




# Family and Domestic Violence Sector Report

Support in the workplace



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## Family and Domestic Violence – Workplace Support

### Introduction

Family and domestic violence is a national emergency with reports of violence on the rise. Australian Statistics suggest that 1 in 4 women experience family and domestic violence, with a much higher rate affecting Aboriginal women and women living with disability.

It's estimated that between 50% to 70% of people experiencing family and domestic violence are in paid employment.

Family and domestic violence can affect an employee's attendance and performance. It may also mean colleagues might be the first to notice if someone is experiencing violence at home.

The workplace can play an important role in supporting those who experience family and domestic violence. It can be a place to escape to, a place to connect with others and receive support, as well as a source of income, which is vital for enabling options for those living with or attempting to leave violent situations.

### Background

Avivo is a community service organisation providing support to people with disabilities, people experiencing mental ill-health as well as older adults. We are an employer of over 1200 employees, the majority of whom are women, from a range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

In December 2022, one of our colleagues, Lynn Cannon was murdered by her ex-husband. The profound effects of Lynn's death resulted in us wanting to learn how to better support our colleagues experiencing family and domestic violence.

Many employees do not go to their employer for support due to fear, shame and barriers unintentionally created by how their employers operate. Avivo wants to be known as a safe, supportive, and responsive employer that all employees know they can trust and receive support from. We remember Lynn, and the many victims of violence, as we work to improve the way we stand with employees experiencing family and domestic violence.

**This ongoing work is dedicated to Lynn and her family.**

## Objective

The focus of our research was to consider our role as an employer and to seek out good practice and innovation. We aimed to make clear our commitment, increase our capability and improve the quality of our support and crisis response for employees.

## Research Method

A small working group undertook the research on behalf of a larger 'core' group of people from across Avivo. Research included:

- Review of the literature and online resources
- Interviews with other employers
- Conversations with family and domestic violence providers
- Conversations with our Avivo community.

Learnings from the research were shared with the core group and together a plan was developed.

## Key Findings

Key findings related to culture and processes are summarised in the table below by insight source.

## Key Findings

**Literature Review – research suggests that effective support from employers ensure:****Culture**

- Campaigns to support culture change and to promote a culture of safety and non-judgement.
- Partnership with specialist family and domestic violence organisations.

**Process**

- Confidentiality and privacy are paramount
- Flexible work arrangements, additional leave, and income
- Training in recognising signs, risk assessments and safety planning, and navigating disclosures.
- Clear leadership on family and domestic violence
- Formal policy communicated through easily accessible information, processes, and pathways.
- Continually monitor process effectiveness.

**Employer Interviews – patterns in the responses suggest:****Culture**

Organisations with accreditation had processes more deeply imbedded than those without.  
Visible commitment on website demonstrate to community and employees a supportive workplace.

**Process**

- No consistent approach among employers however the most common support response was to refer to EAP with extended support for individuals delivered on an ad hoc basis.
- Most respondents didn't consider doing anything more than the legal requirements.
- Formal partnerships and accreditation.
- Self-serve portal, unlimited leave, one off grants.
- Dedicated case managers that were for both employees and customers.

**Family and Domestic Violence Specialists suggest:****Process**

- Individualised support which is tailored to each individuals experience.
- The initial response at first disclosure is VITAL and must be handled with care.
- One disclosure is enough. Do not ask people to re-share their story.
- Don't overstep – support within the parameters of your role and seek support from an FDV provider.

## Avivo Community Insights

### Insights from Lynn's Team

- A clear and coordinated response to a critical incident, led by a trusted person, is required to support the team, and communicate with all the people impacted.
- Being supported by people who have a relationship with you is critical along with choice and control over who initially meets with you and when.
- The day-to-day work of the impacted Team needs to be considered
- Support to attend funerals, counselling, and coaching is very important.
- Longer term follow up and support including skills development is required for team members to support themselves and customers

### Feedback from other Avivo colleagues

- Confidentiality and processes that make it clear where you can go to get support and limit how many people need to know.
- The need for a supportive and safe workplace, good support relating to their employment along with ongoing support and follow up.

