



Good practice for industry family violence guidelines – Referral Options

From time to time, the Economic Abuse Reference Group will develop guidance on an aspect of good practice. These should be read alongside our “Good Practice Guideline” and can be found [here](#).

Industry and government family violence policies should include options for referring (customers or staff) to appropriate family violence services.

There are many lists of family violence services and resources available. These may be appropriate for community agencies with specialist workers, but may not suit businesses or government departments where family violence isn't a key focus of their work.

The principle behind our recommendation is that it should be easy for those making referrals to determine where to refer. If staff are presented with too many referral options, it can be confusing and staff may make inappropriate referrals - or no referral at all.

This guide doesn't cover good practice in making referrals – just the referral options available to staff. However, staff should ascertain what support the person is already receiving before referring them elsewhere.

Good Practice

When providing a list of referral options for your staff, consider the level of training staff have received and their ability to choose between services.

It should be relatively easy for your staff to determine the appropriate service/s to refer to. Provide staff with a minimum range of referral options, with additional referral options only if staff can differentiate between the services based on the customer's circumstances.

A business or agency might choose to add other referral options depending on:

- The nature of your business (for example an insurance company may wish to include a specialist insurance legal service);
- Relationships your business/department has developed with particular services; or
- Higher level training of staff (or a group of staff) which would enable them to distinguish between a variety of services.

Referral Options

Unless there are reasons for providing additional options, we recommend that one referral option (possibly with a 'back-up' in case of lack of availability) is provided under each of the five categories:

1. Emergency;
2. Family violence counselling information and referral,
3. Financial/debt issues;
4. Housing; and
5. Assistance for men (whether the man is a victim or perpetrator).

1. Emergency

If a person is in immediate danger dial 000

2. Family violence support, information and referral

We recommend that customers who require this assistance are provided with the number of their state-based service (if available) and the national "RESPECT" number in case they have problems making contact. A state-based service is likely to have closer contacts with local services. The state/territory based services we have listed are also the contact point for referral for emergency accommodation.

3. Financial/debt issues

People can speak to a free, independent and confidential financial counsellor (either on the phone or face-to-face) by calling the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007 from anywhere in Australia.

The website www.ndh.org.au has a range of step-by-step and self-help guides.

4. Housing (state-based services)

The state-based support services listed below provide referral to emergency accommodation. Provide details for 1800 RESPECT as a second option (or primary option for Northern Territory residents).

5. Support for men (victims or perpetrators)

Provide the number for the state-based services for Victoria, Tasmania or New South Wales. For other states & territories, provide the national number for No to Violence Men's Referral Service.

Key referral agency details

Need	Coverage	Agency	Hours	Contact
Immediate danger	National	Police, Fire or Ambulance.	24/7	000
Counselling, support and emergency accommodation	Provide details for state/territory service and the national service in case that service isn't available.			

	NSW	Domestic Violence Line	24/7	1800 656 463 http://dvnsw.org.au/html/contact.htm
	Victoria	Safe Steps	24/7	1800 015 188 www.safesteps.org.au
	Queensland	DV Connect Womensline	24/7	1800 811 811 http://www.dvconnect.org
	South Australia	Domestic Violence & Aboriginal FV Gateway	24/7	1800 800 098
	Western Australia	Women's Domestic Violence Helpline	24/7	1800 007 339
	Tasmania	Family Violence Counselling & Support	Weekdays 9am-m/night Weekends / Public hold 4pm-m/night	1800 608 122 http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information/children_and_families/family_violence_counselling_and_support_service
	ACT	Domestic Violence Crisis Service	24/7	(02) 6280 0900 https://dvcs.org.au
	National	1800 RESPECT	24/7	1800 737 732 www.1800respect.org.au
Counselling & referral for men (perpetrators or victims)	Victoria, NSW & Tasmania	No to Violence – Men's Referral Line	NSW & Tasmania 24/7 Victoria Mon-Fri 8am-9pm Weekends 10am-6pm	1300 766 491 http://www.ntvmrs.org.au (online chat)
	National	Mensline	24/7	1300 789 978 https://mensline.org.au (online chat)
Financial/debt issues	National	National Debt Helpline (financial counselling)	Generally 9-5 local time in each state	www.ndh.org.au 1800 007 007

If your staff are likely to identify a need for a specialist service, consider adding some of these services to your list. Otherwise, limit options to the referrals above. The following

services are available in Victoria for particular groups. You would need to investigate what services are available in other states for these groups.

Specialist services	Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander	Victoria	Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention & Legal Service Vic	Business hours	1800 105 303 www.fvpls.org.au
	Migrant & refugee communities	Victoria	Intouch	10am-4pm	1800 755 988 www.intouch.asn.au
	LGBTIQ	National	QLife	3pm-midnight 7 days	1800184527 https://qlife.org.au

If you are Victoria-based and want to know more about family violence and what family violence services are available in your local area see www.thelookout.org.au. However, there are a number of referral options provided for each region and we don't suggest that you offer your staff all those options.

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