

CLIENT DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE POLICY

Purpose

BRIC recognises that family violence is a serious and prevalent occurrence in Australian society. We aim to provide clients affected with entitlements to safe, supportive and flexible assistance.

We are committed to managing clients who are experiencing family violence with empathy, sensitivity and with the utmost consideration to clients account security and individual financial circumstances.

Scope

This policy applies to all BRIC clients who may be experiencing family violence, regardless of their current financial capacity, and who require assistance.

It also sets out the process for employees to understand family or domestic violence and our commitment for upholding the rights of customers to privacy and support.

Glossary

For the purpose of this policy:

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Refers to a pattern of coercive tactics perpetrated by one person in order to establish and maintain power and control over another person in a close relationship, or family or domestic situation.

Domestic violence may include, but is not limited to:

- a) physical
- b) sexual
- c) emotional or psychological
- d) verbal
- e) spiritual or cultural
- f) economic or financial

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family Violence or the term Aboriginal Family Violence is accepted amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a more appropriate term to describe violence perpetrated against Aboriginal people, families and communities. The term Aboriginal Family Violence includes violence perpetrated within intimate partner relationships; however, it also encompasses other forms of violence perpetrated against individuals, families, and communities.

Policy

CLIENT RIGHTS

A client experiencing domestic or family violence has the right to:

- expect us to engage with you with sensitivity, dignity, respect and compassion;
- be assured that all personal information will be kept confidential in line with Honan's policies and relevant legislation;
- tell their story one time only;
- feel safe, have time to consider their options and have their privacy protected;
- request your insurance claims is fast tracked if you are experiencing financial hardship;
- receive information about financial support and assistance available and be provided with links to specialised support networks;
- engage a support person to represent you;
- access to a free interpreter service (telephone 131 450), if required; and
- expect us to take reasonable steps to support you in meeting any identification requirements.

TRAINING

We provide appropriate training to all our staff who:

- a) engage with clients
- b) are managers of staff who engage with clients, and who are responsible for how this engagement occurs
- c) are responsible for the development of products, processes and systems

Our training considers the nature of consequences of family violence, how to identify the signs of family violence, how to engage effectively and appropriately with affected clients and how to apply this policy.

We review and update our training regularly and as required.

External Support Services and 24 Hour-Helplines

There are many agencies and support services that can also assist if you are experiencing family violence. Below is a list of important contacts:

Support Services	Contact Number and Information
Emergency	000
1800RESPECT The National Sexual Assault & Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service Safe Steps	1800 737 732 A telephone helpline, information and support service - 24/7. Also, a free advice and counselling line for professionals responding to domestic violence.
Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women Family Violence Services	1800 015 188 A family violence response service for women and children. Provide information on specific family violence support services, legal rights and accommodation options – 24/7.
The Lookout	03 9482 5744 Crisis accommodation and supports for Aboriginal women and spouses of Aboriginal men.
WIRE – Women’s Information & Referral Exchange	www.thelookout.org.au/sector-info/service-directory An online regional service directory and resources aimed at preventing and responding to family violence.
Lifeline	1300 134 130 Provide free and confidential support, information and referrals on any issues, for Victorian women.
Suicide Call Back Service	13 11 14 Lifeline is a national charity providing crisis support and suicide prevention services - 24/7.
Men’s Line Australia	1300 659 467 Provides professional counselling for people feeling suicidal or people worried about someone else at risk of suicide – 24/7.
Kids Help Line	1300 78 99 78 MensLine Australia is a professional telephone and online support and information service for Australian men – 24/7.
InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence	1800 551 800 Support and information for children up to age 25 – 24/7.
Beyond Blue	1800 755 988 Statewide provision of services, programs and responses to family violence in CALD communities.
National Disability Abuse & Neglect Hotline	1300 224 636 Raising awareness and working towards reducing the impact of anxiety, depression and suicide. Empowering people to seek supporting.
National Financial Counselling Service	1800 880 052 An Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability – 24/7.
	1800 007 007 Offer free information and advocate for extreme financial circumstances – 24/7.