### Work Health and Safety insights

- Colleagues mostly self-report family and domestic violence to their Coordinator or Manager.
- WHS have supported colleagues by assisting them with Wellbeing Checks, Counselling and Bluetooth flic button linked to the [Yoursafe duress app](#) (see appendix one).
- WHS review whether they will be safe if working from home or with customers. This is a legal requirement once it is disclosed.
- On occasions, Support Workers express their concerns for customers and are reported to the relevant Team.

## The Avivo Approach – what we did

What	How	Who
<b>Governance and leadership</b>	Confirm a core group of colleagues to develop and implement the project plan made up of both community based and office based colleagues	Executive
<b>Confirm our Commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal Statement making commitment to support colleagues experiencing family and domestic violence</li> <li>• Communication of project plan, then formal statement</li> </ul>	Working group, Executive, Communications and Engagement
<b>Avivo Employee Offer</b>	Define and communicate our processes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A leave process that is timely and protects privacy and confidentiality</li> <li>• Advance pay options</li> <li>• Referrals for family and domestic violence specialist services</li> <li>• Counselling - EAP or refer to family and domestic violence expert partner</li> <li>• Follow-up support</li> </ul>	Human Resources, Work Health and Safety & Payroll
<b>Safety and security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, trial, and refine risk assessment process and tool (see appendix two)</li> <li>• Define security options available such as Yoursafe duress alarm and wellbeing checks.</li> </ul>	WHS
<b>Data collection and monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine a monitoring and data collection process that ensures confidentiality and privacy is protected.</li> </ul>	HR / WHS / Payroll
<b>Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Intranet page outlining Employee Offer and support options (see appendix three)</li> <li>• Schedule and participate in external Campaigns such as 16 Days in WA and Light a Candle Day in May (Annual)</li> <li>• Install Daisy App onto all Avivo phones (see appendix four)</li> <li>• Lifeguard moment</li> </ul>	C&E  Tech  WHS

<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weave stance and commitment into onboarding program.</li> <li>• Incorporate external training modules and resources into Avivo's training offer and share external training opportunities.</li> <li>• Develop a clear pathway for family and domestic violence training to key staff.</li> </ul>	Learning and Development
<b>Critical Incident Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current process based on Team reflections who have been affected by family and domestic violence</li> <li>• Determine and develop key people to lead critical situations.</li> </ul>	Exec
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish local partnerships with a family and domestic violence specialist, disability, CALD &amp; queer groups</li> <li>• Key relationships with CentreCare, Ovis, the Patricia Giles Centre for Non-Violence, Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation, Broken Crayons Still Colour Foundation</li> </ul>	Exec /C&E/ HR / WHS/ Mentors / Diversity and Inclusion
<b>First Nations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress developing relationships with specialist organisations.</li> </ul>	D&I
<b>Our Practice as a Service Provider</b>	<p>Undertake more research to learn more about supporting customers experiencing family and domestic violence.</p> <p>Understand how we can support our colleagues on the front-line supporting customers how may be experiencing violence</p>	Practice Support /Exec/Mentors/C&E
<b>External influence and sharing</b>	Develop a report for the sector to be shared.	C&E

## In closing

Reports of family and domestic violence are on the rise in our wider community and within Avivo. Given the size of our organisation, we know we work with colleagues and customers experiencing family and domestic violence including victims and survivors of violence, people who support them and those who witness the violence. We are also likely to work with people who are perpetrating violence.

Since commencing this project in early 2023 we have seen more employees being prepared to seek assistance from us as their employer when they are experiencing family and domestic violence. We are also seeing other colleagues having greater awareness of family and domestic violence and its impact.

This work is complex and multifaceted requiring a long-term commitment from organisations, government, and society as a whole.

Avivo is committed as a whole organisation to embedding the culture and processes that ensure our people can safely seek the help and support they need.

We will remain active in the family and domestic violence and disability spaces to ensure we continually improve as an employer, and as a service provider, to support those who are experiencing family and domestic violence.

