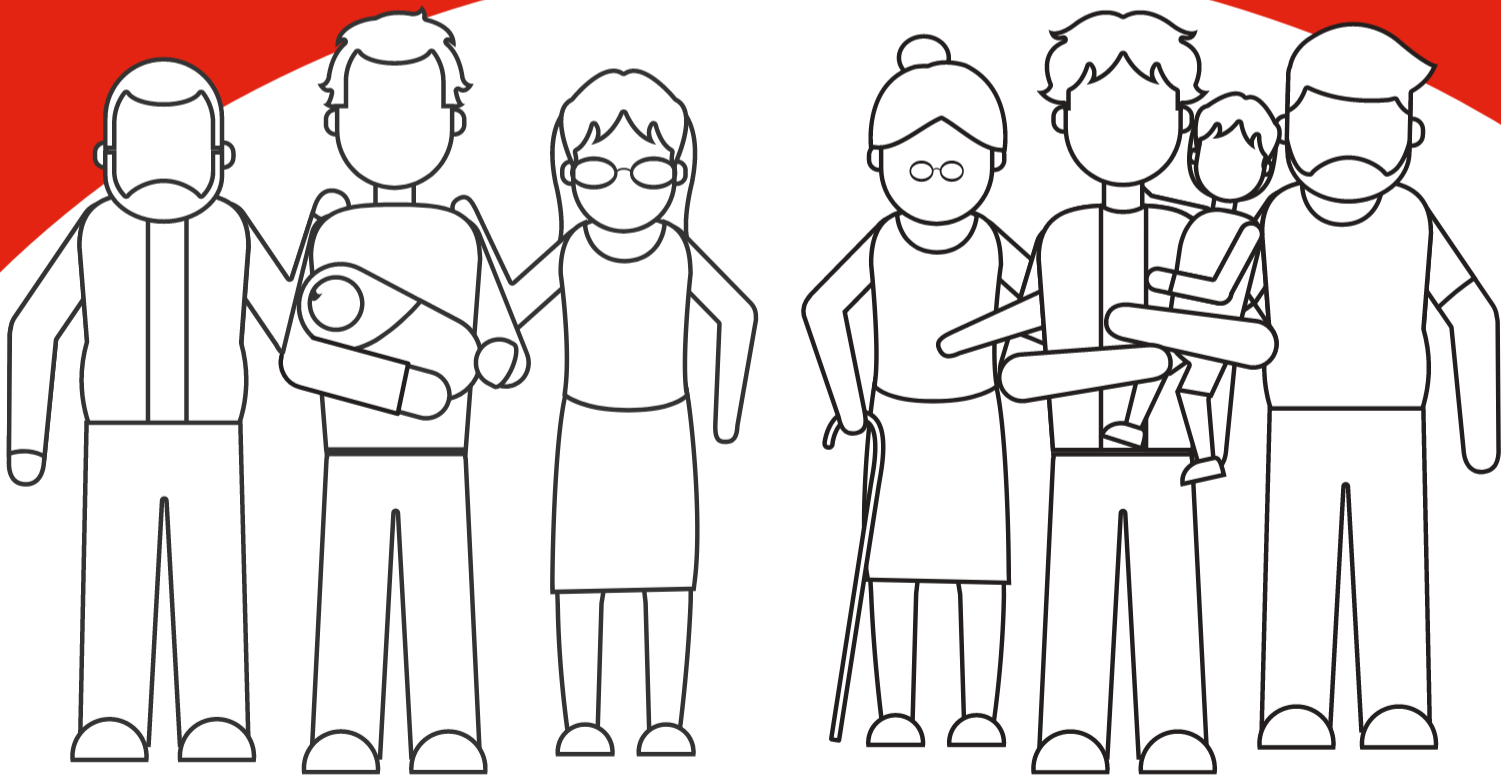




**Australian
Red Cross**

FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TOOLKIT



**A TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE
AFFECTED BY FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

February 2023

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01. PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT



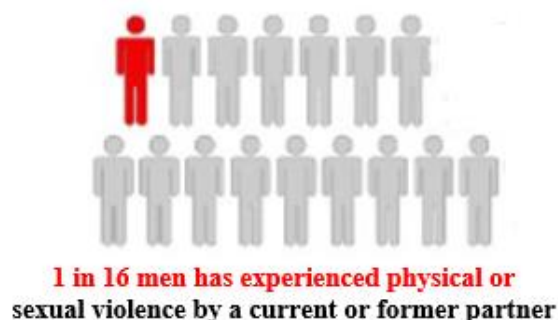
These guidelines outline the support available to Australian Red Cross people (employees, volunteers, and members) and contractors or sub-contractors, work experience students, trainees and apprentices who may be experiencing domestic or family violence.

