question | Proportion of responses |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander | 41 | 1,357 | 3% |
| Person with a disability\* | 94 | 1,366 | 7% |
| Speaks a language other than English at home | 97 | 1,384 | 7% |
| Uses their cultural or faith-based knowledge and experience in undertaking their work | 478 | 1,196 | 40% |
| Born outside of Australia | 273 | 1,363 | 20% |
| Self-described gender | 14 | 1,374 | 1% |
| Age 55–74 | 278 | 1,391 | 20% |

\*This refers to people who experience difficulties or restrictions which affect their participation in work activities   
**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census 2019–20

Family violence workforce diversity 2019–20: primary prevention workforce

| Priority community | Number of responses | Total responses to question | Proportion of responses |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander | 17 | 435 | 4% |
| Person with a disability\* | 56 | 429 | 13% |
| Speaks a language other than English at home | 26 | 437 | 6% |
| Uses their cultural or faith-based knowledge and experience in undertaking their work | 135 | 387 | 35% |
| Born outside of Australia | 86 | 431 | 20% |
| Self-described gender | 4 | 438 | 1% |
| Age 55–74 | 107 | 445 | 24% |

\*This refers to people who experience difficulties or restrictions which affect their participation in work activities

**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census, 2019–20

## Indicator: Increase workforce skills and capabilities

### Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report confidence they have enough training and experience to perform their role effectively

Many workforces that intersect with family violence – including in mainstream and universal services – require training to build the family violence prevention and response capability across the system.

We have heard through our engagement with family violence practitioners that there is a strong association between receiving training in family violence or primary prevention and feeling confident to identify and respond to those experiencing family violence.11

Accordingly, this training is fundamental to the success of the family violence reforms, particularly The Orange Door, the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) framework.

In the 2019–20 Family Violence Workforce Census, at least half of the family violence workforce (61 per cent for specialist family violence response and 50 per cent for primary prevention) felt very to extremely confident in their level of training and experience to complete their role.

The survey identified that confidence rose with age and years of experience.

The top-two identified areas for additional support required to increase confidence for both cohorts were:

* further information sharing and collaboration with other service providers
* a community of practice for each cohort.

Family violence workforce confidence in level of training and experience 2019–20: specialist family violence response workforce (total responses 1,486)

| Confidence rating | Number of responses | Proportion of responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Extremely confident | 178 | 12% |
| Very confident | 728 | 49% |
| Moderately confident | 446 | 30% |
| Slightly confident | 104 | 7% |
| Not confident | 15 | 1% |

**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census, 2019–20

Family violence workforce confidence in level of training and experience 2019–20: primary prevention workforce (total responses 463)

| Confidence rating | Number of responses | Proportion of responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Extremely confident | 60 | 13% |
| Very confident | 171 | 37% |
| Moderately confident | 171 | 37% |
| Slightly confident | 46 | 10% |
| Not confident | 19 | 4% |

**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census, 2019–20

## Indicator: Increase in health, safety and wellbeing of the family violence workforce

### Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report work-related stress

Work-related stress can lead to burnout (prolonged physical and psychological exhaustion).

This affects workers in ways including:

* physical and emotional stress
* low job satisfaction
* feeling frustrated by or judgemental of clients
* feeling under pressure, powerless and overwhelmed
* frequent sick or mental health days
* irritability and anger.

Family violence workforce work-related stress 2019–20: specialist family violence response workforce

| Work-related stress level | Number of workers | Proportion of workforce responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| None | 14 | 1% |
| Low | 303 | 21% |
| Moderate | 649 | 45% |
| High | 332 | 23% |
| Very high | 116 | 8% |
| Severe | 29 | 2% |
| Total | 1,443 | 100% |

| Feels safe performing role | Number of workers | Proportion of workforce responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Always or often | 1,213 | 85% |
| Sometimes or less often | 214 | 15% |
| Total | 1,427 | 100% |

**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census, 2019–20

Family violence workforce work-related stress 2019–20: primary prevention workforce

| Work-related stress level | Number of workers | Proportion of workforce responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| None | 5 | 1% |
| Low | 105 | 23% |
| Moderate | 206 | 45% |
| High | 92 | 20% |
| Very high | 41 | 9% |
| Severe | 9 | 2% |
| Total | 458 | 100% |

| Feels safe performing role | Number of workers | Proportion of workforce responses |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Always or often | 397 | 88% |
| Sometimes or less often | 54 | 12% |
| Total | 451 | 100% |

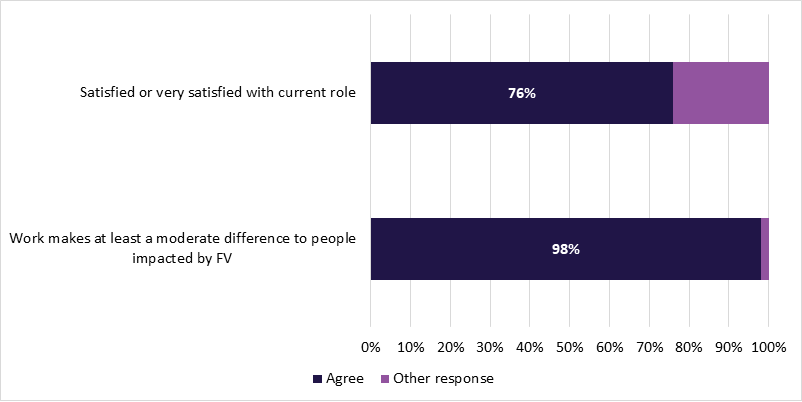
**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census, 2019-20

Most workers in both the specialist family violence response and primary prevention workforces experience at least moderate stress, with approximately one-third experiencing at least high levels of stress.

High workload is the key driver of high, very high and severe levels of stress in these workforces. Half the cohort reports that they only sometimes have sufficient time to complete tasks.

Positively, over 75 per cent are satisfied to very satisfied with their current role. Nearly all workers felt their work made a moderate to significant difference to people affected by family violence.

Satisfaction with role and perceived impact of work (combined specialist family violence and primary prevention workforce) – 2019–20



**Source:** Family Violence Workforce Census, 2019–20

# Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023 activities

****Working towards a Victoria free from family violence****

The [*Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023*](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023>, is a coordinated cross-government plan to implement the next stage of the [*10-year plan*](https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change). It was launched as Victoria continues to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It carries on from the first [*Rolling Action Plan 2017–2020*](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-rolling-action-plan-2017-2020) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-rolling-action-plan-2017-2020>. This laid a solid foundation for investment and activities.

The second *Rolling Action Plan* builds on this. It includes new areas of focus.

Its goal is that by 2023, we will have a system that is:

* more connected, sustainable and focused on preventing violence before it starts
* delivering better outcomes for victim survivors
* holding perpetrators to account.

This report focuses on activities that have been committed to in the *Rolling Action Plan*. It reflects considerable work over the past year across government and statutory authorities. These include:

* Court Services Victoria
* Department of Education and Training
* Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
* Department of Health
* Department of Justice and Community Safety
* Respect Victoria
* Victoria Police.

This is not a comprehensive report on all work under way to reform the way we prevent and respond to family violence.

The sector constantly adapts to needs, risks and situations as they arise, beyond the actions in the *Rolling Action Plan*. This reflects our commitment to embedding lasting, sustainable change across the system.

This report focuses on the achievements across the whole of the sector. It only refers to departments or authorities where required.

Each section sets out:

* what we have achieved
* what we are focused on delivering
* how these activities will contribute to the family violence reform outcomes.

Activities might be mentioned across a number of different priority areas. This reflects the fact they contribute to the delivery of multiple priorities. Where possible, this has been minimised to reduce duplication.

Activities are reflected in the primary priority area they contribute to. For example, the [Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform](https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html) <https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html> contributes to both the ‘[Primary prevention’ priority area](#_Primary_prevention) and the ‘[Research and evaluation’ priority area](#_Research_and_evaluation).

## Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023 activity progress

Of the 212 activities that we committed to in the *Rolling Action Plan*:

* 40 have been completed
* another 146 are in progress, 37 of which are expected to be completed in the first half of 2022
* 16 activities have been delayed
* a further 10 activities are scheduled to commence in 2022 or 2023.

*Rolling Action Plan* activities by status



The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the delivery of some activities under the *Rolling Action Plan* and required some reprioritisation.

Necessary public health measures contributed to an increased risk of family violence and affected the ability of services to respond to those experiencing family violence.

Victorian Government resources were in some cases redeployed to support the COVID-19 response. This affected the implementation of the *Rolling Action Plan*, as did disruptions to building activities such as for new housing and court facilities.

However, despite the [many challenges associated with the pandemic](#_The_impact_of), significant progress has been made in delivering actions under the *Rolling Action Plan*. This reflects the agility and responsiveness of the family violence sector during this period.

#### Download:

* *Family Violence Reform Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023 activities* (PDF)
* *Family Violence Reform Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023 activities* (Word) (accessible)

# Overarching priorities

****Examining the reform through the lens of intersectionality, Aboriginal self-determination, lived experience, sexual violence and harm and children and young people****

There are several themes that cut across our family violence reform work. The [*Rolling Action Plan 2020–2023*](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023> addresses the following three priorities:

* **Intersectionality** recognises people are diverse and that characteristics such as race, age, class, ability, sexuality and gender can combine to create overlapping systems of discrimination and disadvantage.
* Involving people with **lived experience** of family violence in the design, delivery and evaluation of our work to prevent and respond to family violence helps ensure it is inclusive and accessible and leads to better outcomes for all Victorians.
* **Aboriginal self-determination** creates policies and structures that put Aboriginal communities at the heart of decision making on the matters that affect their lives. For further information, refer to the Dhelk Dja priority area.

Additional themes that cut across family violence reform have emerged during the development of the *Rolling Action Plan*:

* **Adults, children and young people often experience sexual violence, abuse and harm (also referred to as sexual assault) in a family violence context. Reforms to the family violence system must take this into account.**
* **Children and young people are victim survivors of family violence in their own right. They have distinct needs.**

**There are limited *Rolling Action Plan* activities specifically related to sexual violence abuse and harm, and children and young people. However, these themes are considered across the delivery of all areas of family violence reform.**

We also know that effective reform oversight and governance is critical to delivering family violence reform. Our governance and oversight structures continue to evolve in response to the maturity and progress of the reform.

This section reports directly on some activities contributing to overarching themes. However, activities reported in other priority areas also have reform-wide impacts, such as:

* the ‘[Workforce development](#_Workforce_Developmentdevelopment)’ priority area, which includes building the capacity and capability of specialist family violence services. This includes, for example, responding to the experience of diverse groups such as people from the LGBTIQ+ community, people with a disability, children and young people, and people from refugee and migrant backgrounds
* the ‘[Research and evaluation](#_Research_and_evaluation)’ priority area, which includes developing consultation guidelines on incorporating lived experience into family violence program evaluations.

## Overarching priorities – What has happened

### Overarching priorities – Lived experience

* The [Victim Survivors’ Advisory Council](https://www.vic.gov.au/victim-survivors-advisory-council) <https://www.vic.gov.au/victim-survivors-advisory-council>, created in June 2016, gives people with lived experience of family violence the opportunity to advise the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence on the violence reform program. The council also participates in the design, delivery and evaluation of key reform initiatives. Council members are developing a *Lived experience strategy*. This will embed lived experience into the centre of the family violence and sexual assault systems. Council members are also appointed to family violence reform governance groups. They are closely engaged in the development of key initiatives for the reform, such as the [*Family Safety Victoria strategic plan*](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-safety-victoria-strategic-plan-2021-2024) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-safety-victoria-strategic-plan-2021-2024> and the Medium-term Perpetrator Accommodation Services.
* We have developed consultation guidelines on incorporating lived experience into family violence program evaluations. These guidelines promote a victim-centred approach to evaluation of family violence initiatives. They aim to improve awareness of good practice for including perspectives of victim survivors in evaluation.

| Grace Donato case study My daughter loved nature, she loved animals, and I do find peace walking on nature trails. She had almost completed her science degree and was majoring in zoology. She was beautiful inside and out, very caring. And. I'm Grace Donato, and I'm a member of the Victim Survivors Advisory Council.  You see, my daughter, Adriana was murdered by her ex-boyfriend back in 2012, and I'm there to be the voice for women who have lost their lives and for her. VSAC was created after the royal commission, and it's there for people with lived experience to have a voice so that they can be involved in the reforms against domestic and family violence. And it's a diverse council, so we have people from all walks of life. It's important to have everybody represented on the group. Family violence and domestic violence affects everybody. We need to recognise the patterns of behavior of domestic violence and family violence and call it out.  In my daughter's case, the perpetrator told his friends that he was going to murder Adriana and nobody called it out. She didn't know. If somebody had told my daughter he wanted to kill her, she would never have ever gotten into the car with him.  It destroyed many lives. It's just horrific. And the chain reaction just keeps going on and on and on. One woman each week is murdered by their partner or former partner. And that's got to stop. It's not only just physical harm, it could be coercive control, financial control.  It could happen with even within young people. So they need to recognise it and they need to call it out because by calling it out, it could save somebody's life. I share my story to motivate schools and parents to participate.  It's important for young people to be taught about what a healthy relationship looks like. We need to teach our young people about gender inequality. We can stop domestic and family violence and stop the murders of women here in Australia.  Source: ‘[Grace Donato](https://www.vic.gov.au/media/134448)’, <https://www.vic.gov.au/free-violence-second-action-plan-2022-2025>. |
| --- |

### Overarching priorities – Sexual violence and harm

* We are developing the 10-year strategy to prevent and address sexual violence, abuse and harm. It is informed by victim survivors and by consultation with the sexual assault and family violence sector and diverse communities. The strategy includes the Victorian Government’s response to the Victorian Law Reform Commission’s review of sexual offences in Victoria: [*Improving the response of the justice system to sexual offences*](https://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/project/improving-the-response-of-the-justice-system-to-sexual-offences/) <https://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au/project/improving-the-response-of-the-justice-system-to-sexual-offences/>.
* Victoria is working to implement the [*National strategy to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse*](https://childsafety.pmc.gov.au/what-we-do/national-strategy-prevent-child-sexual-abuse) <https://childsafety.pmc.gov.au/what-we-do/national-strategy-prevent-child-sexual-abuse>, a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This strategy is the first of its kind in Australia. It provides a nationally coordinated, strategic framework for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse.

### Overarching priorities – Children and young people

* We are focusing on strengthening system-wide engagement with children and young people. They have unique needs and experience the impacts of family violence in their own right. The [*Roadmap for reform: strong families, safe children*](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/roadmap-reform-strong-families-safe-children) <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/roadmap-reform-strong-families-safe-children> focuses on earlier intervention and prevention to reduce vulnerability and equip children and young people to reach their full potential. The Roadmap aims to enhance and integrate pathways for the children, youth and families’ services system. This will improve it for children, families and practitioners.
* [Family Safety Victoria](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-safety-victoria) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-safety-victoria> and [Safe and Equal](https://safeandequal.org.au/) <https://safeandequal.org.au/> (formerly the Domestic Violence Victoria and Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria) have worked in partnership to develop case management program requirements for specialist family violence services funded by the Victorian Government. These requirements provide specialist family violence organisational leaders with a case management ‘manual’ to ensure case management is delivered in line with a set of universal quality criteria. The requirements establish a statewide benchmark for quality, holistic and person-centred case management service delivery for children and young people and other diverse communities and age groups.

### Overarching priorities – Intersectionality

* The [*Everybody matters: inclusion and equity statement*](https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-statement) <https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-statement> was launched in April 2019, following significant community engagement. The statement provides a framework to build towards our vision of a more inclusive, safe, responsive, accessible, and accountable family violence system. The statement applies an intersectional framework to outline a more inclusive family violence system. This will be done by investing in systemic change and building our knowledge, capabilities and specialisation. The [*Everybody matters inclusion and equity blueprint*](https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-blueprint-2019-22/) <https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-blueprint-2019-22/> was released in 2021. It outlines actions and initiatives to achieve the statement's 10-year vision.
* The LGBTIQ+ Family Violence Capacity Building initiative is progressing. This initiative builds capacity in the specialist family violence system to provide appropriate support and resources for LGBTIQ+ communities.
* The Family Violence and Disability Practice Leader project aims to strengthen access to specialist family violence and sexual assault support for people with disabilities at risk of family violence. It will ensure that support is tailored to the individual needs of people with disabilities at risk of family violence.

|  |
| --- |
| Women victim survivors exiting prison The Victorian Government is partnering with Flat Out Inc. to build the capacity of the family violence system to better support criminalised women.  The project includes a number of activities to support workforce capacity building and women with a criminal history who are at high risk of family violence. This includes:   * co-developing a best-practice framework with criminalised women to support cross-sector capacity * developing and piloting training and capacity-building resources * co-designing a specialised assessment tool to undertake legal needs assessment for criminalised women * continuing the peer support network for criminalised women. |

* The [Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework> incorporates an intersectional approach to family violence practice across all MARAM Practice Guides, risk assessment tools and resources. This approach supports the building of capability across the service system to recognise gendered and other drivers of family violence that reflect structural inequality and discrimination, further contributing to barriers to service supports.
* The Intersectionality Capacity Building Project is developing resources to increase the capacity and capability of family violence and universal service workforces. This includes fostering including and equity by adopting and embedding an intersectionality framework across family violence, sexual assault, and child and family wellbeing.
* In 2020–21, the state budget provided $9.7 million for family violence prevention and early intervention with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Of this, $7 million has been provided to 33 organisations through the Supporting Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence 2021 Grant Program. This program will strengthen the capacity of multicultural and faith-based communities to prevent family violence. It uses innovative, culturally appropriate primary prevention and early intervention initiatives.

### Overarching priorities – Reform oversight and governance

* We established the [Family Violence Reform Advisory Group](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-advisory-group) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-advisory-group>. The group comprises government and non-government members. It ensures the perspectives of people working in the family violence sector influence reform efforts. It also promotes transparency and government accountability to the broader sector. The group provides advice to the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence and relevant government departments to realise the vision set out within the *Rolling Action Plan*, [*Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families Agreement*](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023/priorities-for-2020-2023/dhelk-dja-safe-our-way) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023/priorities-for-2020-2023/dhelk-dja-safe-our-way> and the [*Everybody matters: inclusion and equity statement*](https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-statement) <https://www.vic.gov.au/everybody-matters-inclusion-and-equity-statement>.