We share this work with you. If you would like to know more about our work in this area, please email [hello@avivo.org.au](mailto:hello@avivo.org.au).

## Thank you.

We were supported by a range of organizations who generously shared their time, knowledge and strategies with us, which included - Water Corporation, Australian Red Cross – Lifeblood, Broken Crayons Still Colour Foundation, The Patricia Giles Centre for Non-Violence, Naala Djookan Healing Centre, Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation, RUAH, Rise, Centre of Women's Safety and Wellbeing, Kwobap Consultancy, Max Solutions, Sentient, Deloitte, Lavan Legal, Medibank Private Health, Ovis, CentreCare and Aboriginal Health Council of WA. Thank you.



## Appendix One – YourSafe Flic Button and App

### HOW TO SET UP Flic2 DUESS BUTTON FOR YOURSAFE ANDROID APP

**OVERVIEW**

1. Turn "Location Permission" to "Allow All the Time" in Settings
2. Open Flic and create an account
3. Add the Flic to the Phone
4. Configure yoursafe for automatic SOS on opening

**1** Turn "Location Permission" for yoursafe App to "Allow All the Time" in settings

**2** Open Flic app and create an account. Open the app agree to terms and create an account\*

\*Use the one account for your organisation

**3a** Add Flic to Phone. Select **PHONE** at the top of the screen.

Next select - **Add flic to phone.**

**3b** Press and hold the Flic button to start the pairing, the app will indicate connection.

For yoursafe Support contact:  
Email: [whs@avivo.org.au](mailto:whs@avivo.org.au)

**3c** You can now name the Flic2 Button

**3d** Pairing is completed. This is a once off for the connection of a button.

**4** Configure yoursafe for automatic SOS on opening. Select and press the connected flic button

**5a** This screen will appear, press the **Hold** function. This button means press and hold then release to start the action.

**5b** In the actions list choose **Advanced**

**5c** From the Advanced list choose **Send Intent**

For yoursafe Support contact:  
Email: [whs@avivo.org.au](mailto:whs@avivo.org.au)

**5d** In the Send Intent screen, in the **Action (Optional)** box enter **yoursafe.sos** (in lower case letters)

**5e** Scroll down to the **Target** and select on the **Activity** option and **SAVE ACTION**

**6** This screen will appear, flic button is successfully connected with yoursafe app now.

**IMPORTANT NOTES**

Bluetooth needs to be turned on to connect the Flic 2 button. Please enable Bluetooth settings on the phone.

Please ensure that Location Permission is set to "Allow All the Time" on your phone setting, the Flic and yoursafe Apps are running in the background at all times as this is required to trigger the SOS activation.

**The Flic & yoursafe Apps must both be running in the background at all times.**

<https://yoursafe.app/how-it-works/>

**How Does Our Professionally 24/7 Monitored App Work?**

- Step 1**  
Yoursafe SOS alert activated
- Step 2**  
Platform receives alert and location is reported via 4G network
- Step 3**  
Operator contacts user to determine what assistance is required
- Step 4**  
Action is taken based on the users pre-determined emergency
- Step 5**  
Assistance is sent and contacts notified if required

## Appendix Two – Risk Assessment Tool

[Click here to access link](#)



### Family and Domestic Violence Individual Safety Plan

This safety planning tool is to record discussions about risks for a worker experiencing domestic and family violence and to identify strategies, actions and support to contribute to a worker's safety and wellbeing at work.

Work in this safety plan refers to all workplaces, including those related to flexible and blended work arrangements such as working from home, remote or isolated work situations and supports.

Safety is an important aspect of wellbeing in the workplace. Planning to support a worker's domestic and family violence safety should consider intersectionality and its impact on risk and safety.

Intersectionality identifies an individual's relevant characteristics and group memberships. For example, women, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, LGBTIQ+ community, young people, older people, and rural and remote communities.

Intersectionality shows that workers have their own unique experiences, which can impact on their domestic and family violence risk and their opportunities to take action and access support. It is critical to understand and work with a worker to help address their individual needs when providing support.