Where violence against a Red Cross person is occurring in their personal or professional life, Red Cross recognises the devastating impact this can have upon people and their family's health, safety, capacity to work and financial security, and recognises the critical role Red Cross as a workplace can provide in people feeling safe and confident in seeking support.

Family and domestic violence is also a workplace health and safety matter. For example, if a perpetrator follows or harasses an employee at work, it can put both the employee and their colleagues in danger. Red Cross has a legal duty of care to protect the safety of all employees in the workplace.

Australian Red Cross is committed to supporting our people who may be experiencing short or long term domestic or family violence issues and to providing a work environment that promotes safety and flexibility to support a range of practical, as well as health and wellbeing needs that may be required.

Australian Red Cross offers a range of support including up to ten days paid domestic and family violence leave in a 12-month period. For further information please refer to section 03 of this toolkit and to the Australian Red Cross Leave Policy.



02. WHAT IS FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Fair Work Act 2009 defines family and domestic violence as violent, threatening, or other abusive behaviour by an employee's close relative, a current or former intimate partner, or a member of their household that both:

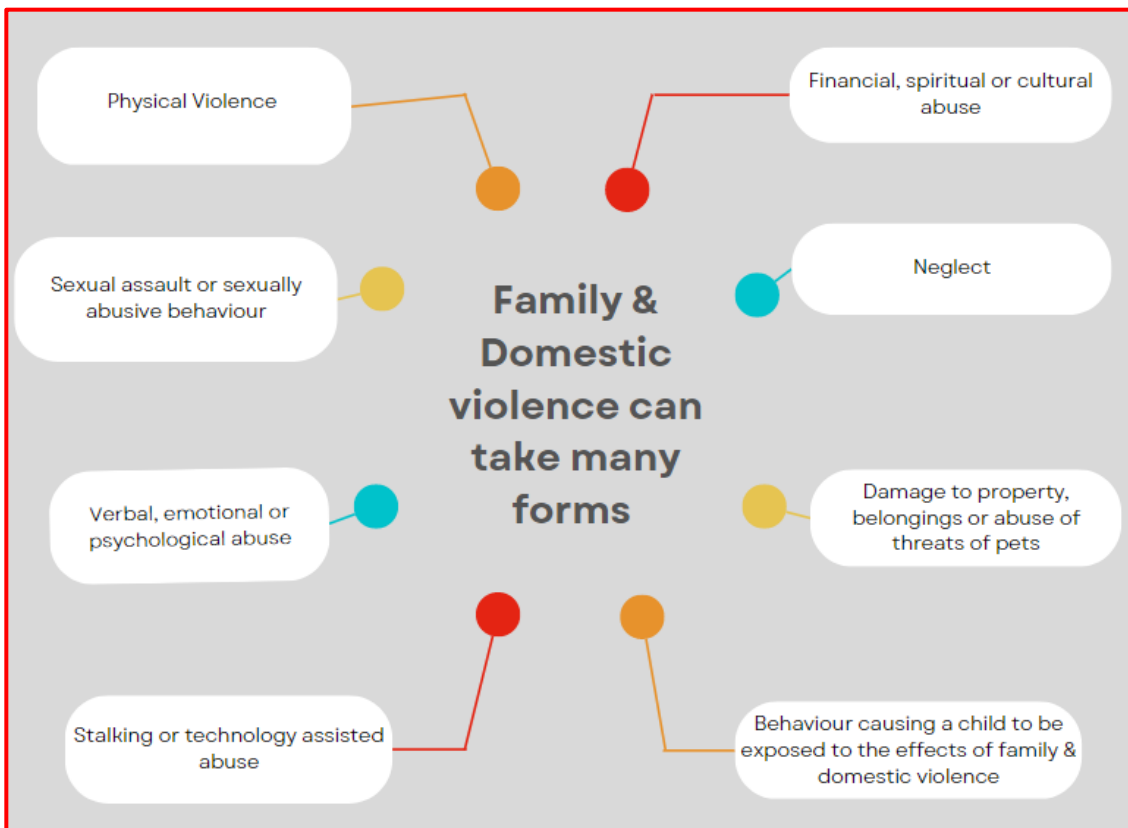
- seeks to coerce or control the employee, and
- causes them harm or to be fearful.