## Overarching priorities – What is next

### Overarching priorities – What is next – Intersectionality

* Capability building and strengthening of the workforce will continue through the LGBTIQ+ Family Violence Capacity Building initiative. It will also involve recruitment and engagement with family violence and disability practice leaders.
* We will continue to develop a Victorian elder abuse statement. This will set out our commitment to ending elder abuse in family violence contexts. It will outline the partnerships required to support older people experiencing family violence. It will also set expectations for the family violence service system to support older people.
* Over the next two years, we will strengthen engagement with multicultural and faith communities on the family violence reforms. This will build opportunities to strengthen engagement and build the capability of workforces of multicultural organisations. It will increase their knowledge and skills to support clients experiencing or at risk of family violence. We will also support cross-sectoral collaboration between multicultural, ethno-specific and faith-based organisations, specialist family violence services and [The Orange Door network](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/>.
* The case management program requirements will be consolidated into a single document. This will include roles and responsibilities in the provision of emergency accommodation and after-hours services. This will integrate case management program requirements into all stages of support.

### Overarching priorities – What is next – Reform oversight and governance

The Family Violence Reform Advisory Group will continue to meet three times a year. It will advise government on system-level impacts of family violence reforms. It will also consider opportunities for improvement in service provision.

### Overarching priorities – What is next – Sexual violence and harm

* The Family Violence Graduate program provides a pathway for new and recent graduates into the family violence, primary prevention and sexual assault sectors. The program ran in 2021 and will continue in 2022.
* The *Whole of Victorian Government sexual violence and harm strategy* will be launched.

### Overarching priorities – What is next – Children and young people

Victoria will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth, states and jurisdictions to influence a strong *National plan on the safety of women and children* and its supporting five-year action plan.

## Overarching priorities – What this means for outcomes

### Overarching priorities – Domain 1: Prevention

The overarching themes in the *Rolling Action Plan* are mirrored in the *Free from Violence Second Action Plan*. They are embedded in projects being implemented across the primary prevention sector.

The approach taken to implement primary prevention activities is underpinned by the understanding that:

* intersecting forms of marginalisation and discrimination drive family violence and violence against women
* Aboriginal self-determination is fundamental to prevention projects within Aboriginal communities
* lived experience is critical to the design of prevention programs.

The primary prevention sector’s focus on these overarching themes will support Victorians, organisations and communities to be safe and inclusive.

### Overarching priorities – Domain 2: Victim survivors

Victim survivors' experiences are at the centre of our family violence reform. They inform how we conduct reform activity. The Victim Survivors Advisory Council (the council) gives people with lived experience of family violence a voice and opportunity to consult on the family violence program. It ensures their voices are heard and directly influence family violence reform. Members of the council also provide feedback and insights into critical issues through the Family Violence Reform Advisory Group and the Primary Prevention Sector Reference Group. This enables government to deliver better outcomes for all victim survivors of family violence. It also centres the experiences of victim survivors in prevention and perpetrator accountability work.

### Overarching priorities – Domain 3: Perpetrators

We will work to better support and engage with perpetrators by understanding their individual needs. Perpetrator-focused MARAM Practice Guides reflect the broad range of identities and experiences of people using family violence.

This intersectional lens is threaded throughout the guides. The guides consider the risk and needs of people using violence across communities. They support targeted responses for people using violence. This helps hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

The following case study highlights how increasing our awareness and ability to respond to all individuals improves our outcomes.

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| LGBTIQ+ practitioner services **An example of pre-court engagement supporting early referral pathways to specialist family violence support services**  Samantha\* was listed as the female respondent for two separate family violence intervention order matters. Based on information provided through the application process, the matter was referred to the family violence practitioner service at the local court.  Before the court hearing, the respondent completed a notice of address form, in which they provided a different first name, Storm.\* They also identified as a transgender male with pronouns he/him and requested support from the LGBTIQ+ Practitioner Service.  When the court registrar received the information, they referred the respondent to the LGBTIQ+ Practitioner Team. An LGBTIQ+ Family Violence Respondent Practitioner then engaged with Storm. They assessed his support needs and undertook risk assessment and safety planning. They also discussed appropriate referral services, including gender identity support services. The LGBTIQ+ practitioner updated court records to accurately reflect Storm’s name and gender.  The practitioner continued to engage with Storm throughout the matter. This ensured risk assessment and safety planning remained current. It also meant appropriate referrals were made to address Storm’s needs and support behaviour change.  \*Names have been changed |

### Overarching priorities – Domain 4: System

Increasing the capability and skills of the family violence and primary prevention workforce is key to implementing many aspects of family violence reform. By increasing capability, workforces can respond sensitively to community members who are more vulnerable.

The Family Violence Reform Advisory Group also provides an important opportunity for family violence non-government professionals to directly engage with government stakeholders and reflect on the impact of reform for people affected by family violence.

Engaging across the community and sector creates a system that is person-centred, supports primary prevention, is responsive to victim survivors, including infants, children and young people, diverse cohorts and vulnerable groups, and can provide flexible tailored responses.

# Courts priority area

****Reforming the courts response to family violence****

The court is often a crucial part of a victim survivor’s journey when seeking protection from family violence. The court system is being transformed to make it safer for victim survivors and families. This will ensure people have the support they need, including supporting respondents to change their behaviour.

We are also working to make courts accessible, so our diverse Victorian community has equal access to justice.

Specialist Family Violence Courts are the centrepiece of family violence reforms to the courts system.

These courts provide a trauma-informed response to family violence. They give victim survivors more choice over their court experience. They also provide greater access to support services that help victim survivors at court and beyond.

The work occurring through the *Rolling Action Plan* focuses on:

* strengthening court reforms
* improving services to keep victim survivors and families safe through the court system
* holding perpetrators of family violence to account.

This work also continues to develop and refine technology-driven initiatives, building on recent experience from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Courts – What has happened

### Courts – Specialist Family Violence Courts

The establishment of Specialist Family Violence Courts creates a shift in our approach to addressing family violence.

These courts are carefully designed to provide greater security, comfort and choice for people experiencing family violence.

A team of specially trained magistrates, operational staff and family violence practitioners ensure that the local community can access tailored and effective family violence services.

Specialist magistrates have the power to mandate counselling, such as Men's Behaviour Change Programs.

This helps to promote women’s and children’s safety by holding men accountable and supporting positive behaviour change.

Establishing Specialist Family Violence Courts was a key activity during 2020 and 2021. This includes:

* Specialist Family Violence Courts established at the Moorabbin, Heidelberg and Frankston Magistrates’ Courts. We now have five Specialist Family Violence Courts with Shepparton and Ballarat Magistrates’ Courts operational since 2019
* planning commenced for Bendigo and Wyndham Magistrates’ Courts as well as for a further seven Specialist Family Violence Courts following the announcement of additional funding in the 2021–22 state budget. These additional sites are Melbourne, Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Geelong, Latrobe Valley, Ringwood and Sunshine Magistrates’ Courts.
* family violence training delivered to members of the judiciary, specialist and non-specialist court staff, and local agencies at each of the five existing Specialist Family Violence Courts. This included a comprehensive induction package for court staff. It also included multidisciplinary training involving court staff and sector workers. This training supports an integrated working model and consistent messaging and approach
* the Court Mandated Counselling Order Program is now operational at the Specialist Family Violence Courts to keep more perpetrators accountable and support them to change their behaviour. The 2021–22 state budget outcome supports further delivery of the program to more headquarter court locations.
* all current Specialist Family Violence Courts are supported by the Family Violence Contact Centre, in addition to a further five courts. The Family Violence Contact Centre is an offsite, centralised service that manages phone calls and emails from court users relating to family violence and personal safety intervention orders. This service alleviates daily call and email pressures at individual courts. It also improves accessibility of court services for people experiencing family violence.

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| Specialist Family Violence Courts transforming the court experience for victim survivors of family violence Sam\* and her former partner John\* came to court both before and after the gazettal of the new Specialist Family Violence Court.  Several years ago, Sam applied for a family violence intervention order at the court’s old building. Sam later reported feeling uncomfortable with the process and did not feel safe in the old building.  Sam was interviewed at the front counter in front of everybody. When she needed to access the female amenities, she had to walk past everybody in the foyer. She felt intimidated and scared about coming to court. On the hearing day, the respondent was sitting across the room from Sam, both in the foyer and during the court hearing.  A couple of years later, the court is now a Specialist Family Violence Court.  Sam rang the court and enquired about applying for a new family violence intervention order. Sam was nervous about the process, but this time, she had access to the specialist court team. They made sure Sam felt safe and supported throughout the process.  When Sam attended court to make her application, court staff reassured her she would not have any contact with the respondent. She was given a tour of the safe waiting area. This helped relieve Sam’s anxiety about attending court.  On the hearing day, Sam was referred to the Applicant Practitioner for support and to a duty lawyer for legal advice before her hearing. She appeared from behind a screen in the court room and did not see or have any contact with the respondent at all.  Sam’s former partner was referred to the Respondent Practitioner as well as a duty lawyer who provided him with information and support, as well as referrals to local family violence agencies.  The Applicant Practitioner followed up with Sam a couple of weeks after her court appearance and she provided positive feedback about the improvements in her court journey this time around at the court now operating as a Specialist Family Violence Court.  \*Names have been changed |

### Courts – Services and programs

* During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria continued to hear family violence matters online, with high-risk and urgent matters prioritised.
* The new family violence intervention order online form was fast-tracked in 2020. This allows applicants to apply online. The online form and online hearings have been important in ensuring continuity of access to justice.
* The Children's Court of Victoria prioritised online hearings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Where appropriate, family violence practitioners and court support coordinators ensured victims survivors can safely navigate and participate in remote hearings and access necessary support services.
* The use of online hearings and remote service delivery has been accelerated during the pandemic, with supported remote hearings expanding to 10 new locations in 2022, and audiovisual linkage available at all locations.
* The Melbourne Children's Court is exploring how court attendant safety plans can be redeveloped to promote the safety of victim survivors in online hearings. Previously, these plans supported vulnerable victims survivors physically attending proceedings.
* A family violence training program for court interpreters is being delivered through Monash University. Eighty interpreters are expected to complete the course in the first year.
* An innovative pilot program for family violence respondents commenced at Ballarat Magistrates’ Court in 2021. The Integrated Counselling and Case Management program provides targeted intervention services to respondents with mental health, alcohol or other drugs issues. This prepares them for group-based counselling to address their use of violence.
* The Pre-Court Engagement and Resolution Pilot supports court users to access pre-court legal referrals across seven court sites. Court users may also be referred to court family violence practitioners, including specialist LGBTIQ+ and Umalek Balit practitioners, and interpreters. The pilot seeks to improve the court experience for court users. It does this by:
  + identifying and coordinating legal and support needs
  + supporting court registry staff to manage high-volume court lists
  + supporting early resolution of matters in some cases.

### Courts – Culturally safe and inclusive

* Court Services Victoria’s [*Self-determination plan*](https://www.courts.vic.gov.au/news/csv-self-determination-plan-2021-2025#:~:text=Court%20Services%20Victoria%20has%20today%20launched%20the%20CSV,Koori%20agencies%20and%20the%20Koori%20Community%20in%20Victoria.) <https://www.courts.vic.gov.au/news/csv-self-determination-plan-2021-2025#:~:text=Court%20Services%20Victoria%20has%20today%20launched%20the%20CSV,Koori%20agencies%20and%20the%20Koori%20Community%20in%20Victoria.> has been launched as part of the Delivering Culturally Safe Court Services Program. The plan guides how courts work towards providing a culturally safe environment for court users and staff.
* The Koori Cultural Safety Initiative is now in its second phase. This initiative developed cultural safety guidelines for court mandated Men's Behaviour Change Programs. The guidelines assist providers of these programs to strengthen and develop cultural safety within their programs and organisations.
* Work on a Koori Family Violence Strategy is under way. This will provide a framework that underpins the courts’ approach to family violence in the Aboriginal community.
* An evaluation of the Koori Family Violence and Intervention Order Breaches Pilot in Mildura is under way. The evaluation considers the pilot’s implementation and effectiveness.

### Courts – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

* We established a central team to support implementation of the [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme>. The team triages and responds to information requests and proactively shares information as required. The team responds to an average of 120 information sharing requests per day.
* We established an information sharing protocol between the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria, Children’s Court of Victoria and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. The protocol enables the department to provide the courts with information about family violence risk when determining family violence intervention order applications. It can be used by judicial officers in the Children's Court of Victoria to inform them of appropriate conditions for inclusion in family violence intervention order proceedings involving young people. The protocol also supports the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria to request information from Child Protection about the parties to a family violence proceeding.
* Courts are implementing the [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework> and embedding it into practice. Training to introduce and contextualise the MARAM Framework for staff engaging with victim survivors of family violence has now been delivered across the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria and Children’s Court of Victoria workforce.

## Courts – What is next

Most activities within this priority area will continue through until 2023. The timeframes for delivery acknowledge the complexity of creating change within our court system. They provide sufficient time to achieve this in a way that will ensure sustained outcomes for Victoria.

Continuing activities include:

* planning for the gazettal of a further seven Specialist Family Violence Courts in 2022, as well as planning for the associated capital works to be delivered over the coming years through to 2025
* expanding the availability of Court Mandated Counselling Orders to other headquarter court locations
* progressing the development and implementation of the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria *Koori family violence strategy*. This will guide how the court approaches family violence in the Aboriginal community
* expansion of online and remote capabilities, including expansion of supported remote hearing access to a further 10 non-court locations
* enhancements to the online family violence intervention order application process. These changes will help reduce the need for a victim survivor to physically attend a court building
* training and capability building will continue across the workforce including:
  + family violence training to judiciary and court staff
  + MARAM-focused training to judiciary and court staff, including to support those who work with respondents
  + training of specialist staff and multidisciplinary training of judiciary and court staff in the Specialist Family Violence Courts.

## Courts - What this means for outcomes

### Courts – Domain 2: Victim Survivors

Activities delivered under this priority area aim to increase the safety of victim survivors. They support victim survivors and families to feel safe and to ensure their voices are heard.

The establishment of Specialist Family Violence Courts is a fundamental shift that improved the safety of victim survivors. This ensures a focus on establishing inclusive courts that are victim-survivor centric. Other activities used online technologies to improve service access for victim survivors. These also contribute to enhanced safety features that give victim survivors more choice about how they want to participate in their court proceedings.

### Courts – Domain 3: Perpetrators

We are trialling new approaches focused on working with respondents to increase their accountability and support them to change behaviours. This is supported through magistrates being able to mandate respondents to engage in a counselling program if the person is subject to a final intervention order. These programs are designed to support respondents to take responsibility for their choice to use violence and change their behaviour.

### Courts – Domain 4: System

Reforms to Victorian courts provide a more coordinated, consistent and timely response to family violence.

This includes Specialist Family Violence Court staff working closely with other court services and the sector as part of an integrated response.

Implementing the MARAM Framework and training strengthened the integration of courts with other services across the sector and built workforce capability.

The courts have also worked with the sector to enhance information sharing capability, processes and practices. This ensures that important risk information held by courts is shared more efficiently with other agencies. It also allows rapid intervention and response to prevent escalation or further harm.

# Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way priority area

****Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families****

We recognise that family violence is not a part of Aboriginal culture. We also recognise that family violence against Aboriginal people is perpetrated by both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people. We acknowledge that colonisation, dispossession, child removal and other discriminatory governmental policies have resulted in significant intergenerational trauma, structural disadvantage and racism. These have had long-lasting and far-reaching consequences.

Victoria has committed to an Aboriginal-led agreement [*Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families* (the *Dhelk Dja Agreement*)](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023/priorities-for-2020-2023/dhelk-dja-safe-our-way) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-reform-rolling-action-plan-2020-2023/priorities-for-2020-2023/dhelk-dja-safe-our-way> that addresses family violence in Aboriginal communities. It is informed by the self-determination principles within [*Korin Korin Balit-Djak*](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-strategies/korin-korin-balit-djak-aboriginal-health-wellbeing-and-safety-strategic-plan-2017) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-strategies/korin-korin-balit-djak-aboriginal-health-wellbeing-and-safety-strategic-plan-2017>, Victoria’s Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017–2027.

The *Dhelk Dja Agreement* commits the signatories – Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal services and government – to work together. It commits them to be accountable for ensuring that Aboriginal people, families and communities are stronger, safer, thriving and living free from family violence. The *Dhelk Dja Agreement* is at the centre of family violence reform initiatives affecting Aboriginal people.

The [Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum](https://www.vic.gov.au/dhelk-dja-partnership-forum) <https://www.vic.gov.au/dhelk-dja-partnership-forum> and its members are strategic leaders overseeing the implementation of the Dhelk Dja Agreement. The forum works closely with community and stakeholders.

*Rolling Action Plan* activities will continue to progress family violence reforms, in line with the *Dhelk Dja Agreement*.

## Dhelk Dja – What has happened?

### Dhelk Dja Agreement

Self-determination is at the heart of the *Dhelk Dja Agreement*, marking a systemic shift in the way we partner with the Aboriginal community.

The Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum and its members are the individual and collective champions and strategic leaders who oversee the *Dhelk Dja Agreement* and the first *Dhelk Dja three-year action plan 2019–2022*. This plan which articulates the critical actions and supporting activities required to progress the *Dhelk Dja Agreement’s* five strategic priorities.

Each of these priorities recognises the need to invest in Aboriginal culture, leadership and decision-making as the key to ending family violence in Victorian Aboriginal communities.

The Dhelk Dja Koori Caucus comprises the chairs of the 11 Dhelk Dja Action Groups and key representatives of Aboriginal services that are members of the partnership forum.

The caucus determined the need to develop a suite of specific and measurable targets and corresponding actions to eliminate violence against Aboriginal women and children. This work is to occur within the first year of the *Closing the Gap Victorian implementation plan 2021–23*.

A detailed data collection plan for the *Dhelk Dja Agreement* will be developed. This will draw on existing data as well as identifying gaps and opportunities for new data. The data will support our understanding of Aboriginal family violence. It will build the evidence base for prevention and intervention.