Work agreements to support a worker experiencing domestic and family violence also need to consider an individual's rights (including human rights), responsibilities, dignity and choices. An individual has a better understanding of their unique risk than anyone else. The attitudes and actions taken by a support person plays an important role in contributing to a worker's risk and safety.

This tool must be kept as a confidential record according to Avivo's policy and procedures.

If someone is in imminent danger call **000**.

#### Privacy statement

The information you have provided us about your domestic circumstances will be used for ensuring your safety and the safety of your colleagues in the workplace. We will only use your information or provide it to third parties for these purposes. Your personal information will be handled in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

#### Guidance

##### Safety

The safety of a worker experiencing domestic and family violence is important but needs to be balanced with Avivo's duty of care to maintain a safe workplace for all. If there is a risk of violence which may affect other workers at work, steps need to be taken to ensure the safety of all workers.

#### Completing the form:

- This plan should be completed when the worker experiencing domestic and family violence is ready to discuss a plan. It may take time and several sensitive conversations before a worker is ready.
- Have conversations somewhere private, quiet and comfortable, and at a good time for the worker. Please ensure enough time is taken to talk properly.
- Please do not provide advice, rather provide details about support options available. For example, work adjustments, leave and the Employee Assistance Program.
- Ask questions relating to the impact of the violence in the workplace such as safety, travelling to and from work, and what specifically can be done to help, including when working alone.

## Appendix Three - Intranet page

[Click here to access link](#)

[I want to...](#)
[How We Work](#)
[Our Teams](#)
[Our Org](#)
[Employee Centre](#)

### Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) Support

Avivo is committed to standing by our colleagues and supporting them to keep safe.

#### How we can help

**Alternative pay methods**  
Out of cycle pay advances and banking into different accounts

**Workplace security**  
Change hours, location, and phone number. Escorting leaving and bar being checks

**Support**  
Free Counselling, EAP and crisis counselling service

**Paid leave**

**Legal referrals**  
Linking to legal advice with requesting orders & court appearances

**Technology**  
Access to a Daisy App (link phone numbers on work phones)

**Information and referrals**  
Specialist crisis accommodation services

**Resources**  
Referrals and support as needed

**Avivo can support with:**

#### Our acknowledgement

Avivo acknowledges the significant impact family, domestic and sexual violence has on the safety and wellbeing of adults, children and young people.

We recognise their courage, hope and determination to live fulfilling lives free from violence.

**In an emergency please call 000.**

#### Useful numbers

**1800RESPECT** 1800 737 732  
**Lifeline** 13 11 14  
**Crisis Care** 1800 199 008  
**Rural Link** 1800 552 002  
**Women's Domestic Violence Helpline** 1800 007 339  
**Mensline Aust** 1300 789 979  
**Men's Domestic Violence Helpline** 1800 000 599  
**1300VARN** 13 52 76 - Support run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

#### Our support

We support our colleagues experiencing Family and Domestic Violence in ways that help them keep themselves safe. We are non-judgemental and confidential, and we respect people's individual circumstances and needs. If you need support, please speak to anyone you feel safe to talk to and together we will work out how Avivo can best help you. We will make sure your employment will not be impacted by seeking help.

A conversation can change a life. How we listen and respond to someone who discloses their experience of violence is critical to their wellbeing.

**Here are some tips from the teams at BUDG and 1800RESPECT.**

#### Campaigns we support

**May:** Domestic Violence Prevention Month - light a candle sign

**November / December:** 16 Days in WA - The annual 16 Days in WA Stop Violence Against Women campaign takes place from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day.

#### External links

A list of specialist FDV organisations across Western Australia.

**CORAL COAST:** Desert Blue Connect  
**WHEATELL:** Share and Care  
**PIRL:** Ona Community Services  
**METRO:** Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing  
**METRO:** CentreCare  
**METRO:** Hot Girls Centre (for people with disability)  
**METRO:** Inkar Multicultural Women's Health Services  
**METRO:** Say It Outloud LGBTQ+  
**Employee Assistance Program:** Access Wellbeing

#### Daisy app

The Daisy App is available on all Avivo phones.

