



COVID-19 Family and Domestic Violence Communique

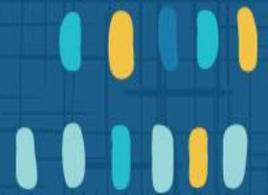
Summary update 7 May 2020

The current global health crisis and subsequent economic challenges are likely to impact on the severity and prevalence of family and domestic violence and the impact on children. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to see a rise in the number of incidents of family and domestic violence across Western Australia, with demand on support services anticipated to increase when movement restrictions are eased, and women can leave their homes to safely access services.

The Department of Communities (Communities) is working in partnership with the community FDV peaks and providers to develop targeted responses to the impact of COVID-19 on family and domestic violence. The Communique is a mechanism to update information on the actions of the Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce.

National Partnership Agreement on COVID-19 Domestic and Family Violence responses

- The signed Agreement enables the distribution of Commonwealth funding via states and territories towards priority supports agreed by the COAG Women's Safety Council.
- These supports will enable people to continue to access critical, specialist domestic, family and sexual violence support services to ensure the safety of women and their children in the context of increased risks resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic
- They will also assist the domestic, family and sexual violence sector to continue to deliver critical supports and services during the Coronavirus pandemic.
- The Commonwealth will initially provide around \$35 million to states and territories in 2019/2020. In May Western Australia will receive \$3.01 million, which will be allocated to support the following priorities:
 - **Accommodation brokerage funding:** provide access to emergency accommodation and wrap around support to ensure the safety of women and children.
 - **Child advocates:** supporting mothers and their children escaping family and domestic violence to sustain safe parenting and accommodation arrangements for victims and children in crisis



- **Safe at home:** assist women and children to remain safely in their homes after separation from the perpetrator.
- **Perpetrator case management:** case coordination and management to maintain visibility over high risk perpetrators during COVID-19 movement restrictions.

Further communication will shortly be provided to specialist family and domestic violence service providers with more information about this funding.

Awareness raising

- An ongoing family and domestic violence COVID-19 communication campaign (social media, website, community messaging) is reinforcing the message that violence is never ok and assuring community members that services remain open and help is available.

Other initiatives

- A central triage model is being trialled to assist the Kimberley family and domestic violence response team to address additional volume and complexity of reports in the context of COVID-19.
- Communities is working with corporate sector stakeholders to coordinate COVID-19 efforts to support the health and wellbeing of Western Australians.
- A data dashboard informed by multiple government data sources and identified service providers is under development. The dashboard will identify trends in demand for support services during the pandemic and support analysis over time.

Further information

To find out more about the how the Department of Communities and its partners are supporting women and children impacted by family and domestic violence during this pandemic please access the following:

- **Web:** <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19/family-and-domestic-violence-covid-19/>
- **Email:** COVID19FDVTaskforce@communities.wa.gov.au
- **Phone:** 08 6217 6888 or 1800 176 888 (country free call)
- **Translation / interpreting service:** 13 14 50
- **Speech and hearing assistance:** Voice Relay 1300 555 727
TTY 133 677
SMS relay 0423 677 767