

MARAMIS Quarterly Newsletter

October-December 2024

Quarter 2

2024-25

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MARAM Practice Guidance

What new MARAM practice guidance is being developed?

Family Safety Victoria (FSV) is developing MARAM practice guidance for:

- direct risk and wellbeing assessment of children and young people victim survivors
- identifying and responding to young people using family violence in the home and in intimate partner/dating relationships (recognising that young people using violence often experience family violence risk).

This new practice guidance will support workforces prescribed under the MARAM Framework to respond directly to children and young people as victim survivors and support their well-being. The guidance will support professionals to respond to young people using violence with a trauma and violence-informed, and age and developmental stage lens. The practice guides and tools are anticipated for release in 2025.

What has been achieved so far?

In 2022-23, 41 consultation sessions were held with over 500 professionals across MARAM prescribed workforces to support the development of the child and young person-focused MARAM practice guidance.

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS), and Safe and Equal were engaged to contribute to the development of the Practice Guides, with much of their work contributing to the project now completed. In addition, FSV engaged RMIT and Monash University to undertake research reports.

In December 2022, RMIT published the report '[Adolescents using Family Violence \(AUFV\) MARAM Practice Guidance Project 2022: Review of the Evidence Base](#)'.

In March 2023, Monash University published their report, '[Young people's experiences of identity abuse in the context of family violence: A Victorian study](#)'. The report provides analysis of Victorian responses received to Monash University's national survey on children and young people's family violence experiences, use of violence, service, and support needs. The report builds on the [I Believe You](#) report published by Monash University in February 2023 and supports further understanding of the voice and experience of children and young people experiencing family violence.

The findings from each report will directly inform the practice guidance and tools by incorporating young people's experience of barriers to help seeking and service engagement, and experience of family violence that targets the young person's identity and/or culture. FSV continues to meet monthly with youth advocates involved in the *I Believe You* research to ensure the voices of children and young people are centred in the Practice Guides and tools.

In June 2023, FSV further engaged a consortium of Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) and Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Healing Service (YWAHS) to work on content across the draft practice guidance, co-lead consultations with key stakeholders, engage with and draw upon children and young people's voices, contribute to tool and template development, and support user testing processes. This approach will ensure that consultation

and user testing is culturally safe, and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lens is centred throughout the development of the Practice Guides and tools.

VACCA and YWAHS are drafting and reviewing content across the Practice Guides to embed a culturally safe lens throughout. Youth Yarns will be held over the coming months with Aboriginal young people.

In July, Swinburne University concluded the Delphi study to develop the identification and assessment tools. This included both survey and focus groups with subject matter experts, including practitioners from prescribed workforces.

Work is underway to finalise the practice guidance and accompanying tools for consultation anticipated to take place in 2025.

MARAM Non-accredited Training

What training is being developed?

FSV has engaged Safe & Equal to develop the MARAM Predominant aggressor identification and responding to misidentification training. This training is tailored for specialist family violence victim-survivor practitioners with comprehensive MARAM responsibilities only as priority cohorts. This training equips participants with the skills and knowledge to identify and respond effectively to misidentification, including use of the Predominant Aggressor Identification Template and associated practice guidance. Please join the waitlist to be informed when new dates are made available. [You can join the waitlist here.](#)

What has been achieved so far?

FSV engaged No to Violence and Safe and Equal to deliver the 'MARAM: Working with Adults Using Family Violence' (AUFV) training program at no cost to participants. The program supports professionals in prescribed workforces to keep adults using family violence in view and accountable, and to promote the safety of victim survivors of family violence.