It can take on many forms. There are many different people who are defined as a "close relative". A close relative can also include:

- de facto partner or former de facto partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling
- a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of an employee's current or former spouse or de facto partner or
- a person related to the employee according to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kinship rules.

The impact of domestic violence is far-reaching, causing social isolation, unemployment, homelessness, financial destitution, injury and sometimes death. People who experience family and domestic violence can be from any socio-economic background, religion, education level, age, gender, or sexual orientation.

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



03. WHAT IS FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

Employees (including casual and part-time employees) are entitled to 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave at their full pay rate each 12-month period, aligning to their work anniversary. This leave:

- can be accessed when an employee is experiencing family and domestic violence, and they need to do something to deal with the impact of that violence
- is available in full when an employee starts working at a new workplace
- is not pro-rated for part-time or casual employees
- casual employees will be paid their full pay rate for the hours they were rostered to work in the period they took leave
- can be taken as a single continuous period or separate periods of one or more days
- can be used during a period of paid personal/carer's or annual leave
- renews in full at the start of each 12-month period of employment
- does not accumulate from year to year if it isn't used

How this leave is taken should be discussed and agreed between the affected employee and their manager. Examples of when this leave may be required include:

- making arrangements for employees' own safety, or the safety of a close relative (including relocation)
- attending court hearings, counselling, or attending appointments with medical, financial or legal professionals
- accessing police services

3.1 NOTICE AND EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

If an employee seeks to take paid family and domestic violence leave, they must discuss with their line manager or People & Culture Business Partner as soon as possible. This could be, depending upon the circumstances, after the leave has already commenced.

Red Cross may request supporting evidence for the leave application including for one day or less of work. Evidence examples may include:

- documents issued by police or a court,
- family violence service, or
- a statutory declaration provided by the employee.

Any information or records in relation to family and domestic violence leave will be kept confidential and will not be saved to the employees' personnel file.

04. SUPPORT OPTIONS

Under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, employees dealing with the impact of family and domestic violence can:

- take up to ten days in a 12-month period of paid family and domestic violence leave,
- request flexible working arrangements, and / or
- take paid or unpaid personal/carer's leave, in certain circumstances.

Domestic and family violence is complex and not normally a one-off event which highlights the need for specialist and often ongoing support.



Leave & working arrangements

Paid leave can be accessed for eligible employees. Refer to [Leave policy](#) on The Lounge.

Flexible Working Arrangements can also be considered. Please refer to [Flexible Work arrangement policy](#) on The Lounge.

Workplace Safety Planning

Employee and their line manager can work with People & Culture to create a Workplace Safety Plan to support the employee in the workplace.

Resources

Resources and support mechanisms are available to employees and managers to help manage the impact of family and domestic violence.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Converge provides Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services for all Australian Red Cross people, their family members, and our volunteers. This is a free, confidential counselling program to assist our people and our families with both workplace and personal issues. This support includes:

- Counselling
- Referrals to specialist services
- Assistance with planning for safety at work and home

Highly skilled consultants are available for both immediate support by phone or an appointment can be arranged. Converge has a specialist Domestic and Family Violence helpline: 1800 015 188.



Download the Converge App
Search 'Converge International' in the app store or scan the QR code



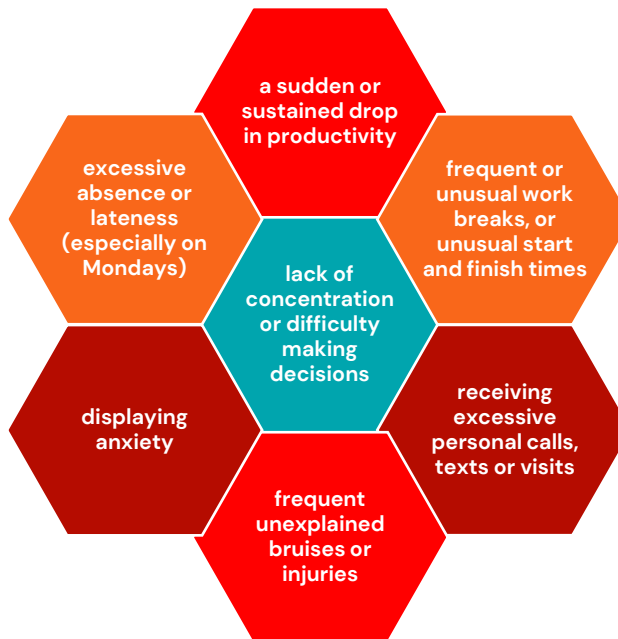
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05. SIGNS OF FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

It's important all employees know the signs that someone may be experiencing family and domestic violence, so they can help employees access the support they need.