Daisy is an app developed by 1800RESPECT to connect people experiencing violence or abuse to services in their local area. Daisy can be downloaded for free from iTunes or Google Play. Once the app is on your phone, you can use it to search for support services in your local area.

Choose the type of service you would like (for example: Legal services or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services) and select your state or territory to find services near you.

#### Working Group

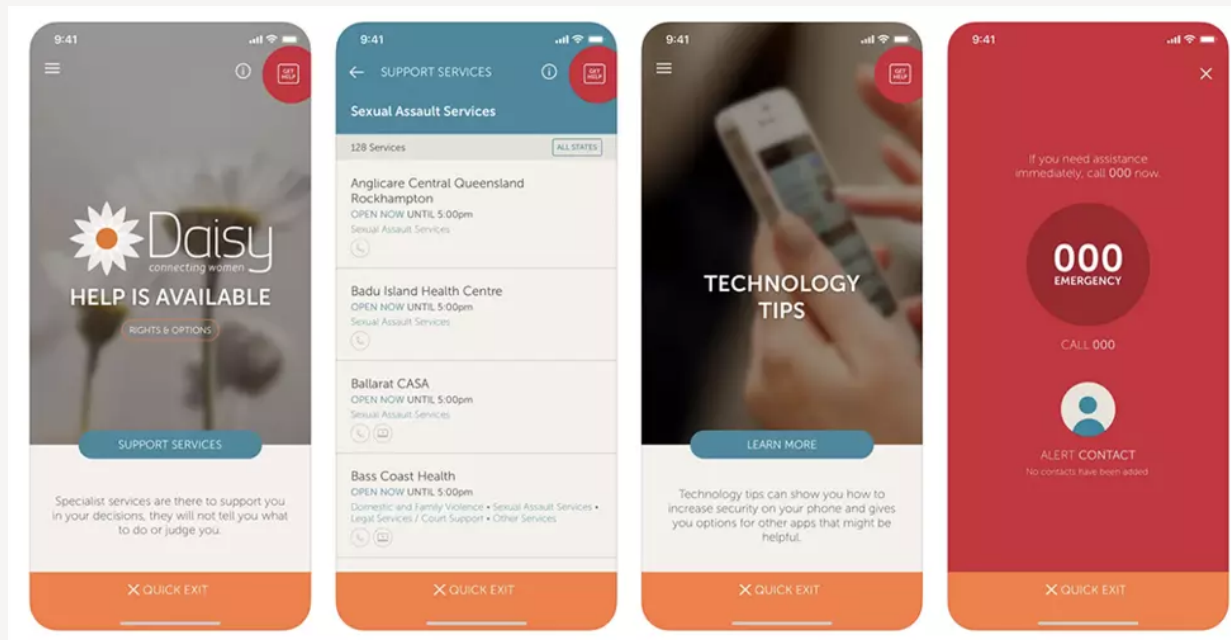
We are continually learning how best to support our colleagues.

We have a working group focused on strengthening Avivo's ability to support colleagues and develop a culture where people within Avivo feel safe to speak up. If you need support for yourself or a colleague, you can call on any of the people below for a strictly confidential conversation.

**EXEC:** Kate Fulton  
**EXEC/HR:** Ricky  
**EXEC:** Collette Wynn  
**HR:** Leonie Murray  
**HR:** Rachael Hartman  
**WHS:** Farrah Oswald-Smith

## Appendix 4 – Daisy App

- Daisy is an app that provides information about support services in your local area.
- Daisy was developed by 1800RESPECT and is free to use and download.
- Daisy includes safety features to help protect the privacy of people using it.
- More information can be found on the [1800RESPECT website](https://www.1800respect.org.au/).



### Avivo Application Assessment:

Before an app is approved an Application Assessment is undertaken where the app is assessed against different criteria. Once the assessment is done and approved the app is published. Overall risk assessment for the Daisy app was determined as medium assessed against technical alignment, application security, vendor and app trustworthiness and whether the app is supportable. Overall risk assessment determined as medium because there is always some risk associated with security and data sharing.