The AUFV program is tailored for each MARAM responsibility level (identification, intermediate and comprehensive)

Delivery of the identification-level training commenced in November 2023 and Intermediate and Comprehensive training commenced in February 2024. Professionals can register for the training via the links below:

- [Register for Identification level AUFV \(Delivered by Safe + Equal\)](#) and [\(Delivered by No to Violence\)](#)
- [Register for Intermediate level AUFV \(Delivered by No to Violence\)](#)
- [Register for Comprehensive level AUFV \(Delivered by No to Violence\)](#)

MARAM Non-accredited Training Review and Redevelopment

What training is being reviewed and redeveloped?

The three Victim Survivor MARAM training packages (Identification, Intermediate, and Comprehensive) and the MARAM; Leading Alignment and MARAM Collaborative Practice modules.

What has been achieved so far?

Following stakeholder feedback and the findings of the MARAM 5-year Evidence Review, FSV has contracted Safe & Equal to review and redevelop the three Victim Survivor training packages (Identification, Intermediate, Comprehensive) and the MARAM Leading Alignment and MARAM Collaborative Practice Modules.

Safe and Equal have commenced the training redevelopment for the packages and will finalise this by June 2025, with pilot training sessions to be tested from May-June 2025 to seek further input from stakeholders.

MARAM Accredited Training

What is MARAM Accredited Training?

The Centre for Workforce Excellence (CWE) in DFFH is working in partnership with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) to develop Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses in family violence.

The training aims to build the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of existing and future workforces to respond to and contribute to the prevention of family violence. These courses are the first accredited training courses to be directly based on the Family Violence MARAM Framework.

Through these courses, individuals will be able to access MARAM aligned and accredited family violence training through Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), TAFEs and dual sector universities, either during their studies or before they enter the workforce as part of their pre-service education and training.

What has been achieved so far?

The *Course in Identifying and Responding to Family Violence* was re-accredited in 2024 with the new code 22660VIC. The updated course was made available to TAFEs and other VET training providers for delivery from 1 April 2024. Improvements have been made to the new course based on learnings from implementation of its predecessor, including streamlined content and assessment requirements. A refreshed suite of courseware and resources to accompany the updated course will be available early this year.

The *Course in Intermediate Risk Assessment and Management of Family Violence* (22625VIC) was re-accredited in 2023 and is available to training providers for delivery. Development of courseware and resources for the unit *VU23432 – Undertake intermediate assessment and management of family violence risk* will commence in late 2024.

The *Course in Contributing to the Prevention of Family Violence and Violence Against Women* (22621VIC) was accredited in 2023 and is available to TAFEs for delivery. Courseware and resources for the unit *VU23411 – Contribute to primary prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women* are currently under development and will be available at the end of this year.

Information Sharing Updates

What is happening now?

Did you know the DFFH Information Sharing Team is expecting to receive around 12,000 CISS and FVISS requests for Child Protection information this financial year?

While we try and process requests as quickly as possible, we often have to come back and ask for more information.

So...we've made some small (but we think important) changes to our webform so it's clearer and easier to use, and cuts down on the need to email back and forth.

DFFH webform changes

Authorised professionals can use the webform for requests under the schemes for Child Protection information.

If you're a regular requester to the department, you may have noticed the following changes:

- Contact information: Requestors are now asked to include a phone number, enabling us to be able to ring and discuss your request directly if needed.
- Funding stream: This updated field helps us verify your program area's status as an Information Sharing Entity (not all areas in your organisation may be prescribed).
- Status prompts: Prompts have been added to help requestors consider their Information Sharing Entity status and the purpose of their request, particularly for those seeking information about an alleged person using violence.
- Specific information prompts: Guidance has been added on requesting specific information when that's all that's needed (such as the most recent Child Protection case information). This helps us turn around responses faster.
- Threshold wording: Wording changes have been made emphasising the need to provide sufficient information to meet the scheme's thresholds.
- Expandable text boxes: Text boxes can be enlarged for improved visibility and space for detailed information entry.
- Primary person prompt: A prompt has been added for the primary person of the request to be added first for easier database searches.
- Mandatory seeking views fields: These fields have been made mandatory to ensure that consideration is given to a victim survivor and/or child's agency when seeking their confidential information.