Behaviours that may signal a person is experiencing family and domestic violence include:



5.1 FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OCCURING WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

The following are examples of ways in which a person's safety can be compromised at work on account of family and domestic violence:

- perpetrator contacting the individual via their work/personal phone/email
- perpetrator presenting at the workplace
- perpetrator stalking the individual
- perpetrator behaving aggressively towards other Red Cross people/clients.

If you witness any inappropriate behaviour in the workplace, including if you suspect an employee is a perpetrator, please immediately report it to your line manager or People & Culture Business Partner.

5.2 WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A COLLEAGUE DISCLOSES OR I SUSPECT THEY ARE EXPERIENCING FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

These situations are very complex, highly confidential and managed on a need-to-know basis.

Co-workers who receive a disclosure by a colleague that they are experiencing family and domestic violence are to encourage the employee to speak to either their direct manager or People & Culture Business Partner so that they can be appropriately supported including safety planning.

If you suspect that an employee may be experiencing family and domestic violence, please seek advice first from your People & Culture Business Partner rather than raising it directly with the employee.

06. MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 HOW TO APPROACH AN EMPLOYEE YOU SUSPECT MIGHT BE EXPERIENCING OR AFFECTED BY FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Below are some ways managers can respectfully raise concerns with an employee:

It's important to

- provide a safe and private place where you can have a confidential conversation
- ask open-ended questions that give your employee a way to safely disclose, such as 'How are things at home?', or 'You seem anxious lately. Are you ok?'
- share your observations using non-judgmental language and expressions
- be prepared for an emotional response, including tears, defensiveness, or withdrawal
- listen and avoid giving advice, let them be in control of the conversation.

It's important not to

- assume any facts before you've spoken to the employee
- pull the employee aside and ask them overly direct or insensitive questions, such as whether they're in a violent relationship
- ask them in a public place or in a team meeting if they're okay.

It's important to remember that an employee can choose not to talk to you about your concerns.

If you initiated a conversation and an employee confided in you, or if an employee confides in you on their own initiative, it's important to stay calm and respond appropriately. Here are some helpful things to remember when responding:

It's important to

- take the matter seriously, believe them, tell them it's not their fault and that violence is never okay
- use a calm and reassuring tone
- acknowledge how hard it must be for the employee to talk about what is happening to them
- put safety first and check for an immediate threat – if you are concerned for their safety, say so
- be aware of how the employee's cultural and linguistic background could affect their understanding of what family and domestic violence is
- provide practical support by asking how you can help
- give information about their entitlements outlined in this toolkit and Leave Policy
- provide information about support services available and refer them on if requested
- follow up with them and continue providing support.

It's important not to

- express doubt, judgement, or shock
- press them for details, give advice or tell them what to do
- make comments or ask questions that undermine what the employee is experiencing such as 'Why do you put up with it?' or 'Why are you still there?'
- criticise their decisions, partner, or family member (the suspected perpetrator)
- try to 'fix' their situation such as by pressuring them to leave or taking any specific action.

In addition to the guidance above, to maintain the privacy, trust and also the safety of the employee it is important to continue to be discrete, sometimes for long periods of time. This includes not sharing information with other colleagues if there is no requirement for them to be aware or their own personal safety is not at risk of being compromised.

6.2 FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DISCLOSURE CHECKLIST

To support managers in responding to disclosures of Family & Domestic Violence, they can:

- Start a conversation (see 5.1 section of this guide and speak with your People & Culture Business Partnering team for support).
- Talk to the employee about their workplace entitlements and the options available to them, such as taking leave or accessing flexible work arrangements.
- Discuss possible safety measures you could implement if the employee feels unsafe in the workplace, such as screening the employee's incoming calls, blocking emails, changing a phone number, or changing working hours or location.
- Provide the employee with information on where they can get further assistance and information. This includes information regarding the Employee Access Program in addition to specialist support services.
- Take steps to ensure all disclosures and activities are kept strictly confidential and the privacy of the employee is maintained.

6.3 WORKPLACE SAFETY PLANNING

The Australian Red Cross acknowledges that employment is considered a protective factor in relation to domestic and/or family violence and plays an important part in promoting independence and wellbeing, particularly upon exit from violent relationships. To this end, the Red Cross will take all reasonable steps to facilitate the continuation of work for any person who falls within the scope of this policy who is experiencing domestic or family violence.

