



INTRODUCTION

The Department is committed to supporting employees experiencing family and domestic violence (FDV) by maintaining employment, providing additional leave, implementing workplace flexibilities to accommodate individual needs and ensuring employees are able to participate safely in their school or workplace.

These guidelines provide information on support available for employees experiencing FDV and how principals and line managers can assist employees in these circumstances. It applies to all Department employees, including casual employees.

The Department acknowledges that each FDV case has unique circumstances that may involve difficult and complex matters that can have significant impact on an individual's mental, emotional, physical, social and financial well-being.

Principals and line managers should facilitate access to support for affected employees within a compassionate, safe and confidential working environment, based on: provisions in the [Premier's Circular 2017/07 Family and domestic violence – paid leave and workforce support](#), August 2017; and the Public Sector Commission's [Safe Spaces](#) strategy.

WHAT IS FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

“Family and domestic violence is legally defined as violent, threatening or other behaviour by a person towards a family member that coerces or controls the family member or causes the family member to be fearful.

Family and domestic violence includes:

- *emotional and psychological abuse;*
- *physical and/or sexual assault;*
- *financial abuse; and*
- *other controlling behaviour.*

Family and domestic violence most commonly refers to violence and abuse against an intimate partner, but can also occur between siblings, from adolescents to parents, or from family carers to a relative.” [Safe Spaces](#).

The Department does not tolerate employees perpetrating family and domestic violence in or from their school or workplace. Such conduct may constitute a breach of discipline under the Department's [Staff Conduct and Discipline](#) policy. Some acts of FDV such as physical or sexual assault, making threats against a person's physical safety, stalking, damage or stealing of property and breaching restraining orders, may constitute a criminal offence and should be reported to the Police.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that principals and line managers provide a supportive, non-judgemental and confidential environment where employees feel comfortable disclosing FDV concerns and applying for FDV leave.

Principals and line managers should keep confidential any information disclosed by an employee experiencing FDV and manage the matter with sensitivity, including:

- sharing information within the school or workplace only on a need-to-know basis or where there are concerns for the safety of students and employees, with prior consent of the employee experiencing FDV; and
- recording FDV leave. Information and evidence for accessing FDV leave should only be retained by the employee and not kept on their personal file without their permission.

EMPLOYEES

Employees who are experiencing FDV and have concerns about their safety, health or welfare may:

- access counselling through the Department's [Employee Assistance Program](#). This independent service provides confidential counselling sessions (face-to-face, telephone or Skype) for staff, their partners and dependent children under 25 years of age. Six free sessions per year are available. [Employee Assistance Program brochure](#). External/community support services are also available for staff (See Appendix A);
- approach a senior member of staff with whom they feel comfortable to have a confidential conversation related to their concerns. This may be their principal, school executive team member or line manager;
- discuss flexible work arrangements with their principal or line manager to assist them to feel safe at work and in accordance with applicable Awards and Agreements, including filtering phone calls or emails or providing a quiet room for confidential conversations;
- apply for FDV leave through their principal or line manager, under the [Premier's Circular 2017/07 Family and domestic violence – paid leave and workforce support](#), August 2017. This includes an additional 10 days, non-cumulative paid leave per calendar year that can be taken as whole or part days and up to two days of unpaid FDV leave on each occasion when they exhaust their 10-day FDV leave entitlement. The FDV leave is applicable to all employees, including casuals;
- use other leave entitlements provided in their Award and/or Agreement, including personal/sick leave, annual leave, accrued long service leave, purchase leave and/or accrued time off in lieu of overtime, flexi leave or banked hours. Use of leave entitlements is subject to principal or line manager's approval and sufficient leave credits available. There is no need to exhaust other leave entitlements to access FDV leave;
- use FDV leave to attend special appointments or for other personal or family safety-related matters. Using FDV leave does not affect salary increment dates, personal leave entitlements, long service leave entitlements or annual leave entitlements. Examples include:
 - attending court dates or other legal proceedings
 - attending appointments for medical, legal, or counselling (or other therapy)
 - attending to financial matters
 - relocating
 - making safety arrangements

- other matters of a pressing nature that require immediate attention and may arise without notice; and
- be required to provide supporting evidence if FDV leave is accessed. Examples include: documents issued by the police, a court, legal service, health professional, counsellor or refuge service.

