



# Domestic & Family Violence Policy

Call 000 if you are in danger or if you're not feeling safe

## What is Domestic and Family Violence

In Australian Law, "family violence" is defined as "violent, threatening or other behaviour by a person that coerces or controls a member of the person's family... or causes the family member to be fearful."

Domestic or family violence is a crime and can affect anyone. It occurs when someone with a close or personal relationship with you makes you feel powerless, afraid or unsafe. This violence can be physical, emotional or psychological.

If you are facing abuse or violence it is not your fault. It is the abuser who is breaking the law and is responsible for the crime.

Forms of domestic and family violence include, but are not limited to are:

- Verbal abuse
- Physical harm
- Threats
- Social abuse
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Stalking or harassment
- Emotional and psychological abuse
- Spiritual or cultural abuse
- Financial abuse
- Controlling behaviour
- Abuse of older Australians
- Abuse or harm to pets

## Our promise to you

Your safety is paramount to us, if family violence is recognised or suspected we are here to help, your safety and the protection of your family's safety is our main concern.

MHIA is committed to providing support to our customers suffering from family violence. In order to deliver on this commitment MHIA will ensure all our employees and distributors have the required training around our "family violence procedures" this will help:

- Early recognition of domestic or family violence
- Minimise the number of times that you need to disclose information to us about your situation
- Ensure your claims handling process is conducted with the utmost care
- We will protect private and confidential information of customers affected by family violence
- Ensure all employees engage with sensitivity, dignity, respect and compassion
- Offer access to Financial Hardship help

- We will supply our employees and distributors with information and support processes available to assist customers experiencing family violence.
- We will refer our customers to specialist support services and counselling available.

## Specialist services available for domestic & family violence

Service Name	Phone Number	Website
Lifeline	13 11 14	<a href="http://lifeline.org.au">lifeline.org.au</a>
1800 RESPECT	1800 737 732	<a href="http://1800respect.org.au">1800respect.org.au</a>
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636	<a href="http://beyondblue.org.au">beyondblue.org.au</a>
Relationships Australia	1300 364 277	<a href="http://relationships.org.au">relationships.org.au</a>
Men's Line Australia	1300 789 978	<a href="http://mensline.org.au">mensline.org.au</a>

## What are your rights

- You can apply for a protection order (AVO) through a solicitor or the police
- Free counselling is available (as listed above)
- Free legal services are available through Community Legal Centres
- Centrelink crisis payments can help with immediate financial concerns