The Red Cross also acknowledges that individuals are the best judge of their own safety and that the experience of violence can cause an individual to have a profound feeling of having their sense of control taken away. As such, the individual is empowered to lead the discussion on their safety planning.

Where a workplace safety plan is developed, the plan should be documented and distributed to those on a strict 'needs to know' basis and with the consent of the employee. The individual and manager should consider the safety plan having regard to the possibility that risks remain imminent for several months.

Plans developed will need to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they remain effective, and the individual remains safe and is not living in fear whilst in the workplace.

All plans need to be developed in conjunction with the affected individual. Issues of confidentiality need to be considered in conjunction with the duty of care and other Red Cross peoples' safety.

Creating a Plan

If the individual is linked with a family violence service, the workplace safety plan will be aligned with the plan developed with this supporting agency. The template for documenting a safety plan is provided at the end of this toolkit. The safety plan is created with input from some or all the following:

- the impacted person
- the manager (in the instances of contractors and sub-contractors, it is the person who has engaged the contractor or sub-contractor)
- [In the instances of contractors and sub-contractors] the organisation who employees the contractor or sub-contractor
- the People and Culture Business Partner
- the Work, Health & Safety (WHS) Consultant
- the Property Manager
- a family violence specialist if the employee is working with a family violence service

Each of the parties will receive a copy of the safety plan which is to be securely stored in accordance with the Red Cross Privacy Policy. There may be other people who are advised of the safety issue (such as Reception desk staff) on a strict 'needs to know' basis.

See appendix for Safety Plan Template.

SAFETY PLAN CONSIDERATIONS	
Safety to and from workplace and office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is the individual parking their car, does this need to be changed? • Does the individual require an escort from their car? • Does the individual require a taxi to and from work as a short-term measure?
Physical Location / Office space and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the individual's office or desk in a secured area or do they need to work from a more secure area? • Do other people in the office need to be made aware of the risks? • Do reception/admin & telephone staff need to be made aware of safety risks? • Do Reception staff require a photo/image of the perpetrator? If so, how will this be confidentially stored? • Should a code word be developed with designated co-workers? • Do all calls to the individual need to go through another 'safe buddy' or manager in the office to prevent stalking and contact with the violent perpetrator? • Does the individual need to have their contact number and email address changed?
Change of hours of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the working hours of the individual need to be adjusted? • Can there be some work done at home or another secure environment?
Changes to electronic Payroll or benefits and staff documentation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the individual need to adjust or amend their pay arrangements and bank details? • Does the individual need to ensure employment related documents are sent to another address?
Personal Alarm or desk alarm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the individual have ready access to a duress alarm, do they require a personal alarm?
Domestic Violence Intervention Orders (DVOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do other management, employees or volunteers need to be made aware of any orders in relation to the Red Cross person and their children? • People and Culture will need to be made aware of any intervention orders or other such orders in relation to the Red Cross person and the perpetrator.
Child Protection/child safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have reasonable grounds and in good faith have concerns regarding a child or children's well-being or safety you MUST report this internally via risk management system.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a need to involve child protection in relation to this family? • Do considerations need to be made in relation to this family member regarding picking up children from school or childcare? • For further assistance please contact a Child Safe Contact Officer or a member of the safeguarding team (refer to Child Protection information on the lounge)
Family & Domestic Violence leave:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the individual need to take Family & Domestic Violence Leave during high-risk periods? • Would the individual like the designated person to maintain contact with them even whilst on Family & Domestic Violence Leave?
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People within the organisation and others associated with the perpetrator and/or affected person: • Identify who else can be affected by this current issue and how can potential risks be minimised? • Who in the organisation might know the perpetrator and might disclose information about the affected person? • What do telephone and reception staff do if the perpetrator makes contact?

07. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Australian Red Cross will take reasonable practical steps to keep any information about an employee's situation confidential including information relating to an employee taking family and domestic violence leave, including leave records as well as any evidence provided by the employee.

When accessing Family and Domestic Violence Leave at Red Cross, the employee is to apply for "Special Leave" in the employee self-service leave system, and this reference is what will appear on the employee's payslip.

Any information or records in relation to family and domestic violence will not be saved to the employees' personnel file.