Where it is not reasonably practicable to provide documentation, a statutory declaration may be acceptable.

Documentation is to be retained by the employee only. The principal or line manager records that documentation has been sighted.

Leave may be granted without supporting evidence where the principal or line manager is satisfied as to the reason for leave.

PRINCIPALS AND LINE MANAGERS

Where an employee discloses they are experiencing FDV, the principal or line manager should compassionately and sensitively facilitate the employee's access to support options and consider safety of students and employees in the school or workplace.

Family and domestic violence can affect the wellbeing, productivity and performance of employees. Flexible work arrangements can often support employees continuing in their role. These may vary depending on their circumstances and specific needs.

Principals and line managers are responsible for:

- developing a risk management plan if an employee feels unsafe in the school or workplace or the safety of students and other employees may be at risk;
- facilitating practical help and support for an employee by informing them about counselling services, including the Department's [Employee Assistance Program](#) and support available from external agencies (See Appendix A);
- facilitating an employee's request for FDV leave by emailing Corporate Business Services Team Leaders Personnel and Payroll at ppteamleaders@education.wa.edu.au. This is an interim measure until a confidential functionality to process FDV leave is available in HRMIS;
- requesting supporting evidence from an employee to access FDV leave. Leave may be granted without supporting documentation where the principal or line manager is satisfied as to the reason for the leave. Documentation will not be kept on the employee's personnel file unless otherwise agreed. The principal or line manager records that any evidence produced was sighted;
- monitoring and managing leave related to FDV. Employees may have difficulty meeting usual notifications of absences due to their circumstances; however, notification should occur as soon as is practicable;
- reporting via the [Online Incident Notification System](#) (See *Keeping Our Workplace Safe*) where an incident adversely affects or has potential to adversely affect safety or school operations, and/or threatens the safety and wellbeing of staff and/or students. The Online Incident Notification System is used to report school incidents only;
- contacting the Director, Staff Recruitment and Employment Services to discuss circumstances where FDV may impact on an employee's ability to continue working at the school or worksite at the request of and in consultation with the employee. Instances will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis; and

- accessing the [Manager Assistance Program](#), if required. This is a telephone advisory service for managers dealing with difficult or complex staff issues. [Manager Assistance Program brochure](#)

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONTACT OFFICERS

The role of the FDV Contact Officer in the school or worksite operates within existing roles and responsibilities:

- Principals and line managers provide support to employees, including facilitating access to FDV leave and ensuring a safe work environment for staff.
- Occupational Safety and Health Consultants support and provide advice to principals and line managers on developing a risk management plan for employees to assist managing FDV matters in the school or worksite. OSHTeam@education.wa.edu.au.
- Equal Opportunity Contact Officers provide information on how to access FDV leave and internal and external support available. [EOCO contact list](#)
- Equity and Diversity team provides information on the Family and Domestic Violence Leave Guidelines. equity@education.wa.edu.au

Contacts

Manager, Labour Relations, Ph: 9264 492.

Manager, Workforce Policy, Ph: 9264 5081.

Manager, Payroll Operations, Sam Mastrolembo, Ph: 9264 8763.

Manager, Payroll Services, Kylie Cornford, Ph: 9264 8426

Director, Staff Recruitment and Employment Services, Ph: 9264 5213.

Principal Consultant, Occupational Safety and Health, Ph: 9264 8442.

Resources

- [Premier's Circular 2017/07](#) *Family and domestic violence – paid leave and workforce support*, August 2017.
- [Implementation Guidelines Premier's Circular 2017/07](#)
- [Safe Spaces Strategy A guide for public sector agencies and employees 2017](#) Public Sector Commission.
- [Keeping Our Workplace Safe](#): a resource for principals to help address incidents of workplace violence against staff.

APPENDIX A – EXTERNAL SUPPORT RESOURCES

A range of community support resources is available for individuals experiencing family and domestic violence and those supporting them.

