

FAMILY VIOLENCE FACTSHEET

What to do

Family violence, also called partner violence or domestic violence, is a criminal offence in all Australian states and territories. It is about coercion, power and control. Family Violence includes physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial and legal abuse. Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure. If you or someone you know experiences family violence, take action to be safe and seek support.

WHAT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Family violence is any behaviour that in any way controls or dominates a family member and causes them to feel fear for their own, or other family member's safety or well-being. Broad family, past relationships and 'family-like' relationships are included in the definition of Family Violence.

Examples

- Physical assaults or threatening injury to a person
- Physical harm or threats to harm property, people or an animal
- Constant put downs, ridicule, name calling, humiliation or insults
- Isolation or controlling contact with people (in person or otherwise)
- Refusing access to your money or appropriate allowance
- Not allowing you to practice religious or spiritual beliefs or practices
- Stalking (persistent unwanted contact, following, tracking or watching)
- Exploiting legal action to intimidate, exhaust, exploit or disempower
- Forced or unwanted sexual activity

Statistics (Australia)

1 in 3 women experience family violence

4% of men experience family violence

80% of perpetrators are male and 20% of victims are female

Family violence is increasing (rates almost doubled from 2010 – 2014)

Family violence disproportionately affects persons who are younger, persons who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and persons who have a disability

Deaths from family violence occur 1 in every 7-10 days

WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE FAMILY VIOLENCE

Take these steps only if you feel it is safe to do so.

Immediate assistance

If you or someone you know is unsafe or needs immediate assistance, for example if you are hurt or injured, call for help as soon as you can.

- On campus – Security 9919 6666 (24/7)
- Off campus – Police & Ambulance 000 (Triple Zero)

If you feel safe to do so, leave the abusive relationship or situation

Consider seeking crisis accommodation

Increase your personal safety

- Program emergency numbers in your phone
- Make a safety plan, including family and friends phone numbers, and safe locations you can go
- Use incognito browsing on your internet browser if you don't want your history to be viewed
- Keep cash and important documents hidden in a safe place if you need to access them quickly

Seek advice and support

- Speak to a trusted friend, family member or neighbour about the behaviour for support
- Ask trusted people not to convey your location to the person
- Report the behaviour to the University, e.g. Security, Student Matters or Safer Community, for advice and assistance including appropriate safety arrangements, referrals and special consideration
- Seek help from a professional support service
- Seek advice and assistance from a professional support services to provide information, advocacy and support
- Seek legal advice about your rights and options

Record and report the behaviour

- Keep and date a record of all incidents
- Keep and date any evidence of the behaviour, including emails and messages, photos, and medical records
- Report the behaviour to the Police to investigate
- If you receive a threat of physical harm or feel concerned for your immediate safety, report to the Police immediately
- Consider if applying for an intervention order is right for your situation; it forbids the person contacting or approaching you, but know the risks, it does not deter all perpetrators of family violence

SAFETY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Get help on campus

VUSafe (App)

All your safety and support services at VU in one app! Features: a silent alarm to Campus Security for immediate assistance, safety notifications, request first aid or a security escort, track the VU shuttle bus, start a virtual safe walk with a friend, report a tip to campus security, campus maps, emergency plans, as well as support services on and off campus. Download free for [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

www.vu.edu.au/safety-app

Security Services

Request a security escort, report a concern or incident, or seek emergency assistance on campus.

www.vu.edu.au/security

P: 9919 6666 (Emergency) or 9919 4999 (Enquiry)

Safer Community

Advice, assistance and referrals for students who experience or witness concerning behaviours on or off campus, including bullying, stalking, harassment, family violence, and sexual assault. Read our online resources, and report something concerning by phone, email or online.

www.vu.edu.au/safer-community

P: 9919 5707 E: Safer.Community@vu.edu.au

Student Advocacy

Confidential advice, support and representation to help you progress successfully during your course, for example discuss your progress, prepare for show cause hearings, attend misconduct hearings and advice on special consideration.

www.vu.edu.au/student-advocacy

P: 9919 5400 E: advocacy@vu.edu.au

Student Counselling

A free and confidential support service. You can speak to a counsellor about any concerns affecting your experience at VU or attend workshops to enhance study and personal skills, including time-management, and emotional intelligence.

www.vu.edu.au/counselling

P: 9919 5400

Student Matters

Manage the University complaint resolution process. Students can lodge a complaint in relation to the provision of University services or functions, behaviour of another student, or allegations of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

www.vu.edu.au/complaint-resolution

P: 9919 5007 E: Student.Matters@vu.edu.au

Welfare Services

Senior advisers provide free and confidential support and assistance to help you with a range of issues, including welfare, finance, and housing support. Our international student advisors are available to provide specialist advice for international students.

www.vu.edu.au/welfare

P: 9919 6100

Get help off campus

Police & Ambulance

National emergency response and reporting.

www.triplezero.gov.au

P: 000

Safe steps

24/7 family violence response and crisis support.

www.safesteps.org.au/

P: 1800 015 188

Daisy (App)

Connects women who have experienced family violence to specialist services.

Download free for [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

National Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Service

24/7 phone and online counselling service for victims of family violence.

www.1800respect.org.au

P: 1800 737 732

Men's Referral Service

Advice and support for men concerned about their anger or violence towards their family.

www.ntvmrs.org.au

P: 1300 766 491

Magistrates Court

Information about applying for a personal safety intervention order.

www.magistratescourt.vic.gov.au

References

www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/family-and-domestic-violence

www.1800respect.org.au