

MARAMIS Quarterly Newsletter

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MARAM Practice Guidance

What new Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (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 wellbeing. 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 early 2025.

MARAM Non-accredited Training

What training is being developed?

FSV has developed a new 'MARAM: Working with Adults Using Family Violence' (AUFV) non accredited training program. 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)

What has been achieved so far?

FSV engaged No to Violence and Safe and Equal to deliver the AUFV training program at no cost to participants. 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 this year with the new code 22660VIC. The updated course has been 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 at the end of 2024.

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 2024.

Information Sharing Updates

What has been achieved so far?

In DFFH, the Information Sharing Team (IST) is responsible for managing requests under the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS).

The IST oversees information sharing practice in DFFH and promotes a consistent approach to the 10,000 plus requests we expect to receive under the schemes this year.

While the IST predominantly deals with requests for Child Protection information, we are a central point in the department to support operational practice for the prescribed DFFH workforces (including Housing, Refugee Minor Program, The Orange Doors and Forensic Disability among others). This support includes providing guidance to departmental staff on other information sharing pathways where we can when the request falls outside of the CISS and/or the FVISS.

What is happening now?

The IST:

- receives requests for Child Protection information from Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) via an online webform and triages the requests to ensure they meet scheme thresholds - ISEs can request Child Protection information via the [request form here](#). For non-CP, please find further information about the [schemes here](#).
- responds to requests on closed child protection matters or refers requests to Child Protection Practitioners where open to the client/family
- provides practice advice & guidance to departmental staff for responding to requests (including a dedicated Information Sharing Intranet site which contains resources like Frequently Asked Questions, response examples and case studies). For further information about the schemes for internal staff please see [our intranet site here](#). For external staff please see further information about the [schemes here](#).

In addition, the IST also is leading the Information Sharing Implementation Project (ISIP) to strengthen the use of the CISS and FVISS and understand the various information sharing arrangements across DFFH.

What is planned next?

The project aims to:

- clarify pathways and accountabilities for information sharing arrangements.
- have a specific focus on the department's prescribed program areas
- understand the operational challenges and complexities to support information sharing capabilities across the department
- strengthen information sharing practice across the department, including the provision of expert advice and development of tailored operational guidance across the prescribed program areas.

MARAM Model of Alignment

What is the MARAM Model of Alignment?

The MARAM Model of Alignment is a policy document that aims to provide guidance on aligning 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 collated feedback and learnings from the finalised MARAM Alignment pilot and undertaken additional research on existing frameworks being implemented across the service system. This work has informed the development of the draft MARAM Model of Alignment Policy.

Work is continuing on the policy, with a focus on establishing an overarching continuous improvement cycle. This will contextualise the use of resources, which are being updated to better reflect the unique requirements of prescribed organisations across the service system.

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 January to June 2024, an extensive review was undertaken on the previous MARAMIS Sector Capacity Building Grants. In undertaking this program review, Family Safety Victoria invited structured and unstructured feedback from departmental contract managers across all years, FSV staff involved with the development and delivery of the program, and the sector grant recipients funded in 2023-24.

The review identified some clear successes and challenges with the delivery of the sector grants program. It identified aspects of the program that would be appropriate to continue forward, such as focusing on alignment and practice capability, however the need to use alternative mechanisms to do so, such as through separate functions to avoid issues related to role clarity and inequity of focus.

What is happening now?

Safe and Equal, No to Violence, and Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare will support three MARAM Practice Lead roles to 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?

For 2024-27, FSV has received funding through the National Partnership Agreement to deliver a MARAM enhancement component to the Serious Risk Perpetrator Pilot (Changing Ways). This is designed to support the effectiveness of the Changing Ways Program. The MARAM enhancement project will run over three years, 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.

A place-based implementation approach will be used, intended to drive organisational alignment to MARAM at the local level. This will leverage existing change management and MARAM alignment expertise held by the Principal Strategic Advisors (PSAs) and their Regional Integration Committees. In addition, MARAM Practice Lead roles are intended to drive internal practice changes across Changing Ways providers as well as 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?

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 per cent 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.

Whilst some of the survey results indicated good progress towards MARAM alignment and high attendance rates at training sessions, there is still room for improvement in organisational understanding of MARAM responsibilities. This year, only 57% of organisational leaders/executives said they had a **detailed** understanding of their responsibilities under MARAM- a 17% decrease from last year's survey results. This reflects the need to refocus attention on organisational leaders as critical enablers of their organisation's success in achieving legislative requirements and reform objectives.