The disclosure of information by Red Cross in relation to family and domestic violence may be made if it is:

Required by law

Necessary to protect the life, health or safety of the employee or another person

08. FAQ'S

WHAT LEAVE IS AVAILABLE TO ME?

All full time, part time and casual employees will be entitled to 10 days of paid Family & Domestic Violence Leave in a 12-month period who are experiencing family and domestic violence and are required to do something in work hours to deal with the impact of the family and domestic violence. The leave is not pro-rated for part-time or casual employees.

HOW CAN I APPLY FOR LEAVE?

The need for leave should be discussed with your line manager. Leave is applied for through payroll Self Service as "Special Leave".

WHAT DETAILS ARE INCLUDED ON MY PAYSリップ FOR SPECIAL LEAVE?

Family & Domestic Violence Leave is displayed as "Special Leave" on payslips with the leave dates taken. The leave balance for Special Leave is not displayed.

WHO CAN I SPEAK TO FOR SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE?

Your manager and/or People & Culture Business Partnering team are available to speak to. They can assist with informing you on the leave and support mechanisms available to you.

WHAT OTHER SUPPORT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

Converge, our Employee Assistance provider offers free confidential counselling, coaching and support for workplace and personal issues to all employees and volunteers. They have a specialist Domestic Violence and Family Helpline which can be reached on 1800 015 188.

Other professional support services are also available. Please refer to the list in this toolkit.

I AM A CASUAL EMPLOYEE – HOW DOES THIS LEAVE GET PAID TO ME?

Casual employees will be paid at their full pay rate for the hours they were rostered to work in the period they took leave. Casual employees will need to speak with their manager regarding these hours.

I AM A MANAGER SUPPORTING ONE OF MY EMPLOYEES – WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE TO ME?

Managers and co-workers are not counsellors. Please speak to your local People & Culture Business Partnering team to support you or contact our free EAP specialist Domestic Violence and Family Helpline on 1800 015 188.

I AM A MANAGER SUPPORTING ONE OF MY EMPLOYEES – I HAVE CONCERNS AROUND CHILD SAFETY, WHAT DO I DO?

If you have reasonable grounds and in good faith concerns regarding a child or children's well-being or safety, you must report this internally via Risk Management System.

For further assistance please contact your local People & Culture Business Partnering team and/or a Child Safe Contact Officer or a member of the safeguarding team (refer to Child Protection information on the lounge).

09. PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

1800 RESPECT

National Sexual Assault, Family & Domestic Violence Counselling Line.

Phone: 1800 737 732

Website: www.1800respect.org.au

Australian Childhood Foundation

The Australian Childhood Foundation is a national charity which prioritises the safety and welfare of children.

Phone: 1300 381 581

Website: www.childhood.org.au

Kids Help Line

Kids Helpline is a free, 24 hour counselling service for young people aged 5–25 years. Counselling is offered by phone, email and over the web.

Phone: 1800 551 800

Website: www.kidshelp.com.au

Lifeline

Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Phone: 13 11 14

Website: www.lifeline.org.au

Mensline

A dedicated service for men with relationship and family concerns.

Phone: 1300 78 99 78

Website: www.mensline.org.au

No to Violence

An anonymous and confidential telephone service for men. NTV is the peak body for organisations and individuals working with men to end family violence in Victoria and NSW.

Phone: 1300 766 491

Website: www.ntv.org.au

Relationships Australia

Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities. We aim to support all people in Australia to achieve positive relationships.

Phone: 1300 364 277

Website: www.relationships.org.au

Wesnet

WESNET is a national women's peak advocacy body which works on behalf of women and children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic or family violence.

Website: www.wesnet.org.au

10. APPENDIX: SAFETY PLAN TEMPLATE

A copy of this plan is to be securely stored by the employee and their manager and is not to be included on the employee's personnel file but maintained in a suitable secure confidential file within People and Culture.

Name of individual:	
Individual's contact number:	
Dept/Unit that individual works in:	
Supporting Red Cross Person:	
Is there an Intervention Order (Yes/No):	
Does Red Cross have a copy of the order? (Yes/No)	
Has the individual provided consent to share this information (Yes/No):	
Who has the individual authorised to have access to this information?	

Security Issues

Name of alleged perpetrator:	
Is alleged perpetrator a Red Cross person (Yes/No)?	
Image / identification of the alleged perpetrator available (Yes/No)? Please attach.	
Description of concerns:	

Summary of events/rationale for plan:

Action Plan

Action	Who	When

Supports Involved:
Plan internally distributed to:
External Services: