

# ENOUGH

## FAMILY VIOLENCE. VICTORIA HAS HAD ENOUGH

The Victorian Government has introduced new laws to better protect the community from family violence and make those responsible more accountable for their actions.

The new laws cover all types of family violence and a wide range of family and family-like relationships.

If you, or someone you know, are experiencing family violence in any form, it's now easier to say 'enough'.

### What is family violence?

Family violence is harmful behaviour that occurs when someone threatens or controls a family member through fear. It can include physical harm, sexual assault, emotional and economic abuse and may involve:

- Unreasonably controlling a person by withholding money for reasonable living expenses where a person is dependent on them for financial support.
- Threatening to harm another family member or pet in order to intimidate.
- Racist taunts that inflict emotional harm.
- Preventing contact with other family members or friends in order to torment the person.

### What types of relationships do the new laws cover?

Under the new laws, the definition of family violence covers a range of family and family-like relationships, including:

- married couples
- couples in civil unions
- de facto couples
- gay and lesbian relationships
- parents and children
- relatives
- persons with a disability who are in a family-like relationship with their carer.

## ONE IN FIVE WOMEN ARE AFFECTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE.

### What is the Family Violence Protection Act 2008?

The Family Violence Protection Act 2008 introduces new laws that come into effect in December 2008. The new laws aim to:

- Make Victorians safer from family violence
- Hold those responsible for family violence more accountable for their behaviour
- Reduce the incidence of family violence in our community.

### What will the new laws mean for Victorians?

The Family Violence Protection Act 2008 will:

- Broaden the definition of family violence so that it includes economic and emotional abuse, as well as other types of threatening and controlling behaviour.
- Give police more powers so that they can respond more quickly and effectively to family violence.
- Make it easier for victims of family violence to adjust tenancy arrangements to enable them to remain in their homes if they wish.
- Improve the court system to encourage greater reporting by victims, including restricting perpetrators from cross-examining their victims.
- Better protect vulnerable Victorians.

# ENOUGH

## FAMILY VIOLENCE IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE.

### How does family violence affect Victorians?

Family violence has a devastating impact on its victims and the broader community. While anyone can be a victim or perpetrator of family violence, most family violence is committed by men against women, children and other vulnerable people. Family violence:

- Is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15 to 44, with one in five women affected by family violence.
- Is a factor in 52% of substantiated child protection cases. Children who witness family violence can become nervous and withdrawn, perform poorly at school, have difficulty socialising and experience a range of other developmental impacts.
- Costs the Victorian economy an estimated \$2 billion a year.

### What else is the Victorian Government doing to address family violence?

The Victorian government has committed over \$75 million since 2005 to address family violence, including:

- Funding for men's behaviour-change programs.
- More resources and special training for police to better respond to family violence situations.
- Dedicated family violence specialists in the Magistrates' Court to provide more support to victims.
- Increased support for Indigenous family violence prevention programs.

## HELP IS AVAILABLE

### Where can I go for help or more information?

If you, or someone you know, are experiencing family violence, there are a range of free services and support available to assist you.

**Women and children experiencing family violence:**

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service on 1800 015 188.

**Men wanting to end their violence and abuse against family members:**

Men's Referral Service on 1800 065 973.

**The Victims of Crime Helpline:**

Provides information, advice and referrals to all victims of family violence.  
1800 819 817 (Mondays to Fridays 8am to 11pm)

**Immigrant women who are victims of family violence:**

Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service on 1800 755 988.

**Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people:**

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria on 1800 105 303 OR  
Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service on 9419 3888.

**In an emergency, always call 000 for help.**

## EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE IN THEIR HOME.