### Dhelk Dja – Statewide access and engagement

* Victoria Police, in partnership with Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum and the Aboriginal Justice Forum, has commenced a refresh of the current 10 Police and Aboriginal Community Protocols Against Family Violence sites. The protocols are an agreement between local Aboriginal communities and Victoria Police that document the local police response to family violence where a person identifies as Aboriginal. Victoria Police has committed to a statewide expansion to include additional sites.
* *Dhelk Dja action groups regional action plans* are being developed and implemented, with many activities and events delivered virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain community engagement and connection.
* At the August 2021 partnership forum, the *Aboriginal family violence industry strategy* was endorsed. The strategy aims to:
  + grow and expand the Aboriginal family violence workforce
  + ensure a self-determining, valued and empowered Aboriginal family violence workforce
  + enhance workers’ employment and study skills
  + ensure a skilled and equipped Aboriginal family violence workforce
  + increase cultural safety in the workplace
  + recognise Aboriginal culture and cultural strengthening as protective factors against violence
  + enhance Aboriginal family violence workforce health, safety and wellbeing
  + ensure the Aboriginal family violence workforce is appropriately remunerated
  + recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Dhelk Dja – Programs and services

* Aboriginal-led prevention is a key priority of the *Dhelk Dja Agreement*. It has a particular focus on the safety of women and children. In 2021, through the annual $1.1 million Victorian Aboriginal Community Initiatives Fund, 24 Aboriginal organisations and community groups are delivering 28 projects. These culturally appropriate, place-based community-led projects are dedicated to preventing and responding to family violence in Victorian Aboriginal communities.
* The $2.7 million Preventing the Cycle of Violence Aboriginal Fund, established in 2018, supported 11 Aboriginal-led family violence prevention and early intervention initiatives. An independent evaluation found that the projects reached at least 50,000 people across Victoria. Projects from the Aboriginal Community Initiatives Fund were also evaluated. With findings supporting building Aboriginal services’ and communities’ capacity in data collection, interpretation, and translation. Findings also supported using local data and evaluation methodologies to inform planning, prioritising and reporting.
* The $18.2 million Dhelk Dja Family Violence Fund prioritises funding over two years to Aboriginal communities and their organisations to develop and deliver a range of Aboriginal-led family violence responses and initiatives. Thirty-four projects and initiatives were funded and delivered by 15 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
* Consistent with the Victorian Government’s commitment to self-determination, the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum endorsed the draft Aboriginal Access Points concept model in January 2020. This included the locations of the first three Aboriginal Access Points in Barwon, Bayside Peninsula and Mallee areas. After a co-design process led by key Aboriginal family violence stakeholders, the forum endorsed the Aboriginal Access Point Service Design Model in May 2021. Work is now under way to appoint the Aboriginal service agencies that will deliver the Aboriginal Access Points. The first Aboriginal Access Point will commence in mid-2022. All three Aboriginal Access Points are expected to be in operation by December 2022.

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| Cultural safety and Aboriginal Access Points in The Orange Door network The Orange Door network includes staff and practice leaders from partner Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. Embedding culturally safe practices with Orange Door services is informed by the experience and expertise of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation staff and practice leaders. It ensures principles of self-determination are upheld when working with Aboriginal families experiencing or using family violence.  The **Strengthening Cultural Safety in The Orange Door** project is under way to establish a continuum of learning across The Orange Door networks. The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency has been contracted to commence development of a cultural safety training package tailored to The Orange Door network. A Cultural Safety Project Lead will be employed in local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in each area across the state from early 2022. These roles will localise the package for their area and support the rollout of training to all staff in The Orange Door. The Cultural Safety Project Leads will facilitate cultural safety assessment and planning processes as part of the implementation the *Aboriginal inclusion action plan*.  The Aboriginal Access Points are a complementary service pathway for The Orange Door network for Aboriginal Victorians experiencing or using family violence. A series of workshops with key Aboriginal stakeholders were held to inform the development of the Aboriginal Access Points service model. This model was endorsed by the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum. Work has commenced to appoint Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations that will deliver the Aboriginal Access Points. |

### Dhelk Dja – Government commitments

* [The Orange Door](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/> *Aboriginal inclusion action plan* was endorsed by the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum in mid-2021. The plan focuses on actions to improve access and equity for Aboriginal peoples. This is to reduce Aboriginal peoples’ experience of systemic barriers when accessing family violence and other specialist services such as child and family services.

### Dhelk Dja – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

We undertook Aboriginal-led evaluations of the Preventing the Cycle of Violence Aboriginal Fund and Aboriginal Community Initiatives Fund.

Evaluation-capacity building of the funded organisations or community groups is a significant component of the two-year evaluation project. The aim is to enable the transfer of evaluation skills and capacity to inform their work with Aboriginal communities.

This project makes an important and significant contribution to the evidence base for what works in family violence prevention for Aboriginal communities.

Final evaluation reports have been provided to the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum to inform future direction.

An independent evaluation of the Aboriginal Innovation Fund was also conducted in 2021, led by a First Nations consultancy firm. The findings offer opportunities to strengthen Aboriginal-led prevention activities and culturally- safe commissioning processes.

## Dhelk Dja – What is next

We will continue many activities started over the past two years:

* Work has commenced to deliver the Aboriginal Family Violence Primary Prevention Research Project. This will examine existing initiatives and inform effective primary prevention of violence experienced by Aboriginal Victorian women, children and their families. This research will inform the review and update of the Indigenous Family Violence Primary Prevention Framework.
* Work will commence on developing frameworks to ensure the voices of Aboriginal children and young people and Elders are embedded in the system transformation work.
* A forum will be held in 2022 showcasing the successful Aboriginal community-led prevention initiatives to inform communities and share best practice.
* Discussions will continue to inform an approach for a campaign focused on preventing violence against Aboriginal women, children and families.
* The refresh and expansion of the Police and Aboriginal Community Protocols against Family Violence sites will continue. Co-design and delivery is informed by the Dhelk Dja Regional Action Groups, Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees and the community.
* A 10-year investment strategy will be developed in partnership with Koori Caucus members of the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum to inform the 2022–23 budget cycle.
* Work is progressing to inform the Aboriginal data needs project to support baseline understanding of Aboriginal family violence prevention activities and build the evidence base for prevention and early intervention. This will support the Koori Caucus of the Dhelk Dja Partnership Forum to prioritise investment and activity towards identified need.

## Dhelk Dja – What this means for outcomes

### Dhelk Dja – Domain 1: Prevention

We are strengthening family violence prevention by investing in Aboriginal community-led projects and initiatives through the Dhelk Dja Family Violence Fund and Aboriginal Community Initiatives Fund. Prevention and early intervention must be grounded in cultural strengthening, cultural expertise and education. This will be led and driven by the Aboriginal community. It will have self-determination at the centre of all decisions.

### Dhelk Dja – Domain 2: Victim survivors

We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are disproportionately affected by family violence, particularly women and children. Activities across the priority areas, such as the use of the [Central Information Point](https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point) <https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point>, assist risk identification. This supports services to prevent the escalation of violence. The design of the concept model for Aboriginal Access Points has been led by the Aboriginal community. This ensures access points will be culturally sensitive. Once established, it will provide a service pathway that can appropriately respond and support Aboriginal victim survivors to ensure they are safe.

### Dhelk Dja – Domain 3: Perpetrators

We continue to work with perpetrators and people who use violence. This work aims to change their understanding of family violence and their attitudes. Ultimately, it seeks to support them to change their behaviour. This requires significant commitment from the perpetrator and support services. Our activities in other priority areas such as the Koori Cultural Safety Initiative, and the Medium-term Perpetrator Accommodation Scheme consider the different requirements of Aboriginal people who are perpetrators or who use violence.

### Dhelk Dja – Domain 4: System

The *Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families* is an Aboriginal-led approach to addressing reform within the system. Activities being delivered recognise the need to respond to all forms of family violence experienced by Aboriginal people in a culturally safe and inclusive way. The approach has focused on integrating the family violence system and making services and programs more accessible to Aboriginal communities. It also ensures that staff and practice leaders from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations are engaged and able to provide culturally appropriate responses. This ensures the system is more responsive and that the professionals within it are skilled, capable and reflect the communities they serve.

# Housing priority area

****Improving access to safe and stable housing options****

**Understanding and responding to the housing needs of people experiencing and using family violence is a key part of the family violence reform.**

**Meeting the housing needs of Victorians experiencing family violence is complex. Each victim survivor has different needs and considerations.**

**Emergency accommodation may be important in a crisis. However, many victim survivors want support to stay in their own homes. Those who cannot stay at home need assistance beyond short-term refuge. A stable home in a suitable location provide security and support stable work and education.**

**In addition to delivering better outcomes for individuals, timely access to stable long-term accommodation reduces the blockages in refuge and crisis accommodation.**

**Our focus continues to minimise risk during crises. We do this by supporting victim survivors to exit safely from a family violence situation. We are also delivering long-term solutions to re-establish stability for victim survivors, including children.**

**The focus for the *Rolling Action Plan* involves new activity and continued delivery of the significant long-term housing investments announced. This includes continuing to replace our communal refuges with new core and cluster model refuges providing greater privacy and independence and building more new social housing homes.**

## Housing – What has happened

Family violence is a leading cause of homelessness, especially for women and children. Homelessness can occur as a direct result of experiencing family violence and structural barriers. These barriers include gender inequality, a lack of affordable housing, and limited social support.

Victoria has commenced delivery of the [Big Housing Build](https://www.vic.gov.au/homes-victoria-big-housing-build) <https://www.vic.gov.au/homes-victoria-big-housing-build>, which aims to increase social and affordable housing. On completion, it will deliver more than 9,300 social housing dwellings:

* 1,100 dwellings will replace existing stock,
* 8,200 will be new social housing dwellings, and
* 2,900 will be new affordable market homes.

Home ownership offers great protections against family violence and gives victim survivors a chance to gain financial independence. The Big Housing Build is expected to provide a safe home for 1,000 victim survivors of family violence across Victoria. This investment is on top of the $498 million *Building Works package* for refurbishment and maintenance of existing public and community housing properties. The *Building Works* package includes a $10 million investment to increase support for women and children escaping family violence.

The [Royal Commission](https://www.rcfv.com.au/) <https://www.rcfv.com.au/> found that housing pathways for victim survivors are ‘blocked up’ and not flowing as intended. It recognised that these blockages result in women and children remaining in refuges for longer periods. Over the past two years, the average length of stay for victim survivors in refuge has remained relatively stable (6.2 weeks in 2019–20 and 6.4 weeks in 2020–21).

[Victorian private rental laws](https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting/changes-to-renting-laws/guide-to-rental-law-changes) <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting/changes-to-renting-laws/guide-to-rental-law-changes> were updated in March 2021. These included higher protections for victim survivors and accountability for perpetrators of family violence:

* The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal can now assist in removing perpetrators of family violence from rental agreements. This allows victim survivors and their children to remain in their own homes.
* Victim survivors are not liable for damage caused by a perpetrator of family violence who does not live in the home.
* Termination of rental agreements because of family violence must be heard by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal within three business days.

Our focus on the future of Victoria’s crisis accommodation continues to be the core and cluster model.

This includes 19 redeveloped and new family violence refuges across Victoria, including three new Aboriginal-specific refuges. The core and cluster model provides individual family units with on-site support which will provide greater independence, privacy and security for victim survivors, including children. As refuges are redeveloped, capacity for after-hours support will also be provided.

### Housing – Statewide access and engagement

The Royal Commission recommended the government report annually on the unmet housing demand among people affected by family violence. The Royal Commission also recommended the government declare the proposed actions for meeting the continuing unmet housing demand (recommendation 20).

On 10 February 2021, the Victorian government publicly published this data for the first time, with its actions for meeting the needs affected by family violence.

Since 2016 we have:

* acquired 325 social housing dwellings and head leased 401 medium-term tenancies from the sector
* prioritised family violence victim survivors and their families for social housing through the Victorian Housing Register
* provided over 6,500 flexible support packages each year to help victims survivors of family violence.

This comes on top of the following investments:

* We committed to building 1,000 new public dwellings for people experiencing homelessness. We have built 349 new homes across Victoria for people experiencing homelessness. Another 700 are currently under construction or about to begin construction.
* We have provided 38 new and leased properties across regional Victoria, providing women and children a safe and secure environment in which to live.
* We committed $30 million for the Regional Estate Revitalisation project to redevelop out-of-date public housing in Ballarat, Bendigo and Benalla over 10 years. To ensure the best outcomes for the redevelopment, community consultation on plans has occurred in Ballarat and Bendigo. Relocations have now commenced. The redevelopments will see a minimum 10 per cent growth in social housing. Aged dwellings will be replaced with additional growth in affordable and possibly private housing.
* Over the past two years, the average length of stay in refuge has remained stable at approximately six weeks.
* Nine family violence refuges have been redeveloped and are operational. These provide women and children with a safe and secure environment where support is available.
* The Personal Safety Initiative continues to support victim survivors to access appropriate and effective technology and security. This allows them to remain safely in their own homes and communities. Personal safety responses for victim survivors experiencing or at risk of experiencing family violence are funded and accessed through the Victorian Government’s Family Violence Flexible Support Package program. Personal safety responses may include home modifications, personal duress alarms and CCTV.
* The Men’s Accommodation and Counselling Service (previously known as the Perpetrator Accommodation and Support Service) supports eligible men who use violence. This includes crisis accommodation, wrap-around support to address immediate concerns and linking them to services to address their offending behaviour. This service was established during the COVID-19 pandemic. It helps to keep victim survivors safe in their own homes by providing crisis accommodation and support for perpetrators. From September 2020 to June 2021, 290 perpetrators were accommodated in the program and the program has been extended until 30 June 2022.
* The Medium-Term Perpetrator Accommodation and Support Service complements the Men’s Accommodation and Counselling Service. It provides medium-term (up to six months) accommodation and case management support for people who use violence. This Service is being piloted in partnership with local housing providers. It is run by three perpetrator case management providers (in Central Highlands, Loddon and North East Melbourne) and two Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (in North East Melbourne, Hume Moreland an Inner Gippsland).

### Housing – Culturally safe and inclusive

* Aboriginal-specific refuges provide a space for Aboriginal women and children experiencing family violence to receive culturally appropriate support. The first refuge has been completed. The second is in the design phase. Land is being sourced for a third. Three core and cluster Aboriginal-specific refuges will be developed, rather than the initial two planned.
* The [Social Housing Growth Fund](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-social-housing-growth-fund) <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-social-housing-growth-fund> is providing safe, stable and secure housing for older women, women and children experiencing family violence, Aboriginal Victorians, people with a disability and people with a mental illness across the state. It is being implemented in partnership with the community housing sector. The program has delivered 133 new social housing dwellings. At least 75 per cent of these were allocated to applicants with a priority need for housing.

## Housing – What is next

Through 2022 the planning, redevelopment and construction of refuges and dwellings will continue. This includes:

* continuing the redevelopment of 10 family violence refuges including the completion of a second Aboriginal-specific family violence refuge and the commencement of a third
* construction of new public housing dwellings
* delivery of an additional 18 new social housing dwellings under the Social Housing Growth Fund
* consultation on the Benalla masterplan for the Regional Estate Revitalisation project
* acquisition of a further 18 properties for women and their children.

We will also evaluate the Medium-Term Perpetrator Accommodation Service and determine next steps based on the key learnings and outcomes from the five pilot sites.

The social and affordable housing challenge will require ongoing effort over many years, extending beyond the Big Housing Build. That is why we are developing a new 10-year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing in Victoria. We are committed to ensuring all Victorians have access to a safe, affordable and appropriate home. The new strategy will establish the 10-year vision for social and affordable housing in Victoria and build on the success of the Big Housing Build and other investment to date. What this means for outcomes

### Housing – Domain 2: Victim survivors

Family violence is the number one cause of homelessness for women in Victoria. We must continue to improve and increase social housing for victim survivors and their children. Providing safe and secure housing helps victim survivors to continue living their lives without the imminent threat of family violence. The core and cluster models we are implementing for family violence refuges allow victim survivors to live independently while also engaging with support services, creating the opportunity to rebuild their lives and thrive.

### Housing – Domain 3: Perpetrators

Ensuring that victim survivors of family violence can stay in their home while supporting perpetrators to move out is important to help hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. Supporting perpetrators to move out of the family home means that victim survivors are able to remain safely within their own home and community. Importantly, it also creates an opportunity to support perpetrators to change their behaviour. It also reduces the chance they will return to the family home if they feel they have nowhere else to go – potentially violating family violence intervention orders. The use of the personal safety responses supported by the Personal Safety Initiative deters perpetrators from breaching intervention orders. It also enables the collection of evidence to support criminal prosecutions when a breach occurs.

### Housing – Domain 4: System

We know there are some cohorts of women who are more likely to experience homelessness than others, including Aboriginal women. Family violence is the leading reason Aboriginal women seek support from specialist homelessness services. By providing Aboriginal-specific refuges, we are building a system that is person-centred and responsive. This ensures the family violence system is accessible, available, person-centred and culturally relevant. The principles of self-determination underpin all housing responses to family violence. This assists in creating culturally safe environments for victim survivors.

# Legal assistance priority area

****Improving legal assistance access, representation and integration across the family violence system****

This priority area focuses on improving access to legal assistance and representation. It also enhances integration between the legal assistance sector (such as[Victoria Legal Aid](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/>) and the broader family violence service system.

These activities focus on early intervention, workforce capacity and responding to the impact of COVID-19.

They support victim survivors to understand their legal options and make informed decisions about their family and safety needs and to advocate for their access to justice. They also help perpetrators understand police and court processes and meet any obligations associated with court outcomes.

The Family Violence Legal Assistance Working Group (co-chaired by the Department of Justice and Community Safety and the Federation of Community Legal Centres) determined the order and priority for delivering these activities in 2022 and 2023. The working group took into consideration the demands on the sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the breadth of work committed to.

## Legal assistance – What has happened

There has been some progress towards implementing *Rolling Action Plan* activities within the legal assistance priority area. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic across the legal system were significant. As a result, we focused on the immediate delivery of services, rather than broader reform to improve legal assistance access, representation and integration across the family violence system.

The ‘Legal assistance’ priority area is closely aligned with the [‘Courts’ priority area](#_Courts). In particular, this occurs through activities, services and programs provided through the Specialist Family Violence Courts.

### Legal assistance – Programs and services

* Victoria Legal Aid is implementing and has had an initial evaluation of the Specialist Family Violence Courts legal practice model. This forms part of the Specialist Family Violence Courts implementation at Shepparton, Ballarat, Moorabbin, Heidelberg and Frankston Magistrates’ Courts. Victoria Legal Aid is working with local groups and committees at each site to embed and refine the model’s processes.
* A pilot of Victoria Legal Aid’s Information and Referral Officer role is in place at the Specialist Family Violence Courts in Shepparton, Ballarat and Moorabbin. This has aided service delivery, especially during COVID-19 restriction periods. A priority phone line has also been created under the model. This phone line accepts calls from professionals servicing the Frankston and Heidelberg Specialist Family Violence Courts.
* The Pre-Court Engagement and Resolution Pilot provides early legal assistance to family violence intervention order parties and, where appropriate, supports the resolution of family violence intervention order matters prior to the court date. Court users may also be referred to other services, such as court family violence practitioners, including specialist LGBTIQ+ and Umalek Balit practitioners, and interpreters. The pilot commenced at Frankston Magistrates’ Court in April 2020. A further $7.75 million was provided by the Victorian Government in the 2020–21 state budget to service seven Magistrates’ Court locations at Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Melbourne, Sunshine, Ringwood, Werribee and the Latrobe Valley.
* A pilot is being developed to connect clients of [The Orange Door network](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/> with legal services that meet their needs in a timely manner. This will also ensure effective connections with family violence and/or family services through The Orange Door network.