Please let us know if there are any issues.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Family Violence and Child Information Sharing Schemes

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Requests for Child Protection Information

The Information Sharing Team (IST) within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is delegated to carry out information sharing functions under Part 5A of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* and Part 6A of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* on behalf of the DFFH Secretary.

The IST shares **historical information** on **closed** Child Protection cases under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS). For open cases, where the Child Protection worker is known, Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) should make a request to them directly.

If your request relates to **immediate risk** or **danger** to a child or another person, please contact **Victoria Police** on **Triple Zero (000)**.

If you have concerns regarding significant risk of harm or potential risk of harm to a child, please consider your organisational policies and procedures. If necessary, contact [Child Protection Intake](#) and/or [Victoria Police](#). Please note that providing information to the IST does not constitute making a report to Child Protection.

MARAM Model of Alignment

What is the MARAM Model of Alignment?

The MARAM Model of Alignment is a policy that will provide guidance to organisations on how to align to the MARAM Framework. The policy introduces an improvement cycle that allows all levels of the service system to understand and guide alignment to MARAM in a continuous and sustainable way.

The MARAM Model of Alignment will be supported by a suite of resources, including the MARAM maturity resources.

What has been achieved so far?

FSV has continued developing a draft MARAM Model of Alignment policy. The draft policy has been reviewed by departments and the feedback provided is currently being collated.

What is happening now?

In addition to policy development, FSV has begun reviewing the existing suite of resources and tools developed to support alignment. Existing resources and tools will be updated and where required; new resources will be created.

All resources and tools will be kept in an accessible and user-friendly repository that links to the MARAM Model of Alignment Policy.

MARAMIS Sector Support Program

What is the MARAMIS Sector Support Program?

The MARAMIS Sector Support Program will run in 2024-25. This program replaces the now lapsed MARAMIS Sector Capacity Building Grants, which commenced in 2017.

This program aims to respond to the current MARAMIS reform context, with two streams of activity – MARAM alignment and capability building and practice uplift.

What has been achieved so far?

From October to December 2024, FSV has been in discussions with the three MARAM Practice Leads and the Principal Strategic Advisors on their respective activities. These initiatives will emphasise addressing gaps and barriers identified within both the specialist family violence and non-specialist family violence sectors.

What is happening now?

Safe and Equal, No to Violence and Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare as the three MARAM Practice Lead roles will deliver state-wide activities focused on capability building and practice uplift. Activities will be available across all workforces within the system.

Principal Strategic Advisors will lead a range of MARAM alignment initiatives within their respective regions. Work will focus on improving understanding and alignment to MARAM and information sharing within and across prescribed organisations.

Enhance Perpetrator-focused MARAM Practice Project

What is the Enhance Perpetrator-focused MARAM Practice project?

The MARAM enhancement project (as part of the Changing Ways program) will run from 2024-27 delivering:

- Change management activities to enhance coordination of multi-agency activity around the perpetrator.
- A MARAM practice support function to support continuous learning and skill development.

Principal Strategic Advisors will lead a place-based implementation approach to drive organisational alignment to MARAM at the local level. Changing Ways Providers will drive internal practice changes across local services working in collaboration with them.

This approach was designed to pilot a new model of MARAM and information sharing whole of system response, with learnings to inform future implementation efforts.

What is happening now?

As Changing Ways Providers, Peninsula Health, Meli, and Dardi Munwurro will support three MARAM Practice Lead roles focused on increasing understanding and skill in MARAM practice when working with people using family violence.

Principal Strategic Advisors located in regions where the Changing Ways program is delivered will lead a range of MARAM alignment and information sharing initiatives. This includes working with organisations that come into contact and supporting clients of Changing Ways.

Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Survey

What is the Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Survey?

The Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Survey (the survey) is a valuable tool to measure how well employees and leaders in framework organisations understand MARAM, and their responsibilities to assess and manage family violence risk. It also measures how well organisations are progressing towards MARAM alignment. Family Safety Victoria conducts this survey annually. It was previously known as the MARAM Annual Survey.

What has been achieved so far?

Analysis from this year's survey found that 77% of organisational leaders/executives felt confident that their workforce was equipped with the tools, resources, and training to meet their obligations under MARAM while 72% of leaders/executives indicated that organisational alignment to MARAM is a **High Priority**.

Professional and frontline staff demonstrated a strong understanding of their MARAM and Information Sharing responsibilities:

- 94% know how to respond to family violence in their role
- 91% know which services to refer victim survivors or perpetrators of family violence
- 89% felt supported by their organisation in identifying, assessing, and managing family violence risk
- 87% know what MARAM is and how it applies to their work
- 85% know what both the FVISS and the CISS are and how the schemes apply to their work.

Frontline staff also reported on how often they share information to identify, assess, and/or manage family violence risk, and to promote the safety and wellbeing of children. 58% of frontline staff use the FVISS at least once a month, while 60% use the CISS at least once a month.

Consistent with results from previous years, survey respondents pointed to lack of staff time, high staff workloads, and lack of statewide service sector specific guidance to address practice challenges as the biggest barriers to implementing MARAM.

What is happening now?

Preparations have begun for the 2025 annual survey. Results from the 2024 survey have indicated where extra training/resources are required, so the 2025 survey will aim to explore these avenues further.

Five-year Evidence Review (MARAM Framework and Practice Guides)

What is the five-year evidence review?

The *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* requires five-yearly reviews of MARAM to ensure it reflects current evidence and best practice.

What has been achieved so far?

The first of these reviews- the literature, practice, and design review, led by Allen & Clarke Consulting is now complete. You can read the report from Allen & Clarke Consulting here: <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-framework-5-year-evidence-review>.

A second part of the evidence review, a data review, is also underway, analysing available data on the evidence-based risk factors. This review is led by Monash University and is scheduled to be completed in 2025.

Monash University and Family Safety Victoria are working together to create data linkages using data from the Coroner's Court of Victoria and FSV's Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) data platform*. This data linkage will provide a better understanding of evidence-based risk factors to assist in the response to family violence risk assessment and risk management.

*For more information on TRAM, see the updates on "MARAM tools in TRAM and SHIP".

Family Violence Capability Frameworks

Why are the Family Violence Capability Frameworks being reviewed?

The Family Violence Prevention and Response Capability Frameworks outline the foundational skill set required to both deliver prevention of family violence and gender-based violence initiatives and respond to all forms of family violence.

The review is intended to reflect the capability uplift and learnings undertaken since the framework's original release, including capturing new evidence and best practice, whilst also seeking to establish an implementation approach that clarifies and increases their utility across the workforce. The review will consider the alignment between the prevention and response frameworks, recognising that prevention and response work is distinct but complementary.

What is happening now?

The Centre for Workforce Excellence (CWE) are in the final stages of completion of the Response Capability Framework, with release expected in the coming months.

CWE are continuing work on the revision of the Prevention Capability Framework in collaboration with Safe and Equal and the Prevention workforce. The revised Prevention Capability Framework is due for release mid-2025.

A new capability framework is also being developed to support capability uplift for the specialist sexual assault workforce. The Responding to Sexual Violence and Harmful Sexual Behaviours Capability Framework is being developed in partnership with Sexual Assault Services Victoria, and due for release end 2025.

MARAM Tools in TRAM and SHIP

What MARAM tools are in TRAM and SHIP?

Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) has been developed by Family Safety Victoria (FSV) as an online platform for use across the service system. TRAM contains the adult and child victim survivor MARAM risk assessments and safety plan, Comprehensive Adult Using Family Violence assessment tool, Predominant Aggressor Identification tool, and in future it will host the child and young person MARAM resources, currently in development. This platform is used across The Orange Door network and by several community agencies.