POLICE

For emergencies, call the police on **000** if someone is in immediate danger.

To report an incident of family or domestic violence, call the police on **131 444** or **SMSAssist** can be accessed by dialling 0403 227 478. SMSAssist is a text messaging service to contact WA police for assistance and is designed for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Department of Communities, Child Protection and Family Support 24-hour helplines:

- Crisis Care Helpline: (08) 9223 1111 or free call 1800 199 008.
- Men’s Domestic Violence Helpline: (08) 9223 1199 or free call 1800 000 599.
- Women’s Domestic Violence Helpline (including referral to a women’s refuge): (08) 9223 1188 or free call 1800 007 339.

Department of Justice: Family Violence Service

This service provides information, advocacy and support.

Free call 1800 199 888 or contact a family violence service in the following locations:

- Armadale: (08) 9339 0722
- Fremantle: (08) 9431 0324
- Joondalup: (08) 9400 0707
- Midland: (08) 9250 0229
- Perth: (08) 9425 2459
- Rockingham: (08) 9592 4018.

Rural in Reach

This service supports the health and wellbeing of people in rural Western Australia, including free counselling and support by video conference or phone.

Free call 1800 998 399 or email ruralinreach@whfs.org.au

The Patricia Giles Centre

This service provides accommodation and counselling for women and children affected by domestic violence.

- Children’s Counselling: (08) 6444 7684
- Women’s Counselling: (08) 9300 1022
- Refuge: (08) 9300 0340

Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services WA

For assistance call (08) 9420 7264 or send an [online query](#).

Women’s Health and Family Services

Northbridge: (08) 6330 5400 or free call 1800 998 399 (outside Perth metro area)

Joondalup: (08) 9300 1566

Daisy App by Medibank Private

Daisy is free and connects women around Australia to services providing support for impacts of sexual assault and family and domestic violence.

[Google Play](#)

[App Store](#)

SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

[Department of Health](#): Sexual Assault Resource Centre
24 hour emergency line call (08) 6458 1828 or free call 1800 199 888.

HOUSING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

[Department of Communities, Child Protection and Family Support](#): Crisis

Accommodation and Homelessness Services

- Homelessness Advisory Service call 1800 065 892
- List of funded [homelessness services](#)

Safe at Home

This service provides support for women and children experiencing domestic violence to enable them to stay in their homes, when it is safe to do so.

- North West Metro: (08) 9206 1283
- North East Metro: (08) 9205 7387
- South West Metro: (08) 9527 3289
- South East Metro: (08) 9227 0348

[Department of Human Services](#): Family and Domestic Violence Support

This service provides information, resources and referrals to people affected by family and domestic violence.

[Zonta House Refuge Association](#) – 9364 8028

LEGAL SERVICES

[Women's Law Centre of WA](#)

The Women's Law Centre is a community legal centre funded to provide free legal services for women of Western Australia. To request information or to book an appointment, call (08) 9272 8800 or 1800 625 122.

[Legal Aid WA](#): Domestic Violence Legal Unit

The Legal Aid WA Domestic Violence Legal Unit assists women with family law issues such as parenting orders and restraining orders: 1300 650 579.

[Community Legal Centres](#)

A list of community legal centres that are members of the Community Legal Centres Association (WA). Call (08) 9221 9322.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SERVICES

[Yorgum Aboriginal Family Counselling](#) - (08) 9218 9477

Aboriginal Family Domestic Violence Hotline – 1800 019 123

[Marninwarntikura Family Violence Prevention Legal Unit](#) - (08) 9191 5284

[Aboriginal Legal Services of WA](#)

1800 019 900 (free call)

(08) 9265 6666

(08) 9265 6644 (after hours)

[Aboriginal Family Law Services](#)

This service provides legal and community education services for all Aboriginal people experiencing family and domestic violence or sexual assault: 1800 469 246.

DISABILITY SERVICES

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline – 1800 880 052

LESBIAN, GAY, TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX SERVICES

[Same sex domestic abuse group](#) - (08) 9251 5777