### Legal assistance – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

* We have commenced a review and assessment of COVID-19 pre-court legal assistance initiatives implemented by the courts. These included providing information and referrals earlier and electronically. The remote service delivery and enhanced audiovisual link technology access initiative has continued to expand. This complements the Specialist Family Violence Courts model.
* We are undertaking a review of the legal assistance recommendations from the [*Positive interventions for perpetrators of adolescent violence in the home* report](https://www.anrows.org.au/project/the-pipa-project-positive-interventions-for-perpetrators-of-adolescent-violence-in-the-home-avith/) <https://www.anrows.org.au/project/the-pipa-project-positive-interventions-for-perpetrators-of-adolescent-violence-in-the-home-avith/>, completed by the [Australian National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety](https://www.anrows.org.au/) <https://www.anrows.org.au/> and [Centre for Innovative Justice](https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/schools-colleges/graduate-school-of-business-and-law/research/centre-for-innovative-justice) <https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/schools-colleges/graduate-school-of-business-and-law/research/centre-for-innovative-justice>.
* Delivery of Safer Families has commenced. This professional development program supports community legal centre lawyers to provide high-quality, effective advice and representation to clients experiencing family violence. Discussions with [Women's Legal Service](https://www.womenslegal.org.au) <https://www.womenslegal.org.au/> to explore how the Safer Families Program can be expanded or uplifted are in train.

| An Australia-wide legal practitioner framework Victoria has co-led an initiative with the Commonwealth, which aims to ensure that the Commonwealth, the state and territory Attorneys-General embed family violence competency into continuing professional development frameworks for legal practitioners across Australia.  This is a significant step that has seen Victoria working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to undertake extensive consultation with legal stakeholders. These include the Law Society and Bar Association in every jurisdiction (in Victoria, these are the Law Institute of Victoria and the Victorian Bar Association), the Law Council of Australia, the Australian Bar Association, the Legal Services Council, the Victorian Legal Services Board and the Legal Practise Board of Western Australia.  These consultations have highlighted broad support for a discretionary model. This will encourage all legal practitioners to engage in regular family violence training by amending guidance materials issued by regulators. The outcomes of this work will be communicated to stakeholders soon. |
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* The Royal Women's Hospital has implemented the Acting on the Warning Signs Project as part of the Health Justice Partnership movement in Australia. The initiative offers free legal assistance to inpatients and outpatients and is delivered on-site (the lawyer being located within the hospital). The program focuses on removing some of the barriers women may face when seeking legal advice such as cost and access. Participants in the program reported that ‘receiving legal advice had a positive impact upon their psychological and emotional health immediately during or after the consultation’.

## Legal assistance – What is next

We are considering and prioritising a number of activities in the legal assistance area delivery commencing in 2022. This will provide clear direction for the sector on what will be delivered.

There are some activities already in progress that will continue, including:

* a broad piece of work to respond to the needs of adolescents who use family violence. This would consider the recommendations from the [*Positive interventions for perpetrators of adolescent violence in the home* report](https://www.anrows.org.au/project/the-pipa-project-positive-interventions-for-perpetrators-of-adolescent-violence-in-the-home-avith/) <https://www.anrows.org.au/project/the-pipa-project-positive-interventions-for-perpetrators-of-adolescent-violence-in-the-home-avith/>
* working with legal services to ensure that training aligns with the Family Violence [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework>
* working to establish a statewide approach to the connection and coordination of legal services within The Orange Door network in every area, following the commencement of the pilot. Development of an agreed and consistent service connection with legal services across the Orange Door network will continue following the outcomes of the pilot.

## Legal assistance – What this means for outcomes

### Legal assistance – Domain 2: Victim survivors

Activities delivered under this priority area have played an important role in keeping victim survivors safe, especially during periods of COVID-19 restrictions. The shift to online accessibility and other adaptations to the legal system help improve victim survivors’ safety by moving towards online and remote service delivery. This is a tangible outcome for victim survivors, who do not need to worry about engaging with or seeing the perpetrator.

### Legal assistance – Domain 3: Perpetrators

The delivery of legal assistance activities will keep perpetrators accountable and further support victim survivors’ safety by improving access to legal support and representation. The Pre-Court Engagement and Resolution Pilot identifies and refers respondents to family violence intervention order matters to legal assistance. It also refers them to family violence practitioners to provide non-legal information, support and referrals. This supports perpetrators to be accountable for their actions.

### Legal assistance – Domain 4: System

We are changing the legal system to better support victim survivors and build consistency of understanding and approach across legal services and other areas of the sector. This supports a family violence system that is integrated, person centred and responsive. Activities in this priority area will help integrate legal assistance across the broader family violence system. As victim survivors and perpetrators interact with the family violence system at various points access to legal assistance is also needed at various points. The development of the pilot to embed legal services in The Orange Door network is one approach that could support capability building within the sector and increase the ability of the system to intervene earlier to identify and respond to family violence.

# MARAM and information sharing priority area

****A shared approach to risk assessment and information sharing****

The Family Violence [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework)Multi-Agency Risk and Assessment Management (MARAM) Framework <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework>, the [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme>, the [Child Information Sharing Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme> and the [Central Information Point](https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point) <https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point> support an effective and consistent approach to risk assessment and management. They also increase collaboration between services through information sharing.

Having a shared understanding supports:

* successful system integration
* workforces who understand their responsibilities in identifying and responding to family violence
* an accessible, equitable system response.

The focus of the *Rolling Action Plan*is to continue to implement and embed the MARAM Framework. This will include working with organisations and services who do not primarily deal with family violence as part of their service provision. These organisations and services will nonetheless encounter family violence. They need to know how to respond and support victim survivors, as well as raising whole of system capability and confidence in keeping perpetrators in view and accountable. This includes collaborating with, or referral to other services and contributing to risk management.

## MARAM Framework

MARAM is the cornerstone of the government’s family violence risk assessment and management reform. It provides evidence-based guidance and tools to professionals to help consistent and collaborative responses to family violence.

With the roll out of Phase 2 of the MARAM over 370,000 practitioners (as at April 2021) are now prescribed from organisations across the health, education, justice and social service system. This means that along with the family violence workforce, other workers will use MARAM as part of their work. This includes workers in primary and secondary schools, early childhood education and care services, community-managed mental health and housing services, public health services and hospitals, refugee and migrant services and state-funded aged care services.

So far, more than 62,000 workers have been trained in MARAM and the information sharing schemes. The bulk of prescribed workers became prescribed in April 2021.

| Practitioner reflections from the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency The new MARAM tools provide a holistic framework to assist with identifying current risk as well as any historical intergenerational trauma. This allows practitioners to design healing plans that respond to a family’s whole experience of family violence.  Practitioners state that the risk assessment tool is useful therapeutically to open up conversations about family violence.  A key aspect of this is how the tool supports the practitioner to continue to hear what the client is saying. This means they are less likely to make a binary judgment or have an attitude that might lead them to predict culpability at the outset about who may be using or experiencing harm.  Rather than being used in a single session, practitioners find that it works best when used over a series of sessions. It can also be revisited to reflect on shifts that have taken place around dynamic risk and safety. |
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The [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme> is a key enabler of MARAM. It enables prescribed organisations, known as Information Sharing Entities, to facilitate assessment and management of family violence risk to children and adults. The [Child Information Sharing Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme> enables the broader sharing of information to promote child wellbeing or safety including in the absence of family violence.

## MARAM and information sharing – What has happened

### MARAM and information sharing – Programs and services

* The Central Information Point consolidates information about a perpetrator of family violence into a single report for frontline practitioners to assess and manage risk of family violence. This brings together workers and information from the Magistrate’s Court of Victoria, Victoria Police, Corrections Victoria and Child Protection in the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Between when it commenced in April 2018 to 30 October 2021, the Central Information Point has provided over 11,925 reports to support frontline practitioners in family violence risk assessment and management, including safety planning. The service is currently available to [The Orange Door network](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/>, the nine Risk Assessment and Management Panels and to Berry Street services. It has become a critical tool for practitioners to access timely and consolidated perpetrator information to facilitate service responses with victim survivors and perpetrators of family violence.
* In particular, The Orange Door network has found value in receiving information in a timely way that shows a perpetrator’s pattern and history of family violence. This also supports and validates a victim survivor’s story or experience, empowers decision-making for victim survivors, and may find instances where misidentification of the predominant aggressor has occurred.

| Central Information Point A Risk Assessment and Management Panel Coordinator was asked to case consult by a Specialist Family Violence service. The victim survivor and perpetrator have a baby called Jane.\* The perpetrator was in custody due to family violence and other offences.  The perpetrator had requested contact with Jane. Several agencies involved with the family raised concerns about the perpetrator having contact with Jane due to the perpetrator’s history of family violence and contact with other children. The Risk Assessment and Management Panel Coordinator submitted a [Central Information Point](https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point) <https://www.vic.gov.au/orange-door-service-model/central-information-point> request.  The Central Information Point report showed a timeline of offences involving the perpetrator's child from a previous relationship, as well as offences involving young people not related to him. The Central Information Point report also demonstrated there had been limited system accountability around the perpetrator's use of family violence with past victim survivors and the harm he had caused to other young girls.  Through sharing the information with relevant services, a more comprehensive risk assessment and safety planning was undertaken. This included supports and conditions for Jane’s safety during any contact with the perpetrator. The information from the Central Information Point report was used to assess and manage the risk to both Jane as a victim survivor of family violence in her own right and to Jane's mother.  \*Names have been changed |
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* A survey of practitioners at The Orange Door network conducted in mid-2021 found that:
  + 100 per cent of practitioners responding to the survey said that the Central Information Point report helped them better understand the perpetrator's family violence history and current risk
  + 79 per cent said that they assessed the victim survivor to be at a higher risk level based on the Central Information Report
  + 78 per cent said that they used the Central Information Report to support a referral or update risk management plans (including safety plans).
* A new online system to host the tools for risk assessment and management has been rolled out to The Orange Door services and key partner services.
* From April 2018 to December 2021, more than 45,000 MARAM risk assessments and safety plans have been undertaken by The Orange Door. The MARAM tools have also been embedded in the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform used by homelessness and specialist family violence services. Between September 2020 and November 2021, more than 49,000 MARAM risk assessments and safety plans were undertaken in the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform.
* Victoria Police shared a total of 5,368 information sharing requests through the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and Child Information Sharing Scheme. Courts received 28,266 Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme requests in 2020–21, an increase of more than 30 per cent since 2019–20. The courts introduced updated Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and Child Information Sharing Scheme request email templates for family violence practitioners to streamline request processes and support a consistent approach to information sharing.

### MARAM and information sharing – Government commitments

The [*Family Violence Protection Act 2008*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008> requires an annual report on MARAM to be tabled in Parliament that describes the key areas of progress and work being undertaken to align to MARAM across departments, organisations, and agencies. The first annual report on the implementation of the MARAM Framework was tabled to Parliament on 20 February 2020, the second on 18 February 2021 and the third on 10 February 2022. Information gathered from reviews and evaluations will inform future MARAM implementation and delivery and will be included in the [annual reports](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-annual-reports) <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-annual-reports>.

### MARAM and information sharing – Enabling our workforce and improving out systems

* Development of accredited MARAM training through the tertiary education system has begun. Providers of this training will be encouraged to offer delivery models which recognise the training needs of different workforces and cover all levels of MARAM responsibility (identifying and responding through to comprehensive risk assessment and management).
* Non-accredited training has been made available in identification, intermediate and comprehensive practice. It has also been made available in collaborative practice and leading MARAM alignment. Training moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
* We have worked closely with prescribed organisations across the health sector to move MARAM training online, ensuring greater participation from health services. The [Strengthening Hospitals Responses to Family Violence](https://www.thewomens.org.au/health-professionals/clinical-resources/strengthening-hospitals-response-to-family-violence/shrfv-resource-centre) <https://www.thewomens.org.au/health-professionals/clinical-resources/strengthening-hospitals-response-to-family-violence/shrfv-resource-centre> training is an example of how working in partnership with health services creates a tailored and appropriate response to family violence.

*‘Following the tailored training that we have rolled out to our Child Protection practitioners, I notice a shift when they start asking questions about integrating MARAM into their practice. At this point they feel challenged by the new information and how to apply it, but for me, this is the first sign that they are starting their journey of practice change … and this is where our implementation approach to MARAM alignment comes to the fore in providing practice resources, including tailored tools that inform and embed practice change’* *– Statewide Family Violence Principal Practitioner.*

| MARAM Practice Guides In July 2021, Family Safety Victoria released the MARAM Practice Guides and assessment tools for professionals working with adults who use family violence (outside of specialist family violence perpetrator services – refer below).  The guides were developed through extensive consultation and user testing with more than 1,000 professionals involved over 18 months. Stakeholders engaged included academics and specialists in practice knowledge in working with people using violence, including towards   * Aboriginal people and communities * LGBTIQ+ communities * people with disabilities * diverse multicultural, language and faith communities * older people   These resources build on the MARAM Framework (released in 2018) and victim survivor focused Practice Guides (released in 2019).  The guides will continue to be updated and evaluated to reflect the evolving evidence base relating to experiences of family violence across the community and shifting practice directions that will contribute to this evidence base.  Tailored MARAM Practice Notes were released to update practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. They respond to adult and child victim survivors, adults and adolescents using family violence. |
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## MARAM and information sharing – What is next

* We will continue to implement the MARAM Framework, Practice Guides and resources across prescribed organisations and services.
* In 2022–23, we will release comprehensive MARAM Practice Guides for professionals working with people using family violence. We will also release supplementary adolescent family violence and comprehensive child risk and wellbeing guidance. These will build on existing resources released during 2019–2021, including MARAM Practice Guides for working with adult and child victim survivors, and non-specialist guides for working with people using violence.
* Authorised organisations and services will continue to use the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme to manage family violence risk to children and adults and the Child Information Sharing Scheme to promote the safety of children.
* Family Safety Victoria and partner agencies are continuing to work together to support the ongoing operation of the Central Information Point.
* Annual reporting on the MARAM Framework will continue, as well as this 5–year reviews of the MARAM, Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and Central Information Point are due to commence in 2022.

## MARAM and information sharing – What this means for outcomes

### MARAM and information sharing – Domain 2: Victim survivors

Victim survivors are at the centre of our family violence reform. It is their experiences that have driven Victoria’s systemic approach to end family violence. Having a system in place where family violence organisations share risk relevant information and identify, assess and manage risk, helps ensure the safety of victim survivors. The MARAM Framework assists in services’ capacity to identify risks that may indicate the presence of family violence and severity of risk. This enables early intervention and coordinated and collaborative responses to risk management.

### MARAM and information sharing – Domain 3: Perpetrators

Having a system in place where family violence organisations share risk-relevant information and identify, assess and manage risk also helps to hold perpetrators to account. MARAM Practice Guides and assessment tools for professionals working with people who use violence help embed risk assessment and management responsibilities into operations. Tailored guidance ensures a common understanding of perpetrator presentations. It also promotes awareness of the risks that perpetrators pose to victim survivors. This approach supports the family violence workforce to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour. Professionals are also supported to understand perpetrators and their behaviour. This reduce their ability to be manipulated, ensuring that perpetrators can be held accountable for their behaviour.

### MARAM and information sharing – Domain 4: System

Embedding the MARAM Framework across the whole service system ensures Victoria is creating the foundation for an integrated family violence system. This system will support a shared understanding of risk and a consistent response to family violence. The benefits of this holistic approach at a service level are already being observed, with details provided in the MARAM annual reports. The family violence sector and broader workforces are becoming more skilled and capable of ensuring victim survivors are protected and perpetrators are held accountable. Information sharing across the family violence sector has allowed an integrated and consolidated approach to working with individuals experiencing or perpetrating family violence. This ensures the system remains person-centred and responsive.

# Perpetrators and people who use violence priority area

****Developing a system-wide approach to keeping perpetrators accountable, connected and responsible for stopping their violence****

This priority area focuses on developing a system-wide approach to keeping perpetrators and people who use violence accountable. It also seeks to keep them connected and responsible for stopping their violence.

It acknowledges that every time a person who uses violence interacts with the service system, there is an opportunity to effect behaviour change and intervene. This change is more likely to happen when the government, the broader service system, community and society are working together to prevent violence or intervene early.

The focus for the *Rolling Action Plan* is to work with sector partners and draw on the experiences of victim survivors, perpetrators and people who use violence to progress reform activities. Activities are grouped under three themes: enhanced service responses, cultural safety and inclusion and enablers.

## Perpetrators and people who use violence – What has happened

We rapidly addressed the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the family violence sector and delivery of services. This included the establishment of Operation Ribbon and ensuring that family violence court matters were heard online. All urgent and high-risk matters were prioritised through this process. Agencies have adapted the way they work with perpetrators and people who use violence. This includes using telephone-based and online service delivery.

| Operation Ribbon and Family Violence Investigation Units Operation Ribbon was Victoria Police’s pro‑active family violence operation. It was launched to reach out to victim survivors and perpetrators during the COVID‑19 pandemic. This was due to the recognition that victim survivors might find it difficult to report family violence and seek assistance while self‑isolating at home with a perpetrator. Police reached out to victim survivors to check on their safety and wellbeing. They also contacted perpetrators to monitor their behaviour and keep them in view.  At its conclusion in December 2020, Operation Ribbon involved 32,963 contacts with 23,355 affected family members (victim survivors) and 9,608 perpetrators of violence. The 9,608 contacts with perpetrators of family violence led to:   * the remand of 1,072 individuals, with 470 individuals bailed and 383 summonsed * the detection of 5,360 breaches of family violence intervention order offences * the detection of 3,014 other family violence offences.   Since Operation Ribbon ceased, the lessons learned have seen specialist Family Violence Investigation Units investigators continue to actively engage with high-risk victim survivors and perpetrators. They also liaise closely with partner services in line with management plans, to monitor safety and compliance. This type of sustained proactive engagement is important and will continue within Victoria Police as a model of family violence management. |
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### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Programs and services

* A new pilot, the Integrated Counselling and Case Management program, has been implemented at the Ballarat Specialist Family Violence Court. The program addresses the complex interplay between family violence, alcohol and other drugs and/or mental health issues. The program enables greater opportunities to tailor responses through integrated case management. It also provides counselling services for eligible clients ordered to attend a Men’s Behaviour Change Program.

| Court Mandated Counselling Order Program The Court Mandated Counselling Order Program has been implemented at all Specialist Family Violence Courts. It will be extended to other headquarter courts.  Robert\* turned his life around with the support of the Court Mandated Counselling Order Program, changing his behaviour to be a better partner and father for his kids.  In April 2016, prior to the implementation of the Specialist Family Violence Courts Division, Robert was a respondent to a family violence intervention order. He was directed to attend a Men's Behaviour Change Program but unfortunately failed out of the program twice due to poor attendance and was sent back to court.  When Robert returned to court, his hearing took place in a new Specialist Family Violence Court. Robert asked the magistrate for another chance and promised to turn his life around to have a healthier relationship with his partner and family. The magistrate ordered him to participate in the new Court Mandated Counselling Order Program.  With the significant support and case management provided, Robert successfully completed the program. Robert wrote a letter to thank the magistrate and court staff who had given him another chance and who had supported him to change his behaviour and become a better partner and better father to his kids.  \*Names have been changed |
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* Two initiatives that aim to broaden the range and reach of perpetrator interventions have been implemented –
  + Case management provides a tailored service response through the coordination of specialist services. These include mental health, alcohol and other drug, and housing services. The service assists in engagement with programs that aim to stop family violence, such as Men's Behaviour Change Programs. Brokerage funding can be used to provide practical assistance to perpetrators to decrease risk for victim survivors.
  + Perpetrator cohort interventions continue to build the evidence for trauma-informed practice. This includes the development of new interventions for perpetrators from diverse backgrounds and with complex needs.
  + Family safety contact is a part of all perpetrator interventions that provides support to current or previous victim survivors, is also being delivered.

