

H06 Family Violence

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support YWCA Housing and YWCA National Housing (YWCA) residents, tenants, renters and employees identify family violence and to support those experiencing or at-risk of family violence to manage their housing situation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors and volunteers of YWCA (Employees) and all residents, tenants and renters of YWCA (tenants)

3. Policy Aim

YWCA acknowledges the right of people to live in safety and free from violence and is committed to supporting those impacted by family violence.

YWCA understands the importance of an integrated and intersectional response, ensuring respectful and appropriate assistance that caters to the needs and diverse experiences and identities of those accessing YWCA services, and to improve service delivery and policy to those impacted by family violence.

This policy aims to support YWCA tenants who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing family violence to manage their housing and support situation and/or find appropriate housing solutions.

4. Policy Statement

YWCA has a zero-tolerance approach to family violence. YWCA will work with residents, renters and/or tenants, in a safe and confidential manner, who are experiencing family violence, or whose relationships have broken down, to manage their housing situation and access support, and/or find appropriate housing solutions. This may be through referral to other agencies, an inter-organisational transfer or approving an early exit to a tenancy if appropriate. Family violence can be a valid reason for cessation of service provision by YWCA to perpetrators.

YWCA acknowledges that family violence can happen to anyone, regardless of social background, disability, age, gender, religion, sexuality, or ethnicity. We also recognise that family violence affects people of all genders, including gender diverse, transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people, as well as all relationship types, including those in lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer relationships. We are committed to supporting any YWCA tenant impacted by family violence regardless of gender or sexuality.

5. Definitions

Family relationship	includes people who are related to one another through blood, marriage or de facto partnerships, adoption and fostering relationships, sibling and extended family relationships. It includes the full range of kinship ties in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, extended family relationships, and constructs of family within lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer (LGBTIQ+) communities. People living in the same house, people living in the same residential care facility and people reliant on care may also be considered to be in a domestic relationship.
Family violence	includes any behaviour, in an intimate or family relationship, which is violent, threatening, coercive or controlling, causing a person to live in fear. This includes patterns of controlling or coercive behaviours and can include things such as economic abuse, stalking, damage to property, physical and/or sexual violence, emotional and/or psychological abuse and any behaviour that causes a child to hear, see or otherwise be exposed to the effects of any of these types of behaviours.
Integrated response	means using a multi-agency approach to working whereby many agencies/services may work together to provide the best outcomes for a client
Intersectionality	is a term used to describe an approach where the various identities held by an individual intersect, rather than just looking at one part of their identity. This may include considering things like a person's gender, sexuality, ethnicity and/or cultural background, religion, linguistics and/or ability, all together rather than separately.
Intimate relationship	refers to people who are (or have been) in an intimate partnership whether or not the relationship involves or has involved a sexual relationship, i.e. married or engaged to be married, separated, divorced, de facto partners (whether of the same or different sex), couples promised to each other under cultural or religious tradition, or who are dating.
Perpetrator	means a person who is exhibiting behaviours which are violent, threatening, coercive or controlling, causing another person to live in fear. This includes patterns of controlling or coercive behaviours.

6. Policy Implementation

YWCA will prioritise and assess the changing needs of a resident/renter/tenant experiencing or at-risk of family violence. YWCA employs various frameworks and resources from across its operating jurisdictions regarding family violence. These are used in the development of our working practice and identification protocols to provide safety and access to appropriate supports for our residents/renters/tenants.

YWCA will prioritise the rehousing of clients experiencing family violence according to need and the availability of homes as required. If a client of YWCA is experiencing family violence, YWCA will support the clients to engage with appropriate supports and make referrals as necessary.

Information will be shared only as necessary, with consent or as required by law and/or upholding prescribed requirements under State Government Frameworks, such as the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework and the Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes (FVISS and CISS) in Victoria. This includes information relating to perpetrators of family violence.

7. Complaints, Feedback and Appeal of decisions

YWCA has an effective and appropriate response in place to deal with complaints and ensures that accurate information and records of investigations are maintained. YWCA will ensure that privacy principles are followed at all times and tenant confidentiality is maintained throughout the incident management process.

YWCA welcomes anyone to query any decisions we make and/or ask questions about our work practices. If a customer wishes to provide feedback to YWCA and/or believes a decision made by us is incorrect, they can register their feedback and/or lodge an appeal using the YWCA Feedback and Appeals Policy.

Document Control Data	
Policy Framework	
Responsible Body	Chief Executive Officer
Accountable Officer	General Manager, Community Housing
Application	YWCA Employees involved in tenancy management
Supersedes	All previous documentation
Associated documents	YWCA Housing Policies and Procedures YWCA Feedback and Appeals Policy and Procedures YWCA Privacy Policies and Procedures YWCA Customer Service Charter
Legislation	Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (VIC) Family Violence Protection Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2017 (VIC) Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework, 2018 (VIC) Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework, Family Safety Victoria, 2017 (VIC) Dhelk Dja Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families, 2018 (VIC) Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement, 2018 (VIC) MARAM Practice Guides July 2019 (VIC) Child information sharing scheme guidelines (VIC) Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 (QLD) Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028 (NT) Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007 (NT) Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (VIC)

	Residential tenancies & Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (QLD) Residential Tenancies Act 1999 (NT) Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 National Community Housing Regulatory Code Victorian Community Housing Regulatory Code State based agreements between YWCA and statutory bodies
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Approval and Amendment History			
Review period – 2 years			
Approval Date	Version	Amendments	Next Review
May 2022	1.0	Superseded Family Violence Policy	May 2024