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.

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

What is the five-year evidence review?

The MARAM Framework was established in the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic) in 2018. The Act requires five-yearly reviews of MARAM (Section 194) to ensure it reflects the current evidence and best practice. The review looks at:

- whether MARAM reflects best practice of family violence risk assessment and risk management
- what changes may be needed.

What has been achieved so far?

The first of these reviews is now complete.

The literature, practice, and design review, led by Allen & Clarke Consulting, examined the Framework and key supporting resources, including victim survivor-focused MARAM Practice Guides and tools published in 2019. It involved consideration of family violence research, best practice, evidence, and consultation with 225 participants from 81 organisations. This included victim survivor advocates, family violence practitioners, academics, specialist and universal services, and government bodies.

The review found that across all sectors, MARAM is considered a valuable resource. It supports a shared understanding of family violence, risk assessment and risk management practices.

The review made 17 recommendations relating to accessibility of the MARAM Practice Guides and assessment tools, improving approaches to risk assessment, and planning and enhancements to recognise experiences of family violence risk across all communities, including children and young people.

The MARAM 5-Year Evidence Review Final Report, Literature Review, and Summary Report are available at <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?

CWE are in the final stages of drafting the *Response Capability Framework*, with a final draft to be completed end of this year, with early 2025 release planned.

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 also 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 as an online platform for use across the service system. TRAM contains the adult and child victim survivor MARAM risk assessments and safety plans, Comprehensive Adult Using Family Violence assessment tool, Predominant Aggressor Identification tool, and in future it will host the remainder of the MARAM resources, currently in development. This platform is used across The Orange Door network and by several community agencies.

Family Safety Victoria 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?

The Predominant Aggressor Identification Tool was released to SHIP for use by Specialist Family Violence Services on 15 July 2024. The tool provides a structure to support the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor using information sharing, direct assessment, and structured analysis. If you have not received the updated user guidance for MARAM tools in SHIP, please contact tram@familysafety.vic.gov.au. Use of this tool in SHIP by Specialist Family Violence Services will allow FSV to collect and analyse de-identified data on misidentification trends and contribute to service improvements.

FSV are also scoping the addition of the Identification and Intermediate Adults Using Family Violence assessment tools into SHIP.

The TRAM platform recently underwent 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

MARAMIS week 2024: *Strengthening our family violence shared understanding and practice.*

This year, MARAMIS Week ran from **21-25 October** hosting a range of online seminars targeted to the broader Victorian family violence sector.

MARAMIS week is an annual event hosted by DFFH and aims to promote understanding of family violence and information sharing, alongside supporting professionals and organisations to align with and apply the framework.

The team would like to say an enormous thank you to everyone who was a part of this event. A special thanks goes out to our many presenters and the DFFH Communications team who helped to make this event happen. A special thanks also to the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence, the Hon. Vicki Ward MP, DFFH Secretary, Peta McCammon, and FSV Deputy Secretary, Melanie Heenan who all found time in their busy schedules to host MARAMIS week events.

Want more information? Visit the MARAMIS week page here: [MARAM and Information Sharing Week 2024 | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/maramis-week-2024)

MARAM makes it onto ABC Drive radio!!!

The incredible Anita Morris, DFFH's Statewide Family Violence Principal Practitioner represented DFFH in an interview on ABC's Drive radio program on October 31, 2024, as part of MARAMIS week. You can listen to Anita talk about MARAM and the Victorian government's response to Family Violence, here – Anita is introduced at 1:55:

<https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/melbourne-drive/drive/104521064>

MARAMIS week videos- release of event recordings

If you were unable to attend any of this year's MARAMIS week events, we are pleased to announce that the MARAMIS week 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 keeping 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 training packages.

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, including:

- 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 webpage here: [MARAM and Information Sharing Hub \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Women with Disabilities Victoria

Introductory Violence Prevention Training with Gender & Disability Experts by Experience Advocates

Women with Disabilities Victoria's Gender & Disability Experts by Experience Advocates (the Experts) are a group of women and non-binary people with diverse experiences of disability. We're excited to announce that 4 new Experts with broad knowledge and expertise have recently joined the team.

The Experts facilitate one-hour introductory training that covers aspects of gender equality, disability inclusion, and prevention of violence against women with disabilities. This recently refreshed offer is based on research, evidence and the lived experience of women with disabilities.

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

Fees: \$600

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

How to book:

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.

[Download flyer PDF](#)

[Download flyer Word](#)

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>