We have implemented [perpetrator accommodation initiatives](#_Housing) to enable victim survivors to remain at home when it is safe to do so.

### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Government commitments

* Through the meeting of Attorneys-General, Victoria is working with the Commonwealth and all states and territories to develop [national principles on coercive control](https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/publications/development-national-principles-addressing-coercive-control) <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/publications/development-national-principles-addressing-coercive-control>. The national principles will enable a high-level shared understanding of coercive control across jurisdictions. This will inform system responses to coercive control.
* Work has commenced to inform a discussion paper for stakeholder consultations on peer navigation and specialist family violence navigator models for perpetrator interventions. Early research has highlighted key benefits. These models could support perpetrators to better understand the family violence system. In addition it could support them to have greater compliance with orders, increased attendance at court and enhanced behaviour change outcomes.
* We established the Expert Advisory Committee on Perpetrator Interventions. It delivered its final report on ensuring the diversity of programs, services and initiatives that respond to perpetrators of family violence in Victoria. The Committee’s recommendations have been adopted through the whole of Victorian Government approach to perpetrator accountability outlined in the *Rolling Action Plan*.

### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Culturally safe and inclusive

* An evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the Koori Family Violence and Intervention Order Breaches pilot in Mildura is currently under way.
* Tuning into Respectful Relationships is a culturally inclusive program suitable for remand and short sentence prisoners. In 2020 and 2021, it has expanded to be run at an additional nine prisons. This means it is available in 11 of 13 public Victorian prisons.
* The development of Inclusion and Equity Blueprints has commenced. These include perpetrator intervention activities. Work is under way to implement the first blueprint. This provides a foundation for system and organisational change. This will ensure everyone has equitable and inclusive access to family violence services, no matter who they are or where they turn to for help.

### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

* **Common clients** are people who interact with multiple services across mental health, drug and alcohol, child protection and the criminal justice system. We recognise that many perpetrators of family violence may be common clients. The *Better, Connected Care reform* will deliver greater service integration for common clients. This will occur through new service delivery models, systems reform, changing our workforces’ practice and embedding client voice and self-determination. This includes the statewide rollout of local governance sites. This will create opportunities for more targeted efforts for priority cohorts.
* We have commenced a review of Family Violence Perpetrator Interventions in the justice setting. This will be used to improve the responsiveness of perpetrator interventions to the unique needs of the diverse perpetrator cohort.
* We have continued to embed the family violence and child information sharing and MARAM reforms. This has included guides for working with people who use violence. These have been released for those who do not primarily deal with family violence as part of their service provision, but will encounter it and need to know how to respond. Early change management and embedding activities are under way. Grants have been provided to organisations in multicultural services, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and peak bodies representing core services to continue to embed the [information sharing schemes and MARAM](https://www.vic.gov.au/information-sharing-schemes-and-the-maram-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/information-sharing-schemes-and-the-maram-framework>.
* MARAM Practice Guides and tools for adults using family violence have been released to support non-specialist workforces. These support consistent identification, assessment and management of perpetrators of family violence. They contribute to a shared understanding of key issues and practice concepts. These include drivers, coercive control, predominant aggressor identification, and using an intersectional lens when working with people using family violence. The guidance and tools prioritise safety of victim survivors. They also focus on connecting people using family violence to relevant supports to promote behaviour change.
* Our commitment to building our understanding about perpetrator characteristics and service use has continued. The [Crime Statistics Agency](https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au) <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/> released the paper [*Finding typologies of family violence perpetrators using police records*](https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/research-and-evaluation/publications/finding-typologies-of-family-violence-perpetrators-using) <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/research-and-evaluation/publications/finding-typologies-of-family-violence-perpetrators-using>. Key findings can be found on their website. The paper noted that seven distinct ‘types’ of family violence perpetrators can be identified using police records. These include four groups who perpetrated violence against their intimate partner and three groups who perpetrated violence against another type of family member (not against an intimate partner). It also noted differences between groups. These were in terms of their demographic characteristics, risk factors identified by police, frequency of family violence perpetration and other offending behaviour.
* We have begun a review of the actions needed to achieve the outcomes in the perpetrator domain of the [Family Violence Outcomes Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-outcomes-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-outcomes-framework> and to identify potential additional measures. This review will support the design and delivery of more effective perpetrator interventions to promote positive behaviour change and accountability.
* We have commenced a long-term program of work to develop and implement outcomes measurement for funded family violence programs. Services for people using violence, and family violence therapeutic interventions, are being used to develop, test and trial a beginning suite of program outcomes measurement. We have also started planning for a core set of outcomes questions for perpetrator case management, Men's Behaviour Change Programs and post-participation follow up. These will build on questions developed as part of evaluation of case management and cohort trials.

## Perpetrators and people who use violence – What is next

Most of the activities and initiatives in this priority area will continue into 2022:

* Magistrates at headquarter courts will be able to mandate that perpetrators attend a counselling program.
* Continued implementation of additional Specialist Family Violence Courts with another seven courts identified with funding through the 2021–22 state budget.
* Continued delivery of Tuning into Respectful Relationships. This is a culturally inclusive program suitable for remand and short sentence prisoners. It will be delivered in almost all Victorian prisons.
* Implementing post-participation follow up for perpetrators who have engaged with Men's Behaviour Change Programs. This will provide an opportunity to:
  + support and reinforce behaviour change and accountability
  + monitor and manage risk to victim survivors
  + better understand the trajectory towards positive behaviour change.
* Continued development and implementation of client outcomes measurement and monitoring for perpetrator interventions, building on approaches currently being trialled.
* Finalisation of the measures for the perpetrator outcomes and indicators to support the perpetrator domain of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework.

## Perpetrators and people who use violence – What this means for outcomes

### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Domain 2: Victim survivors

Activities delivered under this priority area focus on working with perpetrators with the intent to increase the safety of victim survivors. Activities such as Operation Ribbon and the Victoria Police specialist Family Violence Investigation Units actively engage with both perpetrators but also high-risk victim survivors. These activities have a focus on monitoring safety. They contribute to our ability to intervene early and to prevent escalation to keep victim survivors safe and to reduce harm from family violence.

### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Domain 3: Perpetrators

We will continue to work with perpetrators and people who use violence to change their understanding of family violence, their attitudes and ultimately support them to hold themselves accountable. This type of behaviour change requires significant commitment both from the perpetrator and the support services. There is no single activity or intervention that will work for all individuals. Our activities in this priority area use different models, approaches and programs (such as Men’s Behaviour Change Programs and individual case management approach). We also continue to research and pilot new approaches (such as the Integrated Counselling and Case Management pilot and research into peer navigation models). We provide perpetrators with different ways to engage. This creates opportunities to help them hold themselves to account for their behaviour, which ultimately contributes to a reduction in family violence behaviours.

### Perpetrators and people who use violence – Domain 4: System

Building our evidence base and understanding of who we are working with supports us in the development of a family violence system that is person-centred and responsive. The implementation of the MARAM Framework and training supports a strengthened workforce and improves service delivery. It supports improved family violence and child information sharing arrangements. It also supports processes and practices that create a more integrated family violence system. This addresses the needs of perpetrators and people who use violence.

# Primary prevention priority area

****Changing community attitudes and behaviours to help stop family violence and all forms of violence against women before it starts****

Primary prevention aims to shift the underlying drivers of family violence and all forms of violence against women to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. These drivers include systems, structures, norms, attitudes, practices and power imbalances.

Primary prevention is a long-term strategic approach that seeks to engage and reach people of all ages in the places they live, work, learn, socialise and play. It aims to drive social and cultural change towards a society where Victorians can live free from violence. We all have a role to play in calling out and challenging violence-supportive attitudes, behaviours and drivers. This includes discrimination and gender inequality.

The *Rolling Action Plan* will continue to:

* strengthen the foundations already in place
* scale up the prevention activities that are most effective
* increase the capability and capacity of our workforce.

The recently released [*Free from Violence: Second Action Plan 2022–2025*](https://www.vic.gov.au/free-violence-second-action-plan-2022-2025) <https://www.vic.gov.au/free-violence-second-action-plan-2022-2025> sets out our approach to primary prevention as a priority of the *Rolling Action Plan*.

## Primary prevention – What has happened

This report provides an overview of some of the prevention initiatives undertaken as part of the Victorian Government’s family violence reforms. Work has commenced on two reports to be delivered in 2022. These will provide a more comprehensive picture of activity under the *Free from Violence Strategy* and primary prevention efforts undertaken across Victoria more broadly.

These are:

* [Respect Victoria](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx)’s <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx> *Three-yearly report to Parliament.* This will report on progress of all primary prevention activity of family violence and violence against women across Victoria
* a midterm review of the *Free from Violence Strategy*. This evaluates the collective work delivered by programs funded under the strategy’s first action plan.

Actions highlighted in this section have largely been undertaken under the framework of the *Free from Violence Strategy*’s First Action Plan. This includes the multifaceted work of Respect Victoria in community awareness, research, evaluation, policy and advocacy.

### Primary prevention – Statewide access and engagement

* Gender inequality is a key driver of family violence. Addressing it is a critical part of our reform to reduce family violence. In 2020, Victoria appointed its first [Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner](https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/) <https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/> responsible for overseeing the implementation of the [*Gender Equality Act 2020*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/gender-equality-act-2020/002) *(the Act)* <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/gender-equality-act-2020/002>, which came into effect on 31 March 2021. The Act is the first of its kind in Australia. It requires public sector organisations to demonstrate meaningful progress on workplace gender equality. The Act will work to break down discrimination and gender barriers in the public sector. It also guides gender equality for defined entities, including the Victorian public sector, local government, university and TAFEs. The Commissioner has also received the first workplace gender audits from defined entities. Gender equality action plans, which must include workplace gender audit data, are due to the Commissioner on 31 March 2022.
* Organisations across the health sector have developed gender equality action plans in line with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act. These plans include provisions that address violence for staff and consumers.
* Women’s health services are key partners in supporting the health and wellbeing of Victorian women, promoting gender equality and preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women.
* Under the current Victorian Women’s Health Program, 9 regional and 2 state-wide women’s health services are supported with core funding to lead best practice health promotion and the primary prevention of family violence, as well as to promote gender equal health outcomes and prevent illness and disease in Victorian women.
* Over 1,950 Victorian government, Catholic and independent schools are signed on to the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships. More than 35,000 school staff and more than 3,500 early childhood educators have participated in Respectful Relationships professional learning.

| Integrating respectful relationships in VCAL at Melbourne Polytechnic Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students and staff at Melbourne Polytechnic were concerned about unhealthy relationships. They piloted a process that could influence positive change within the VCAL cohort.  The senior VCAL program for 2020 explored the themes of power, justice and equity. It was informed by research on family violence primary prevention strategies and respectful relationships.  Students developed and applied knowledge and skills about social issues around violence against women, respectful relationships and social connectedness.  They also reflected on their own value systems. This includes the responsibility they have as individuals to build self-awareness and resilience to support personal growth. The project addressed the bystander effect and calling out disrespectful actions and sexist language.  The project commenced in 2020 and ran over two semesters. In the first semester, students conducted a targeted youth attitudes survey through social media. This sought responses to the question: ‘What does it mean to be a young man growing up in Melbourne in 2020?’  This research informed the respectful relationship prototype resource VCAL students developed in the second semester. The prototype is designed for senior secondary school students to talk and learn about respectful relationships.  The project was funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and supported by the Department of Education and Training. |
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* [Our Watch](https://www.ourwatch.org.au/) <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/> launched [Respect and Equality at TAFE](https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/video-collection/change-the-story-in-your-tafe/) <https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/video-collection/change-the-story-in-your-tafe/> in July 2021. This is a whole-of-institution approach to preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality. It was developed with the support of the Victorian Department of Education and Training and five TAFEs. The Department of Education and Training will work with TAFEs across Victoria to implement Respect and Equality at TAFE. It aims to support all TAFEs to build an environment where staff and students feel safe, respected and valued.
* We have supported Our Watch to develop the Men in Focus practice guide. This builds on the Men in Focus evidence review, released in 2019. This will provide prevention practitioners with guidance and support to implement best-practice initiatives that engage men and boys.
* Respect Victoria has developed a three-year campaign strategy that will run until 2023–24. Early evaluation of existing campaigns show a high level of community recognition and understanding of key messages. This includes the Pride, Respect, Equality (LGBTIQ+) campaign, released in early 2021. This campaign addresses family violence perpetrated against LGBTIQ+ people by a person’s biological family or the family a person was raised in.

| Respect Women campaign across 16 Days of Activism Each year, Respect Victoria supports organisations and individuals across Victoria to engage in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. This is a global initiative of UN Women that runs from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day).  In 2021 there were numerous elements to the Respect Victoria-led 16 Days of Activism initiative. These included:   * the Respect Women: 'Call it Out' (Respect Is …) statewide paid media campaign (seen by more than one in every three Victorians – 34 per cent across November/December 2021) * the Respect Women: ‘Call it Out’ (Respect Is …) grassroots initiative. This was delivered to 113 organisations across the state. It was done in partnership with Safe and Equal, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Council of Social Services, No To Violence, GEN VIC and the Women’s Health Services Council * the Walk Against Family Violence was held on 25 November. It was led by Safe Steps with organising partners including City of Melbourne, Djirra, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Safe and Equal, InTouch Multicultural Centre, Emerge, Women with Disabilities Victoria, No to Violence and the Victim Survivors' Advisory Council. It reached an estimated 2.6 million individuals online in 2021 * an initiative amplifying voices of victim-survivors and advocates sharing their stories of respect.   The ‘Respect Is …’ platform encourages community members to call out sexism and disrespect. It aims to support Victorians to make the link between gender inequality and family violence in all of its forms.  The 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS) found that 40 per cent of people believe that women exaggerate when they talk about inequality.  The 16 Days of Activism offers a unique opportunity for many different communities and organisations to come together and take action to create a future where all Victorians are safe, equal and respected.  Outdated attitudes about gender no longer have a place in the spaces we live, work or play. By leading with respect, we can stop family violence and violence against women before it starts. |
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### Primary prevention – Programs and services

* Respect Victoria commissioned research to deliver a family violence prevention action research project on the transition to parenthood for LGBTIQ+ parents. The project is titled [New Parents, New Possibilities](https://cfre.org.au/new-parents-new-possibilities/) <https://cfre.org.au/new-parents-new-possibilities/> and was undertaken in partnership with the Drummond Street Service’s Centre for Family Research and Evaluation. This research provides a suite of resources. These include three booklets for new parents, family and community, and perinatal practitioners. It includes a webinar series developed for the perinatal sector. It also provides an interactive simulation tool with case studies of diverse LGBTIQ+ families.
* The $3.58 million Free from Violence Local Government Program 2022–2025 was announced in December 2021. The program will support up to 15 councils implement the *Local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women*. This will be launched in mid-2022. The guide provides an evidence-based whole-of-council model. It aims to ensure a consistent, best-practice approach to prevention in local government settings. It was developed through an extensive co-design process.
* The Baby Makes 3 Toolkit was developed by Health Ability (previously known as Carrington Health) in partnership with six antenatal service providers. This aims to support educators in childbirth and parenting education programs to promote equal and respectful relationships during the transition to parenthood. Twenty public maternity hospitals across Victoria have implemented the toolkit in their childbirth and parenting programs.
* We are also funding community organisations to deliver programs targeting men and boys and promoting healthier masculinities. These include:
  + delivering a pilot project ‘Engaging with men in faith settings’ with the Islamic Council of Victoria. This was undertaken in partnership with the Jesuit Social Services’ The Men’s Project. The project engages with secondary school students and school staff to prevent family violence and promote healthy masculinity.
  + [Gender Equality Victoria](https://www.genvic.org.au/) <https://www.genvic.org.au/> has been funded to work with young men to understand bystander behaviour and co-design bystander interventions to support young men to step in when they see violence online.
  + the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative engaged young men and their families to promote respectful relationships. This work was part of the Aboriginal Family Violence Primary Prevention Innovation Fund. It engaged 80 young men across eight primary schools. Feedback indicated their attitudes towards their culture and women had been positively changed.

| Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform In June 2021, Respect Victoria and the Victorian Crime Statistics Agency launched the [Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform](https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html) <https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html> (the platform). It is a ground breaking primary prevention tool.  The platform brings together a wide range of valid data. It allows the Victorian Government, the family violence sector, researchers and the public to track Victoria’s population-level progress on preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women.  The platform includes data collected between 2009 and 2020 from 34 existing sources. This data relates to the prevalence of violence. It is presented through interactive dashboards that provide a visually rich interface with definitions, imagery and explanatory materials.  This provides a baseline for Victoria’s status before significant investment in primary prevention.  The platform will be updated regularly as more data becomes available.  Updated data will include a number of datasets, such as the 2021 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS).  Regular data updates will enable users to see how rates of gender inequality, violence, and community attitudes towards violence are changing over time. This will help inform primary prevention policy and program planning. |
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### Primary prevention – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

* The Victorian Government has consulted with the sector to identify priorities for supporting the primary prevention workforce. An internal report set out targeted recommendations and actions. This have informed the deliverables in the *Free from Violence Second Action Plan* and will inform the next industry plan rolling action plan.
* We have progressed important work to strengthen the prevention system, to ensure enabling supports are in place, and to improve coordination and planning. To support this we have, established new governance forums for the Victorian Government to work closely with the broader sector. We have continued to invest in regional and local level leadership and partnership through women's health services. We have also developed a primary prevention model for local government.
* We have funded Jesuit Social Services to implement the Contributor Workforce Capacity Building project. This builds the capacity of those who work with men and boys every day. This includes social workers, staff in correctional facilities and educators. The aim is to improve the wellbeing and attitudes of men and boys by confronting stereotypical constructions of masculinity. Training was delivered to more than 100 people across four agencies.