FSV also oversees the development of the MARAM risk assessment and management tools into the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP). SHIP contains the adult and child victim survivor MARAM risk assessments and safety plan. MARAM tools in both these online platforms support services in their alignment to MARAM.

What additional MARAM tools are coming to the online platforms?

FSV are scoping adding the Identification and Intermediate Adults Using Family Violence assessment tools into SHIP. Use of these tools in SHIP by housing and homelessness services will allow FSV to collect and analyse de-identified data on family violence risk and trends, these will contribute to service improvements and the adults using family violence evidence base. The Predominant Aggressor Identification template was released for use by Specialist Family Violence Services in July 2024. This template provides a structure to support the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor using information sharing, direct assessment, and structured analysis.

The TRAM platform has undergone a security upgrade to ensure client information remains secure and confidential. This upgrade has resulted in a new and cleaner look for TRAM. It also opens the possibility for further improvements across TRAM which FSV are exploring.

Organisations interested in more information or adopting TRAM can contact tram@familysafety.vic.gov.au.

DFFH MARAMIS Implementation

Learning and Development

- The Information Sharing uplift workshop focused on mature information sharing practices continues in consultation with the DFFH Information sharing team. Delivery of sessions by Safe and Equal will commence in March 2025. The first sessions will be open for Child Protection and Housing workforces in the coming weeks. Stay tuned.
- **Applying MARAM in Policy and Projects** eLearn has been finalised. This eLearn has been produced to support staff in non-operational roles understand their obligations in using MARAM in their daily work.

MARAMIS week videos- release of event recordings

For those that missed this year's MARAMIS week events, we are pleased to announce that the events were recorded and will be released shortly. Here are some of the important topics covered:

- **MARAM and Information Sharing in practice:** Working with Adults Using Family Violence including a panel discussion with Rivka, Chairperson of the Victim Survivor Advisory Council (VSAC)
- **Embedding lived experience:** Survivor-Advocates from Safe and Equal's Expert Advisory Panel on why the MARAM and Information Sharing Schemes are critical to keep victim-survivors safe.
- **Identifying the Predominant aggressor:** MARAM guidance around the predominant aggressor
- **The Regional Family Violence Integration Committee:** collaborative practice agencies working together and how this can improve outcomes for people experiencing family violence.

Reminder! Child Protection and Housing tailored MARAM: Working with adults using family violence (AUFV) - Identification and Intermediate level.

Tailored training packages for Child protection and Housing workforces are being facilitated by No to Violence (NTV) with support from senior practitioners from relevant workforces.

- Child Protection (CPP2) workers can access the Identification level training [here](#)
- Child Protection (CPP3-6) can access the Intermediate level training updates [here](#)
- Housing, Reception, Forensic Disability and Complex Needs workforces can access the Identification level training [here](#)
- Forensic Disability Clinical Services (FDCS) and Disability Justice Coordination (DJC) workers can access the Intermediate training [here](#)

For further information please email the DFFH information sharing and MARAM implementation team at infosharing@dhhs.vic.gov.au

We encourage you to visit our page here: [MARAM and Information Sharing Hub \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Women with Disabilities Victoria

Women with Disabilities Victoria Gender & Disability Experts by Experience Advocates Available for Training and Consultation in 2025

Women with Disabilities Victoria's Gender & Disability Experts by Experience Advocates are a group of women and non-binary people with diverse experiences of disability.

They are available for consultations to support the development of gender and disability inclusive policies, products, and services.

They also offer one-hour introductory training that covers aspects of gender equality, disability inclusion and prevention of violence against women with disabilities.

Consultations:

Consultations take place monthly via Zoom, on Thursdays between 11am and 2pm. You will be supported throughout the process, enabling you to get the most from your consultation time.

Consultation fees:

1 consultation session (60-minute session) = \$880

2 consultation sessions (120-minute session) = \$1,660

Please note if booking 2 consultations, both consultations do not need to be conducted on the same day. Session length can be negotiated.

Training:

Our Introduction to Preventing Violence Against Women with Disabilities is based on research, evidence and the lived experience of women with disabilities.

1-hour sessions can be held online or in person and content may be adjusted to meet your group's training needs.

Training cost: \$600

Please note: The cost may vary if there are requirements in addition to our standard sessions.

For further information and bookings:

Contact the Gender and Disability Workforce Development Team at gandd@wdv.org.au for further information or to book a session.

Generally, a minimum of 8-weeks' notice is required.

MARAM Annual Report

What has been achieved so far?

The *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* requires an annual report to be tabled in Parliament on the implementation of the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM Annual Report).

This report is consolidated from portfolio annual reports completed by all government portfolios with responsibility for MARAM-prescribed workforces. The MARAM Annual Report must describe the key areas of progress and work being undertaken to align to MARAM across departments, organisations and funded agencies.

The 2024 MARAM Annual Report is the sixth annual report. Highlights from the 2023-24 reporting period include:

- Completion of the MARAM 5-year Legislative and Evidence reviews in August 2023 and December 2023 respectively.
- Training was launched for professionals who work with adults using family violence in November 2023. [No to Violence](#) and [Safe and Equal](#) are delivering this training.
- Professionals across the service system completed more than 89,000 MARAM and MARAM-aligned training sessions.
- Practitioners completed 134,000 risk assessments and safety plans using MARAM online tools.
- The Central Information Point received more than 8,000 reports (including 2,097 of the new Brief Reports).
- The information sharing teams managed more than 88,000 information sharing requests.

What is happening now?

The *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* requires that the MARAM Annual Report be tabled in Parliament by the sixth sitting day of the calendar year. The report has been approved by Minister Natalie Hutchins and Cabinet. The report is now awaiting tabling in Parliament which must be completed on or before February 20. Following tabling, the report will be published on Vic.gov.au webpages.

Department of Education update

Information Sharing and family violence reforms: guidance, tools, and training

The Department of Education has [updated its guidance and released 3 new tools](#) to support schools and early childhood services to identify and respond to family violence in a safe and consistent way.

To help meet schools and early childhood services' legislated MARAM responsibilities, principals and service leaders should identify 2 to 3 MARAM nominated staff who will be responsible for family violence screening, safety planning and making referrals and reports.

[New training is available](#) for MARAM nominated staff to understand and action their school or service's MARAM responsibilities.

For further enquiries, contact the Information Sharing and MARAM enquiry line: 1800 549 646

email: cjsandfvis@education.vic.gov.au

MARAMIS Resources

MARAM Video Series

What is the MARAM Video Series?

The MARAM video series consists of 17 impactful videos to support prescribed workforces to better understand MARAM reforms, including the key concepts and responsibilities that apply to their role. These videos are available on the [Vic Gov website](#) and [YouTube](#).

What videos are available?

The series includes two types of videos:

- **MARAM animation series:** Six short videos on specific MARAM practice topics, for example Structured Professional Judgement. You can view them on the [Vic Gov website](#) or on [YouTube](#).
- **MARAM victim survivor and person using family violence series:** Eleven longer role play scenarios between a practitioner and client, including graphics with key topics raised. You can view them on the [Vic Gov website](#) or on [YouTube](#).

MARAMIS Fact Sheets

MARAMIS fact sheets were developed to support people receiving services from DFFH but are relevant to a broad range of workforces.

The fact sheets outline the Family Violence MARAM Framework and Information Schemes in everyday practice. To support diverse communities, the fact sheets are translated into 6 commonly used languages: Dinka, Somali, Simplified Chinese, Oromo, Arabic and Vietnamese. They are also translated into easy English.

Access the fact sheets here: <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-videos-series>