### Primary prevention – Government commitments

* The *Free from Violence Second Action Plan 2022–2025: Victoria’s strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women* continues the work started under the first action plan. This plan builds on what we have achieved and learned to continue embedding a primary prevention approach.
* The Primary Prevention Sector Reference Group was established in early 2021. It provides a forum for key leaders in the prevention sector to provide strategic advice to the Victorian Government. This includes advice on policy, program and service development, implementation and delivery. It is co-chaired by Department of Families Fairness and Housing and Respect Victoria. It focuses on current and emerging issues relevant to the primary prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women.

## Primary prevention – What is next

We will continue to strengthen existing prevention partnerships with community organisations and industry sectors to effect positive change. We will amplify our impact through the implementation of the *Free from Violence Second Action Plan*.

* Regional and statewide Women’s Health Services continue to support primary prevention networks and partnerships with local organisations, councils and other priority group representatives. These partnerships build capacity and capability in primary prevention. They also promote gender equality across local communities. Support for these networks is delivered (in part) through the Women's Health Services Workforce Capacity Building Program. There is a total investment of $9.6 million from 2018 to 2026.
* Respect Victoria partners across the sector to extend the reach of community initiatives. Current partnerships include:
  + [Safe and Equal](https://safeandequal.org.au/) <https://safeandequal.org.au/> (formerly Domestic Violence Victoria and Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria) for the ‘Respect Is’ grassroots initiative across 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (working with initiative partners Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Council of Social Services, No To Violence, GEN VIC and the Women’s Health Services Council)
  + [Safe Steps](https://safesteps.org.au/) <https://safesteps.org.au/> Family Violence Resource Centre to support the Walk Against Family Violence (with organising partners including City of Melbourne, Djirra, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Safe and Equal, InTouch Multicultural Centre, Emerge, Women with Disabilities Victoria, No to Violence and the Victim Survivors' Advisory Council).
* The [Supporting](https://www.vic.gov.au/dffh/prevent-family-violence-2021-grant-program) [Multicultural and Faith Communities to Prevent Family Violence 2021 Grant Program](https://www.vic.gov.au/dffh/prevent-family-violence-2021-grant-program) <https://www.vic.gov.au/dffh/prevent-family-violence-2021-grant-program> funds 33 organisations to deliver primary prevention, awareness raising and early intervention projects with over 17 identified ethnic groups, communities from five geographical and five faith groups across Victoria.
* [Rainbow Health Australia](https://rainbowhealthaustralia.org.au/) <https://rainbowhealthaustralia.org.au/> has received additional investment to continue the LGBTIQ+ Family Violence Prevention Project from 2022 to 2024. The funding will enable Rainbow Health to expand their LGBTIQ+ initiatives and support the prevention sector to embed evidence-based, intersectional and community-led approaches to primary prevention of family violence.

## Primary prevention – What this means for outcomes

### Primary prevention – Domain 1: Prevention

Creating social and cultural change can take years. Behaviour change campaigns are being delivered by Respect Victoria and the Department of Education and Training’s Respectful Relationships initiative, along with other program activities. These campaigns are starting the conversations that will shift the social norms, practices and structures that allow family violence and violence against women to occur. This work shines a light on some of the less understood forms of violence. It gives Victorians the tools to help prevent violence before it starts.

### Primary prevention – Domain 4: System

Primary prevention activities are establishing strong foundations to support sustainable changes across the Victorian Community and in specific settings and sectors. Significant investment has occurred in training and building capabilities and embedding training and models into our education system. This provides a consistency in understanding, approach and language used to address the drivers of family violence and all forms of violence against women.

# Research and evaluation priority area

****Coordinating research and evaluation across the family violence reform****

We need a strong and effective evidence base regarding family violence and violence against women. This is key to delivering long-term, sustainable reform of our family violence system. It tells us what is working, what needs to be adjusted, and where to focus our efforts for the greatest effect.

Through the *Rolling Action* Plan we will continue to strengthen the family violence evidence base. We will focus on research activities that fill gaps in knowledge across primary prevention, early intervention and response. We will also improve the quality, availability and use of the data that underpins our research and evaluation activities. This is critical to driving improvement.

## Research and evaluation – What has happened

Significant work has occurred to actively research, review, and evaluate to both inform and adapt programs as we implement family violence reform.

### Research and evaluation – Statewide access and engagement

* The Harmony Study is a partnership between Latrobe University and [inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](https://intouch.org.au/) <https://intouch.org.au/>. It works with primary care clinicians to increase identification and early intervention for family violence among migrant and refugee communities. It aims to test the feasibility and effectiveness of a systems intervention to increase identification and early intervention of family violence. It also seeks to improve the capacity of primary care clinicians (GPs, nurses and others) to enquire about family violence, provide first-line support, and offer female patients referrals to specialist family violence services.
* [Respect Victoria](https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/) <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/> commissioned [three research pieces](https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/coronavirusresearch) <https://www.respectvictoria.vic.gov.au/coronavirusresearch> looking at how the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the drivers and risk factors for violence against women and family violence. The research focused on elder abuse, LGBTIQ+ family violence and the impact of the pandemic on the primary prevention sector workforce.
* We have established two research collaborations that will deliver important insights into how the COVID-19 pandemic affected family violence and associated service responses in Victoria. The projects also examine how we can harness these to strengthen our future responses. The projects are:
  + *Future-proofing safety: surfacing inequity and building service capacity for crisis-ready responses*. This study uses a system lens to understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on family violence and sector responses. It is being delivered by the [Centre for Family Research and Evaluation](https://cfre.org.au/future-proofing-safety/) <https://cfre.org.au/future-proofing-safety/> at Drummond Street Services, RMIT University for Centre for Innovative Justice and the Australian Institute of Family Studies
  + *Effectiveness and sustainability of COVID-19 related service changes and innovations for family violence and sexual assault victim survivors as they relate to the LGBTIQ+ community*. This is being delivered by the Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society based at Latrobe University and Thorne Harbour Health.
* The [Prevention of Family Violence Data Platform](https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html) <https://files.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/Prevention-of-Family-Violence-Data-Platform.html> was launched in June 2021. The platform will enable government and the broader sector to track progress towards preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women.
* The Family Violence Database continues to be updated annually on the first Wednesday of December each year. [Sexual violence related data](https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/sexual-violence) <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/sexual-violence> was also added to the Family Violence Database for the first time on 1 December 2021. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a special project developed and published the [COVID-19 Family Violence Data Portal](https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMGU5NmRiMTItM2M0MC00ZmNiLWFiYzgtZGExNDAyNjBmNDZjIiwidCI6IjcyMmVhMGJlLTNlMWMtNGIxMS1hZDZmLTk0MDFkNjg1NmUyNCJ9) <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMGU5NmRiMTItM2M0MC00ZmNiLWFiYzgtZGExNDAyNjBmNDZjIiwidCI6IjcyMmVhMGJlLTNlMWMtNGIxMS1hZDZmLTk0MDFkNjg1NmUyNCJ9>. It shows the effects of the pandemic on demand for family violence services.

### Research and evaluation – Government commitments

* We have developed a whole of government Family Violence Research Agenda. The agenda contributes to strengthening the family violence and sexual assault evidence-base and strategic decision-making. It supports research to be better targeted to address priority evidence gaps. It articulates the Victorian Government’s research priorities for family violence and sexual assault. The agenda will be supported by a research program. This will detail how government will work with Victorian universities, industry and agencies. It will also consider knowledge translation mechanisms. This will ensure research is relevant and accessible to sector organisations and practitioners.
* The Respect Victoria Primary Prevention Research Agenda, supported by a newly established advisory group. We have established an advisory group. The advisory group comprises expertise and experience spanning primary prevention peak bodies, practitioners, intersectional and research organisations. It will guide development of a three-year program of research.
* Respect Victoria released the Free from Violence Monitoring and Evaluation Strategic Framework in June 2021. The framework is a principles-based document. It outlines an overarching evaluation strategy for primary prevention programming across the state. It sets out a ‘big picture’ for organisations leading or funding prevention programs or initiatives under *Free from Violence*. The framework can be used to guide decision-making around evaluation of initiatives, programs or priority areas under *Free from Violence*.

### Research and evaluation – Culturally safe and inclusive

* An evaluation of the Safer Stronger Communities pilot has been completed. The evaluation of the Multicultural Family Violence Work Package covered a range of initiatives funded from 2017–2021, including the Safer and Stronger Communities Pilot. The evaluation sought to capture emerging lessons. These will inform and improve community approaches to preventing and addressing family violence in migrant, refugee and faith communities. This will build the evidence base for what works in the prevention of family violence.
* We have completed suite of action research projects with leading research bodies. These include the co-design of primary prevention interventions for addressing elder abuse, violence against women with disability, and LGBTIQ+ families in the transition to parenthood. The COVID-19 related research noted above was also action research. Research projects with Aboriginal communities are also under way.

### Research and evaluation – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

* In June 2021, Respect Victoria launched a new research seminar series. ‘Building the evidence to stop violence before it starts’ seminars share newly created research and applied evidence with the primary prevention and other sectors. This work supports prevention efforts including webinars, expert panels and program design and practice guidelines.
* We engaged the University of Adelaide to conduct a systematic review of high-quality published studies of family violence intervention outcomes focusing on victim-survivor and perpetrator interventions. The review aimed to find out the characteristics of family violence programs that were effective at reducing family violence and improving outcomes for victims and perpetrators. The review will inform our own approach to research by summarising the existing evidence and identifying gaps in the evidence.
* An evaluation of the maternal child health family violence initiatives is under way. The evaluation findings will guide service improvements. This will ensure that children, women and families at risk of or experiencing family violence can be identified earlier and supported with improved access to the right services and supports.

## Research and evaluation – What is next

The ongoing collection and informed use of data and evidence will continue through 2022. Key initiatives are being embedded to support a greater understanding of the family violence system. This work will also to inform our current gaps in knowledge to keep us focused on understanding the impact of our work. Activities include:

* A midterm review of the *Free from Violence Strategy* First Action Plan is being delivered by Respect Victoria in 2022. The midterm review will evaluate the collective work delivered, including program implementation across the five priority areas.
* Respect Victoria’s *Three-yearly report to Parliament* on the progress of all primary prevention activities for family violence and violence against women. The report is a key public accountability tool. It plays a pivotal role in supporting a continued focus on primary prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women and will be informed by findings from the midterm review of *Free from Violence*.
* As part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategic Framework, Respect Victoria will collaborate with experts and practitioners to release a monitoring, evaluation and learning Practice Guidance and Toolkit. The Toolkit will build on existing work being delivered across the sector to strengthen monitoring, evaluation and learning practice for primary prevention practitioners.
* Continued development of outcome measures that support our understanding of how family violence reform is contributing to the changes we want to create. This will be informed by the work being done in the development of theories of change for both the ‘Prevention’ and ‘Perpetrator’ domains of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework:
  + Respect Victoria is developing a theory of change for the primary prevention of family violence and violence against women in Victoria. This resource will be developed in close collaboration with experts and practitioners. It will show the desired along our ‘pathway of change’.
  + [Family Safety Victoria](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-safety-victoria) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-safety-victoria> is finalising a draft theory of change and monitoring and evaluation framework for perpetrator interventions. This will be aligned with the perpetrator domain of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework. The work will include a consultation process. It will support greater quality and consistency in evaluations of the perpetrator interventions we fund.
* We will use the whole of government Family Violence Research Agenda and the Respect Victoria Primary Prevention Research Agenda to drive research. This work will support the sector, government and other stakeholders in Victoria to deliver evidence-informed and effective policy and practice.
* We will continue to evaluate programs. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of the Risk Assessment and Management Panels. It will also include select activities conducted under *Strengthening the foundations: first rolling action plan 2019*. Based on these evaluations, we will implement identified changes to ensure the system we build is responsive and flexible.

## Research and evaluation – What this means for outcomes

We are working to strengthen our evidence base, evaluate programs and initiatives, and adapt our programs in response. This means we can focus on prevention and response activities that actively contribute to the achievement of our four outcome domains.

This work helps us understand how effective our activities are. It also shows us where we are not having the impacts we thought. This allows us to can adjust our programs, services and approaches to improve outcomes for Victoria.

We are improving the data and evidence we collect, and analysing it to inform our monitoring frameworks and outcome measures.

The long-term changes being implemented by the family violence reform will take time to embed across society. By keeping our outcomes in sight as we deliver on activities, we can investigate the barriers or challenges being faced.

# The Orange Door network priority area

****Delivering an accessible and visible service for people experiencing family violence and children and families in need of support****

The Orange Door network is the first of its kind. It brings together intake for specialist family violence, child and family, Aboriginal and perpetrator services. It aims to provide accessible and safe services for people experiencing family violence and for children, young people, and families in need of support.

It is delivered in partnership between community service organisations including Aboriginal services, and the Victorian Government.

The Orange Door network is an important shift in the way Victoria works with family violence victim survivors, and for families who need support with the care and wellbeing of children and young people.

It aims to be accessible, safe and welcoming. It provides tailored support for:

* adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence
* families who need support with the care and wellbeing of children and young people
* perpetrators of family violence.

It brings services together as a partnership alongside government, which means individuals and families do not have to go to multiple services. They do not need to retell their story multiple times to have their needs met.

The *Rolling Action Plan* focuses on:

* continuing the roll out of [The Orange Door network](https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/) <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/> across the state
* strengthening Aboriginal responses
* planning the transition to the full service model
* improved data monitoring and reporting
* continuous improvement and evaluation.

## The Orange Door network – What has happened

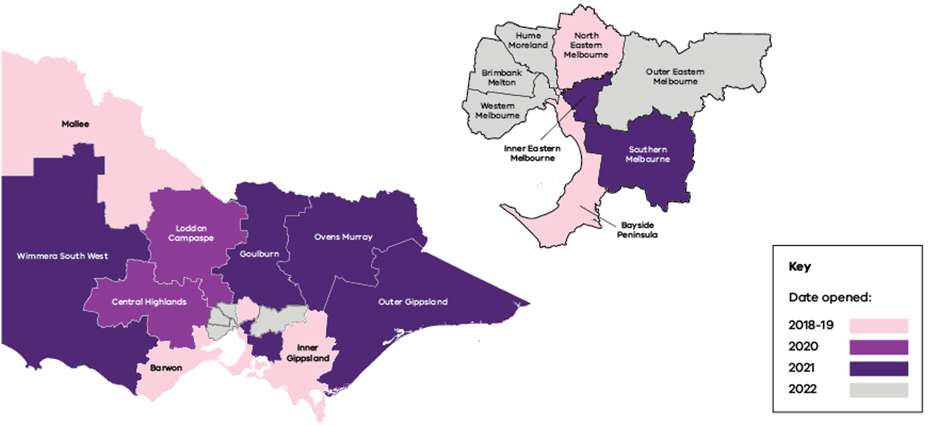
Since it commenced in May 2018, The Orange Door has supported over 200,000 people, including 80,000 children. This has provided people with access to immediate and longer-term supports. These range from crisis support to case management and counselling.

The Orange Door network has continued to roll out across the state. As of 2021, it is operating in 13 of the 17 Department of Families, Fairness and Housing areas across Victoria.

Even with the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, service commenced in two areas in 2020 and a further six areas in 2021.

The Orange Door network is operational in Bayside Peninsula, Southern Melbourne, Inner Gippsland, Outer Gippsland, Ovens Murray, Goulburn, Inner Eastern Melbourne, North Eastern Melbourne, Loddon, Mallee, Barwon, Central Highlands and Wimmera South West (South West).

The Orange Door network sites by open date



Access to The Orange Door network is facilitated through networks in each area. These include the establishment of a primary site, access points, outposted services where The Orange Door workers are collocated with other services, and outreach.

Telephone and email options for referrals and to access supports complete the network.

Across the state, there are 12 operational access points[[5]](#footnote-6) and four operational outposts.[[6]](#footnote-7) In each area, access points and outposts complement the primary premises. This ensures people and communities have geographic access and choices to access services in ways that suit them.

The Orange Door network considers each local context and engages with the right stakeholders for the area.

The following highlights show some of our work to ensure that The Orange Door network embeds Aboriginal self-determination. The highlights also demonstrate how we are continuously improving the operation of sites and the capability of staff.

### The Orange Door network – Culturally safe and inclusive

The Orange Door network has committed to embedding [Aboriginal self-determination](#_Dhelk_Dja:_Safe) in its implementation.

To deliver on this commitment, we are undertaking the following:

* Aboriginal Access Points are being developed as a complementary service model to work alongside The Orange Door. These will provide a culturally safe referral pathway for Aboriginal people impacted by family violence.
* Staff and practice leaders from partner Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations provide experience and expertise to support ongoing plans to embed cultural safety and inclusion. They also ensure principles of self-determination are upheld when working with Aboriginal clients.
* The Aboriginal organisations that employ staff and practice leaders are part of The Orange Door network area-based governance structure. They have representatives on the Hub Leadership Group and Operational Leadership Group. Aboriginal Advisory Groups are also established as part of the area-based governance. These are currently in place in 12 areas, with the intention of establishing them in all remaining areas.
* The Strengthening Cultural Safety in The Orange Door project is under way with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in each Orange Door network partnership. This project encourages employment of Cultural Safety Project Leaders to facilitate cultural safety self-assessments and action planning. This includes the roll out of foundational training across The Orange Door staff.
* There is dedicated brokerage funding administered by an Aboriginal organisation for Aboriginal clients.
* Work has commenced to include key requirements from the *Aboriginal inclusion action plan* into the annual program that each Orange Door site will complete in 2022. This annual program will be informed by Aboriginal Advisory Groups and led by the Hub Leadership Group. It will give a strong local plan for ensuring cultural safety and inclusion.

We have also enhanced service connections, responses, and accessibility for individuals of any age, gender, ability, sex, sexuality, culture or religion. This includes through the release and implementation of the *Inclusion action plan* for The Orange Door in 2021.

### The Orange Door network – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

We have embedded a continuous improvement approach to ensure staff, systems and service responses support good outcomes for clients. During 2020 and 2021 this included:

* ensuring the client voice continues to be prioritised, and that service responses support the specific needs of both adults and children
* developed and begun delivery of interim specialist training as part of a new site induction program that provides greater alignment to integrated practice
* developed a pilot approach to the connection and coordination of legal services within The Orange Door network, engaging key stakeholders and drawing on previous work to understand the client experience
* developed a performance management framework for final sector consultation, to help area-based The Orange Door governance groups understand the effectiveness of service delivery approaches, identify areas for improvement and provide information on the collective contribution, achievements, and impact of The Orange Door network as part of the partnership model
* progressed work towards developing several key pieces of work including:
  + a refreshed integrated practice framework
  + a framework for managing demand
  + a standardised approach to child wellbeing assessments
  + a quality governance guide
* commenced the development of a data strategy with external services currently providing feedback. Once finalised, the strategy will help improve data collection, information sharing and assist in providing insights on how The Orange Door network is operating.

| The Orange Door A 23-year-old woman of Somalian descent, Hira\*, was 20 weeks pregnant when she came into The Orange Door.  Hira was born in Australia, but her family sent her to Somalia to a facility that she describes as using physical punishment and control to rectify her ‘behaviour’. This was distressing for Hira, and when she returned to Melbourne, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, she was subject to physical abuse from her extended family.  An intervention order was in place against a family member. However, Hira had been unable to find the support she needed to establish her own home away from her extended family.  When Hira came to The Orange Door, practitioners undertook a family violence needs and risk assessment. Practitioners identified that emergency safe accommodation was a priority, as was providing funds to meet Hira’s immediate practical needs. This meant making sure she had enough to eat and did not have to return to her family’s home for clothing or belongings.  Hira agreed for The Orange Door practitioner to communicate with other support services – including housing and youth services, and prenatal services.  The Orange Door practitioner made sure these services were aware of and understood Hira’s specific safety and support needs and her history of trauma. This helped the services more effectively identify specific supports. These included transitional housing in her area of preference, and a referral to the Cradle to Kinder program that could support her as a new parent. This was particularly important for her, as she could not rely on any extended family for support.  Hira has made the most of living safely and independently. Since the birth of her child, she continues to use local community and health supports that support her child’s wellbeing and development, and also give Hira an opportunity to focus on healing from her trauma.  \*Names have been changed |
| --- |

## The Orange Door network – What is next

The statewide roll out of The Orange Door network will continue. It is expected to be completed by the end of 2022. Hume Moreland opened in February 2022 and implementation is progressing well towards service commencement in the remaining departmental areas of Outer Eastern Melbourne, Brimbank Melton and Western Melbourne, as well as the northern region of the Wimmera South-West Area (Wimmera).

During this implementation phase, existing services will continue to operate in areas until The Orange Door network opens. Specific activities include:

* planning for the delivery of additional access points and outposts
* three Aboriginal Access Points, which are expected to be operational by the end of 2022
* development of agreed and consistent service connections with housing and financial counselling services
* improving our reporting to show The Orange Door network is delivering better outcomes for clients
* an evaluation of The Orange Door network to provide additional insights on what is working well and what we could do better
* continued work to deliver the remaining Victorian Auditor-General’s Office recommendations including:
  + finalising and commencing implementation of the Performance Management Framework
  + delivering a consistent approach to assessment of children and young people across The Orange Door network
  + planning for the transition to delivery of the full service model outlined in the statewide concept
  + continuing training development and delivery, including refreshed induction training, and the Strengthening Cultural Safety in The Orange Door project
  + finalising the demand management framework, integrated practice framework and improvements to data capture, quality and timeliness.

## The Orange Door network – What this means for outcomes

### The Orange Door network – Domain 2: Victim survivors

The Orange Door networks support victim survivors and families to ensure they receive the assistance they need as quickly as possible. The integration of multiple services means people only have to tell their stories once. This is a deliberate design to minimise retraumatisation. It also focuses on a system that can better understand and support individuals’ needs. This ensures victim survivors are safe and able to rebuild their lives, and families get help when they need it.

### The Orange Door network – Domain 3: Perpetrators

The Orange Door network engages with perpetrators to address the risk they pose, challenge their violent and abusive behaviour and connect them with services to address their behaviour. Central Information Point reports and greater information sharing capability supports risk assessment. This is done through greater visibility of perpetrator / alleged perpetrator behaviour, including history of family violence. This is informed by an understanding of perpetrator risk and intervention planning that keeps perpetrators in view and helps hold them to account.

Additionally, a strengthened approach to practice leadership has been implemented across The Orange Door network in each area. This includes the establishment of new practice leader roles focused on working with perpetrators. This work complements existing roles focused on integrated practice, working with Aboriginal people and families, and victim survivors.

### The Orange Door network – Domain 4: System

The design and implementation of The Orange Door network creates system change to better respond to victim survivors, create greater visibility of children and young people experiencing family violence and to prevent the escalation of family violence. The Orange Door network employs specialised training, alignment of risk assessment, information sharing, and a diverse workforce. This increases staff capability. It also ensures a consistent approach that supports staff to work towards common client goals at intake. The Orange Door network is a foundational step towards creating an integrated family violence system. This in turn supports a family violence system that is accessible and available across the community.

# Workforce development priority area

****Strengthening the specialist family violence and primary prevention workforces****

Strengthening the capacity and capability of the people who work to prevent and respond to family violence is critical to reform success.

The specialist family violence and prevention workforce is a distinct workforce with a specific focus and expertise.

We are also building the family violence capabilities of broader workforces that intersect with family violence. These include community services, health, police, courts, schools and early years services.

The focus for the *Rolling Action* ***Plan*** is to continue to strengthen our specialist prevention and response workforces.

We are achieving this by:

* recruiting and retaining people with skills from diverse backgrounds
* working to create clear career pathways that develop expertise and knowledge
* providing training and skills development
* creating a workplace where people feel valued and supported.

## Workforce development – What has happened

Since 2018 under amendments to the [*Family Violence Protection Act 2008*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/family-violence-protection-act-2008>, organisations across the many parts of the social service system are prescribed by associated regulation to align their policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools with the [Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework>.

As at April 2021, there were more than 6,700 organisations and more than 370,000 professionals prescribed under MARAM, and more than 8,300 organisations consisting of 408,000 professionals prescribed under the [Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme>.

### Workforce development – Enabling our workforce and improving our systems

* The Best Practice Education Model for accredited primary prevention and family violence training delivery was completed in July 2021. The model outlines the relationship between vocational competency, assessment methods, and professional development. It was informed by extensive consultation with Vocational Education and Training, Family Violence and Aboriginal cultural experts, as well as disability, LGBTIQ+, CALD stakeholders and unions. The model supports trainers and TAFEs to deliver accredited family violence prevention and response training. It also builds trainer capability to increase the number of trainers across the vocational education and training sector.
* MARAM supports workers across the service system to better understand their responsibilities to undertake identification, risk assessment and management. It has been introduced through the tertiary education system. Providers are encouraged to offer delivery models that recognise the training needs of different workforces.
* MARAM guidance for professionals working with adults using family violence was [released in July 2021](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-professionals-working-adults-using-family-violence) <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-professionals-working-adults-using-family-violence>, and course development and delivery has commenced.
* The Building Family Violence Evaluation Capacity Project began in 2018. It has established a centralised whole of department evaluation function to support Department of Justice and Community Safety business units to undertake family violence evaluations. It has been extended to June 2024. Benefits include:
  + evaluations are initiated and completed within faster time frames
  + enhanced quality and consistency of family violence evaluations
  + a robust evidence base for understanding broader, whole of DJCS reform impacts
  + reduction of the siloed nature of family violence evaluation initiatives.
* The health and wellbeing of our workforce is a key priority. We will continue to ensure we understand their perspectives. We will keep their health, safety and wellbeing in focus by:
  + conducting a workforce census every two years. The [2019–20 census](https://www.vic.gov.au/summary-findings-report-2019-20-workforce-census/introduction) <https://www.vic.gov.au/summary-findings-report-2019-20-workforce-census/introduction> identified three target audiences. These are the specialist family violence response workforce, primary prevention of family violence workforce, and the broader workforce that intersects with family violence. The census provides many insights. These include what activities staff are engaged in, how well supported they feel, stressors they face in their work environment, and their motivations for working in the sector. This information is used to inform the development and implementation of training, recruitment and wellbeing programs and policies.
  + developing a *Family violence workforce health, safety and wellbeing guide*, based on the PERMAH (Positive Emotions, Engagement Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment and Health) model of wellbeing.

| Attracting and recruiting the right people Recent recruitment campaigns focused on attracting students and graduates, career seekers and people from diverse communities to enter the sector. They also sought to attract people specifically into the perpetrator services, sexual assault services and the traineeships program.  One phase of the campaign focused on attracting people from diverse communities, including through radio and newspaper advertising, as well as rural and regional audiences.  Career insights events provided interested people an opportunity to pose questions of current workers about what it is like to work in the sector.  More than 500 people attended these sessions.  Since the campaign started:   * more than 2,550 people have registered for the family violence jobs portal since the May 2020 launch * there have been more than 150,000 visits to the family violence jobs hub and portal |
| --- |

## Workforce development – What is next

Upskilling and training both the sector and across other key industries and workforces remains a focus moving into 2022:

* The Best Practice Education Model is being piloted internally by Safe and Equal (previously Domestic Violence Victoria and Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria). It is also being piloted with TAFEs and TAFE trainers through the VET Development Centre.
* Accredited training courses are being finalised. These include Course in Contributing to the Prevention of Family Violence and Violence Against Women and Course in Intermediate Risk Assessment and Management of Family Violence Risk. Training and assessment resources will support the delivery of these courses through the VET sector.
* Delivery of the Fast Track Professional Development Program will continue.
* The Mandatory Minimum Qualifications policy was introduced on 1 July 2020 for the specialist family violence response workforce. This will be implemented over a five-year transition period. The Mandatory Minimum Qualifications Transition Monitoring Advisory Group will monitor implementation collecting and analysing data and assessing policy gaps and challenges. The new requirements will support the increased visibility and professionalisation of the specialist family violence response workforce. This will ensure that the workforce is drawn from a range of disciplines, experience, and backgrounds.
* Development of a Family Violence and Sexual Assault Traineeship model has begun. This will accelerate training pathways for the family violence and sexual assault support workforce across the state.
* The Family Violence Workforce Project will support understanding the design of job roles in the family violence specialist sector. This will include developing roles to support current and future requirements of the system.
* Ongoing work for the implementation of the Family Violence Workforce Health, Safety and Wellbeing Guide will be occurring.

## Workforce development – What does this mean for outcomes?

### Workforce development – Domain 1: Prevention

The focus on upskilling the broader workforce will support the changing conversation within Victoria of our understanding of family violence and all forms of violence against women. This will help to shift the understanding and attitudes of the broader community. Work over this period has set the scene for a more strategic approach to building sustainable workforce capacity and capability specifically for primary prevention. This is in specialist prevention roles and across a wide range of contributing workforces.

### Workforce development – Domain 2: Victim survivors

Specialised training, clear policies, procedures and tools equip the workforce to be able to better support victim survivors. Training for the MARAM Framework is supporting a shift in the understanding and management of risk assessments. It also supports better information sharing and embedding an intersectional approach into service delivery. Having more Victorians trained in assessing the potential risks of family violence supports early intervention. This better serves victim survivors by preventing the escalation of family violence.

### Workforce development – Domain 3: Perpetrators

Specialised training will support implementation of guidance for professionals working with adults using family violence. This is an important step towards a more consistent and collaborative practice across departments and agencies to identify, assess and manage risk. Increasing the workforce’s awareness and knowledge will in turn lead to more informed and targeted interventions. This will help to manage risk more effectively and support behaviour change. Improving the coordination of interventions across services will support the system, workforce and individuals to hold perpetrators to account. This includes encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for their choice to use violence, including the impact on their children.

### Workforce development – Domain 4: System

Our focus on developing our workforce is key to delivering on the outcome ‘family violence and broader workforce across the system are skilled, capable and reflect the communities they serve’. The 2019–20 workforce census indicates the activities being delivered are supporting the upskilling and capability of the workforce. More than 50 per cent of respondents (for specialist family violence services and primary prevention) feel very or extremely confident in their level of training and experience to complete their role.

# Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations

****A commitment to implement all Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations****

The [Royal Commission](https://www.rcfv.com.au/) <https://www.rcfv.com.au/> was established in 2015 after a number of family violence-related deaths in Victoria – most notably the death of Luke Batty.

The role of the Commission was to find ways to prevent family violence, improve support for victim survivors and hold perpetrators to account.

The Royal Commission found existing programs were not able to:

* reduce the frequency and impact of violence
* prevent violence through early intervention
* support victim survivors
* hold perpetrators to account for their actions
* coordinate community and government services.

The Royal Commission identified [227 recommendations](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-recommendations) <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-recommendations> for the family violence system and we are working to implement every one of these recommendations.

In response to the Royal Commission, the Victorian Government announced an ambitious plan: *10 years to rebuild Victoria’s family violence system* (2016). The commitment to implement all 227 recommendations from the Royal Commission provided the basis for the reform outlined in the plan.

As at [8 September 2021](https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/work-continues-reforms-end-family-violence) <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/work-continues-reforms-end-family-violence>, we have implemented 204 of the recommendations, with the remaining 23 recommendations expected to be implemented by October 2022. The Victorian Government recognises that implementing the recommendations is not the end of a task, but in fact the next step towards building a new family violence system.

In line with Victoria’s *10-year plan*, we will continue to improve the family violence system through the *Rolling Action Plan* and use the Family Violence Outcomes Framework to monitor our progress towards the changes we want to see.

# Glossary of terms

| Term | Description |
| --- | --- |
| **Adolescent or young person ‘who uses violence’** | Adolescents or young people between the ages of 10 and 17 who use family violence are referred to as an ‘adolescent or young person’ who uses violence. This language reflects that adolescents who use family violence are a distinct group. This cohort requires distinct responses tailored to the age of the young person and their concurrent safety and developmental needs. Young people who use violence against a family member are often also themselves victim survivors. |
| **Affected family member** | The term affected family member is used by police to refer to the individual deemed to be most harmed and affected by events occurring during a family violence incident. Police assess risk, considering past family violence and any recorded criminal history. They identify who is being harmed and affected the most during an incident. |
| **Children and young people** | Children and young people are classified as anyone younger than 18 years of age. When a child or young person is referred to as a ‘person who uses violence’, children aged between 10 and 17 years old are included. This is in recognition of the specific legal status of this age group and because the criminal age of liability in Victoria is 10 years old. |
| **Family Violence Incident (or Family Incident)** | An incident attended by Victoria Police where a Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report (also known as an L17 form) was completed. |
| **Family Violence Intervention Order** | Family Violence Intervention orders include conditions to stop the [respondent](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#respondent) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#respondent> from using family violence against the protected person. If the respondent breaks the conditions of an intervention order, police can [charge](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#charge) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#charge> them with a criminal [offence](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#offence) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#offence>. |
| **Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme** | The Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme enables the sharing of information between authorised organisations to assess and manage family violence risk. |
| **Family Violence Intervention Order Breach** | If a [respondent](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#respondent) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#respondent> breaks the conditions of an family violence intervention order, [family violence safety notice](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders/what-police-do-about-family-violence/family-violence-safety-notices) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/family-violence-intervention-orders/what-police-do-about-family-violence/family-violence-safety-notices> or a counselling order, police can [charge](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#charge) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#charge > them with a criminal [offence](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#offence) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#offence>. This is called a [breach.](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#breach) <https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/legal-glossary#breach>. |
| **Family violence sector** | The family violence sector encompasses all stakeholders who work within the family violence workforce and contribute to the family violence reform. |
| **Family violence system** | The family violence system incorporates all the family violence initiatives conducted by the sector as part of the family violence reform. |
| **Intimate partner violence** | Intimate partner violence refers to any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship. |
| **L17 form** | An L17 form refers to the Victoria Police Risk Assessment and Management Report that Victoria Police are required to complete after they have attended a family incident. The report is completed when family incidents, interfamilial-related sexual offences, and child abuse are reported to police. |
| **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework.** | The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework ensures services are effectively identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk. |
| **Offender** | An ‘offender’ describes a person who has been found guilty of an offence. |
| **Perpetrator** | A perpetrator of family violence is an adult who uses violence or threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour against family members as defined in the Family Violence Protection Act, in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships. |
| **Predominant aggressor** | When police attend and record a family violence incident, the term ‘predominant aggressor’ (or ‘other party’) is used to describe the person who they determine is causing harm to others.  The predominant aggressor is the perpetrator who is using violence and coercive control to dominate, intimidate or cause fear in their partner or family member, and for whom, once they have been violent, particularly the use of physical or sexual violence, all of their other actions take on the threat of violence. |
| **Primary prevention** | Whole of population initiatives that address the primary (‘first’ or ‘underlying’) drivers of violence. Primary prevention works by identifying the deep underlying causes of violence. This includes the social norms, structures and practices that influence individual attitudes and behaviours. Primary prevention acts across the whole population to change these, not just the behaviour of perpetrators. |
| **Primary prevention of family violence workforce** | The primary prevention of family violence workforce includes those who work to prevent family violence through systemic / organisational / community-level initiatives.  Example roles: family violence primary prevention officer or practitioner, family violence or respectful relationships educator, gender equity officer, prevention of violence against women officer, family violence health promotion officer, manager or trainer of primary prevention officers or practitioners, etc. |
| **Respondent** | In both individual and police applications for family violence intervention orders, the ‘respondent’ describes the person against whom an order is sought. |
| **Royal Commission into Family Violence** | The Royal Commission was Australia’s first Royal Commission into Family Violence. It was the established in 2015 after a number of family violence-related deaths in Victoria – most notably the death of Luke Batty.  The role of the Commission was to find ways to:   * + prevent family violence   + improve support for victim survivors   + hold perpetrators to account.   The Commission included 25 days of public hearings. Community conversations were held with over 800 Victorians and nearly 1,000 written submissions were received.  The Commission made 227 recommendations to reduce the impact of family violence in our community, with the Victorian Government committing to implement all recommendations. |
| **Service navigators** | Service navigators are responsible for identifying shared priorities at the local level. They explore new opportunities to partner and provide service responses to Victorians seeking support and safety through The Orange Door. |
| **Specialist family violence practitioners (workers)** | Specialist family violence practitioners are people who work directly with victim survivors, perpetrators, or cases of family violence as a family violence response specialist;  or  Those who work directly with family violence response specialists as a manager, supervisor or trainer; or in a capacity building, policy or practice development role.  Example roles: family violence or justice case manager, family violence outreach, refuge worker, counsellor / phone support, crisis worker, men’s behaviour change practitioner or case manager, RAMP Coordinator, intake or enhanced intake, sexual assault worker, family violence court practitioner or family violence court registrar, etc. |
| **Specialist family violence services** | Specialist family violence services provide front line support for those experiencing family violence. |
| **The Orange Door network** | The Orange Door is part of the Victorian Government’s response to the Royal Commission. 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 provides access to a range of family violence and family services in person, or over the phone. To make it easier for people to be safer and supported, The Orange Door brings together workers from specialist family violence services, family services, Aboriginal services and services for men who use violence. |
| **Unique affected family members** | The count of unique affected family members is the number of individuals who were recorded as an affected family member in any given year. Where an affected family member has been involved in incidents across a number of years, they will appear in each year in which they were recorded. |
| **Victim survivor** | Victim survivor refers to adults, children and young people who experience family violence. Under the Family Violence Protection Act, children are considered victim survivors if they experience family violence directed at them or are exposed to the effects of family violence, including being present to or witnessing a family violence incident. |

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# Explanatory notes

## Explanatory notes – Domain 2: Victim Survivors

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of unique affected family members who are children

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data in this measure comes from the Victoria Police Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) data collected by the Crime Statistics Agency. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of unique affected family members identified in L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Reports who experienced at least one family violence incident within a year, and who were 17 years old or younger at the time of the first reported incident.  Denominator – Number of unique affected family members identified in L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Reports who experienced at least one family violence incident. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 through to 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. |
| Data details | This measure counts unique children who were recorded as an affected family member in at least one family violence incident within the reference period. Children recorded in two or more incidents within a 12-month period are only counted once.  Individuals where with age unknown are not included in the measure as there is no indication whether these individuals are children. |
| Data quality and caveats | In July 2019, Victoria Police launched a new L17 Risk Assessment form statewide. Changes to the way information is captured on this form may impact data collected from this time and onwards.  During the COVID-19 pandemic, Victoria Police launched several responsive initiatives, including Operation Ribbon, which was designed to target high risk family violence offenders. Changes in the data during the pandemic may be impacted by such initiatives, as well as other community changes taking place during the pandemic. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘pregnancy or new birth’ is recorded

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data in this measure comes from the Victoria Police Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) data collected by the Crime Statistics Agency. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Reports recorded by Victoria Police where ‘pregnancy or new birth’ is recorded.  Denominator – Number of family violence incidents recorded by Victoria police. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 through to 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. |
| Data details | This measure counts the number of family violence incidents where pregnancy or new birth is recorded by Victoria Police. |
| Data quality and caveats | The data reported is subject to changes to the L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report in 2019–20, including changes to recording practices. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of family violence incidents where ‘recent separation’ is recorded on L17 form

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data in this measure comes from the Victoria Police Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) data collected by the Crime Statistics Agency. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Reports completed by Victoria Police where ‘recent separation’ is recorded.  Denominator – Number of family violence incidents recorded by Victoria police . |
| Time period | Due to recording practice changes, data covers two financial years, 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 to 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. |
| Data details | This measure counts the number of family violence incidents where recent or imminent separation is recorded by Victoria Police. |
| Data quality and caveats | The data reported is subject to changes to the L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report in 2019–20, including changes to recording practices. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number of family violence-related deaths

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data in this measure is from Coroners Court of Victoria data extracted from the Victorian Homicide Register (VHR) by the Crime Statistics Agency. |
| Definition | Numerator - Homicides reported to the Coroners Court of Victoria, indicating where homicides were family violence related.  Denominator – Number of total reported homicides. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 through to 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. |
| Data details | A family violence related homicide is defined as one which occurred in circumstances where there was a familial relationship between the homicide offender and the homicide victim, as defined by the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic.), whether or not there was an identified history of family violence prior to the homicide. This may include current or former intimate partners or kinship relationships as defined by the Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Taskforce (2003). |
| Data quality and caveats | n/a |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of victim survivors who are homeless/without a permanent place to live

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data for this measure is from the Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Homelessness Data Collection dataset |
| Definition | Numerator - Number of cases supported by specialist family violence services where homelessness indicated on first presentation.  Denominator - Total number of cases supported by specialist family violence services where housing situation is recorded on presentation. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years (FY), 01-Jul-2015 to 30-Jun-2016 through to 01-Jul-2020 to 30-Jun-2021. |
| Data details | Data is reported by household cases. A household case is defined as only including a lead family member (presenting unit head) who is 16 years old or over.  The measure relates to support periods opened during the reference Period.  Clients are considered to not be homeless if they were living in any of the following circumstances at the open or close of the case:   * public or community housing (renter or rent free): dwelling type is house/townhouse/flat and tenure type is renter or rent-free public housing, renter or rent-free community housing * private or other housing (renter, rent free or owner): dwelling type is house/townhouse/flat and tenure type is renter-private housing, life tenure scheme, owner–shared equity or rent/buy scheme, owner–being purchased/with mortgage, owner-fully owned, rent-free private/other housing. * institutional settings: dwelling type is aged care * or the client is living in other circumstances with long term tenure (not couch surfer).   Clients were considered to be homeless if they were living in any of the following circumstances on presentation (start of the case):   * no shelter or improvised dwelling: includes where dwelling type is no dwelling/street/park/in the open, motor vehicle, improvised building/dwelling, caravan, cabin, boat or tent; or tenure type is renting or living rent free in a caravan park * short-term temporary accommodation: dwelling type is boarding/rooming house, emergency accommodation, hotel/motel/bed and breakfast; or tenure type is renting or living rent free in boarding/rooming house, renting or living rent free in emergency accommodation or transitional housing * house, townhouse or flat (couch surfing or with no tenure): tenure type is no tenure; or conditions of occupancy are living with relatives fee free, couch surfing.   Cases are not included that recorded 'Don't know' for housing situations at end of support. Some cases also did not have quite enough information to know what the housing situation was. These have been combined with clients in institutions in a 'Homeless at presentation' category called 'Housed, Institution or Not enough information. |
| Data quality and caveats | There are historical issues with data quality. In particular, the inflated number of case records created after police referrals distorts both numerator and denominator for this measure, in 2016-17 and 2017-18 in particular. This inflation was due to poor practice at some agencies, where workers would open a support period for an affected person (victim-survivor) as soon as they received an L17 referral from police. This practice was largely ceased by the end of 2017-18.  The data is not a full representative sample of victim survivors experiencing homelessness. This is both because service delivery reported through IRIS is not included due to data quality issues and because a significant proportion of clients reporting through the HDC do not have housing status recorded and so have been excluded.  There are historical issues with data quality. In particular, the inflated number of case records created after police referrals distorts both numerator and denominator for this measure, in 2016-17 and 2017-18 in particular. This inflation was due to poor practice at some agencies, where workers would open a support period for an affected person (victim-survivor) as soon as they received an L17 referral from police. This practice was largely ceased by the end of 2017–18. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Proxy – measure assumes a causal link between homelessness and family violence. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Proportion of victim survivors who experience an improvement in their housing situation after receiving a service

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data for this measure is from the Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Homelessness Data Collection dataset |
| Definition | Numerator - Number of cases supported by specialist family violence services where homelessness was indicated on first presentation who are no longer homeless at end of latest/last support period.  Denominator - Number of cases/support periods supported specialist family violence services where homelessness was indicated on presentation and support has ended. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 through to 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. |
| Data details | Data is reported by household cases. A household case is defined as only including a lead family member (presenting unit head) who is 16 years old or over.  The measure relates to support periods closed during the reference Period.  Clients are considered to not be homeless if they were living in any of the following circumstances at the open or close of the case:   * public or community housing (renter or rent free): dwelling type is house/townhouse/flat and tenure type is renter or rent free public housing, renter or rent-free community housing * private or other housing (renter, rent free or owner): dwelling type is house/townhouse/flat and tenure type is renter-private housing, life tenure scheme, owner–shared equity or rent/buy scheme, owner-being purchased/with mortgage, owner-fully owned, rent-free private/other housing * institutional settings: dwelling type is aged care * or the client is living in other circumstances with long term tenure (not couch surfer).   Clients were considered to be homeless if they were living in any of the following circumstances on presentation (start of the case):   * no shelter or improvised dwelling: includes where dwelling type is no dwelling/street/park/in the open, motor vehicle, improvised building/dwelling, caravan, cabin, boat or tent; or tenure type is renting or living rent free in a caravan park * short-term temporary accommodation: dwelling type is boarding/rooming house, emergency accommodation, hotel/motel/bed and breakfast; or tenure type is renting or living rent free in boarding/rooming house, renting or living rent free in emergency accommodation or transitional housing * house, townhouse or flat (couch surfing or with no tenure): tenure type is no tenure; or conditions of occupancy are living with relatives fee free, couch surfing.   Cases are not included that recorded 'Don't know' for housing situations at end of support. Some cases also did not have quite enough information to know what the housing situation was. These have been combined with clients in institutions in a 'Homeless at presentation' category called 'Housed, Institution or Not enough information. |
| Data quality and caveats | There are historical issues with data quality. In particular, the inflated number of case records created after police referrals distorts both numerator and denominator for this measure, in 2016-17 and 2017-18 in particular. This inflation was due to poor practice at some agencies, where workers would open a support period for an affected person (victim-survivor) as soon as they received an L17 referral from police. This practice was largely ceased by the end of 2017–18.  The data is not a full representative sample of victim survivors experiencing homelessness. This is both because service delivery reported through IRIS is not included due to data quality issues and because a significant proportion of clients reporting through the HDC do not have housing status recorded and so have been excluded. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Proxy data – homelessness status is used as a proxy for improvements in housing status. |

## Explanatory notes – Domain 3: Perpetrators

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of reported contraventions of Family Violence orders

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data in this measure comes from the Victoria Police Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) data collected by the Crime Statistics Agency. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of respondents who contravened a family violence intervention order at least once during the reference period.  Denominator – Total number of respondents on a family violence intervention order during the reference period. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years (FY), 01-Jul-2015 to 30-Jun-2016 through to 01-Jul-2020 to 30-Jun-2021. |
| Data details | The data presented captures the number of unique respondents who contravened a family violence intervention order within the reference period. |
| Data quality and caveats | The data reported is subject to changes to the L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report in 2019-20, including changes to recording practices. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of individuals identified as the respondent in an L17 report who receive a subsequent L17 report within [12 months]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data in this measure comes from the Victoria Police Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) data collected by the Crime Statistics Agency. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of unique people identified as the other party on an L17 form during the reference period, who were previously identified as the other party in an L17 report up to 365 days prior.  Denominator – Number of people identified as the other party in an L17 report during the reference period. |
| Time period | Data captures six financial years (FY), 01-Jul-2015 to 30-Jun-2016 through to 01-Jul-2020 to 30-Jun-2021. |
| Data details | Recidivism rate is calculated using the last day of a committed offence within a financial year and checking to see whether similar offence had also taken up to 365 days prior to it. In cases where the recorded incidents take place on the same date, they are not counted as re-offence, for example if Other Party (other individual who involved in a family violence incident) engages in 5 different counts of family violence on the same day, they won’t be considered as a re-offence. |
| Data quality and caveats | The data reported is subject to changes to the L17 Risk Assessment and Risk Management Report in 2019-20, including changes to recording practices. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data. |

## Explanatory notes – Domain 4: System

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number of Central Information Point reports provided to services

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data for this measure is collected from The Orange Door (TOD) record of Central Information Point (CIP). |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of CIP reports requested by / provided to Orange Door.  Denominator – Number of CIP reports delivered. |
| Time period | Data covers three financial years: 01-Jul-2018 to 30-Jun-2019, 01-Jul-2019 to 30-Jun-2020 and 01-Jul-2020 to 30-Jun-2020. |
| Data details | The CIP requests and CIP delivered are unique counts. There are occasions that a request may be filled in parts.  The Number of CIP reports requested and number of CIP reports delivered read directly from the operational Power BI report, except for the 2018/19 FY. |
| Data quality and caveats | n/a |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Full data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who identify as from a priority community – ATSI, CALD, LGBTIQ+, disability

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data for this measure is from the Family Safety Victoria, Family Violence Workforce Census reports including the:   * 2019–20 census of workforces that intersect with family violence: Survey Findings Report – Specialist Family Violence Response Workforce, available here * 2019–20 census of workforces that intersect with family violence: Survey Findings Report – Primary Prevention Workforce, available here. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of workers who indicated ‘yes’ to relevant survey question.  Denominator – Total worker responses for survey question, by workforce type. |
| Time period | The included data covered the 2019-20 report only. |
| Data details | Specialist family violence workforce includes:   * those who work directly with victim survivors, perpetrators, or cases of family violence as a family violence response specialist * those who work directly with family violence response specialists as a manager, supervisor or trainer; or in a capacity building, policy or practice development role.   Example roles: family violence or justice case manager, family violence outreach, refuge worker, counsellor / phone support, crisis worker, men’s behaviour change practitioner or case manager, RAMP Coordinator, intake or enhanced intake, sexual assault worker, family violence court practitioner or court registrar, etc.  Primary prevention includes:   * those who work to prevent family violence through systemic / organisational / community level initiatives.   Example roles: family violence primary prevention officer or practitioner, family violence or respectful relationships educator, gender equity officer, prevention of violence against women officer, family violence health promotion officer, manager or trainer of primary prevention officers or practitioners, etc.  Survey Coordinators were carefully recruited to ensure good coverage of all areas of the workforces that intersect with family violence in Victoria. Coordinators were asked to either email the survey link directly to their contacts, or act as an intermediary, by asking their contacts to share the link to relevant cohorts within their extended network.  A total of 22 Survey Coordinators assisted in promoting and disseminating the census across the three workforces. |
| Data quality and caveats | A census was also undertaken in 2017, however many of the survey questions had changed and were not comparable. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Partial – data reported is reflective only of the family violence workforce who participated in the Family Violence Workforce Census and responded to the relevant question reflected in this data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report confidence they have enough training and experience to perform their role effectively

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data for this measure is from the Family Safety Victoria, Family Violence Workforce Census reports including the:   * 2019-–20 census of workforces that intersect with family violence: Survey Findings Report – Specialist Family Violence Response Workforce, available here * 2019–20 census of workforces that intersect with family violence: Survey Findings Report – Primary Prevention Workforce, available here. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of workers who indicated ‘yes’ to relevant survey question.  Denominator – Total worker responses for survey question, by workforce type. |
| Time period | The included data covered the 2019-20 report only. |
| Data details | Specialist family violence workforce includes:   * those who work directly with victim survivors, perpetrators, or cases of family violence as a family violence response specialist * those who work directly with family violence response specialists as a manager, supervisor or trainer; or in a capacity building, policy or practice development role.   Example roles: family violence or justice case manager, family violence outreach, refuge worker, counsellor / phone support, crisis worker, men’s behaviour change practitioner or case manager, RAMP Coordinator, intake or enhanced intake, sexual assault worker, family violence court practitioner or court registrar, etc.  Primary prevention includes:   * those who work to prevent family violence through systemic / organisational / community level initiatives.   Example roles: family violence primary prevention officer or practitioner, family violence or respectful relationships educator, gender equity officer, prevention of violence against women officer, family violence health promotion officer, manager or trainer of primary prevention officers or practitioners, etc.  Survey Coordinators were carefully recruited to ensure good coverage of all areas of the workforces that intersect with family violence in Victoria. Coordinators were asked to either email the survey link directly to their contacts, or act as an intermediary, by asking their contacts to share the link to relevant cohorts within their extended network.  A total of 22 Survey Coordinators assisted in promoting and disseminating the census across the three workforces. |
| Data quality and caveats | A census was also undertaken in 2017, however many of the survey questions had changed and were not comparable. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Partial – data reported is reflective only of the family violence workforce who participated in the Family Violence Workforce Census and responded to the relevant question reflected in this data. |

### Explanatory notes – Measure: Number/proportion of workforce who report work related stress

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Source | Data for this measure is from the Family Safety Victoria, Family Violence Workforce Census reports including the:   * 2019–20 census of workforces that intersect with family violence: Survey Findings Report – Specialist Family Violence Response Workforce, available here * 2019–20 census of workforces that intersect with family violence: Survey Findings Report – Primary Prevention Workforce, available here. |
| Definition | Numerator – Number of workers who indicated ‘yes’ to relevant survey question.  Denominator – Total worker responses for survey question, by workforce type. |
| Time period | The included data covered the 2019-20 report only. |
| Data details | Specialist family violence workforce includes:   * those who work directly with victim survivors, perpetrators, or cases of family violence as a family violence response specialist * those who work directly with family violence response specialists as a manager, supervisor or trainer; or in a capacity building, policy or practice development role   Example roles: family violence or justice case manager, family violence outreach, refuge worker, counsellor / phone support, crisis worker, men’s behaviour change practitioner or case manager, RAMP Coordinator, intake or enhanced intake, sexual assault worker, family violence court practitioner or court registrar, etc.  Primary prevention includes:   * those who work to prevent family violence through systemic / organisational / community level initiatives   Example roles: family violence primary prevention officer or practitioner, family violence or respectful relationships educator, gender equity officer, prevention of violence against women officer, family violence health promotion officer, manager or trainer of primary prevention officers or practitioners, etc.  Survey Coordinators were carefully recruited to ensure good coverage of all areas of the workforces that intersect with family violence in Victoria. Coordinators were asked to either email the survey link directly to their contacts, or act as an intermediary, by asking their contacts to share the link to relevant cohorts within their extended network.  A total of 22 Survey Coordinators assisted in promoting and disseminating the Census across the three workforces. |
| Data quality and caveats | A census was also undertaken in 2017, however many of the survey questions had changed and were not comparable. |
| Full / Partial /  Proxy / Ideal | Partial – data reported is reflective only of the family violence workforce who participated in the Family Violence Workforce Census and responded to the relevant question reflected in this data. |

1. A unique affected family member is defined as a person who has had one or more family violence incidents recorded in the LEAP database within the relevant reference period. A unique affected family member may be recorded in more than one incident during the reference period. However, they will have a count of 1 in the data presented concerning unique affected family members. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. In this report, ‘family violence cases’ count one client per presenting group or household. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The figures in this measure refer to people on orders including a family violence intervention order, interim family violence intervention order and/or a family violence safety notice. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. A person can be on more than one active order within the reference period. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Access points are branded The Orange Door network locations that have at least one permanent multidisciplinary team that delivers the full suite of The Orange Door services. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Outposts involve a smaller staff cohort operating from a location hosted by a partner agency or community service to deliver support to The Orange Door clients. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)