



# YOUR INFORMATION AND YOUR SAFETY

Your safety is very important to us.

We want to help you secure your ongoing safety from domestic violence.

## Working out your safety needs

To know how we can help you we need to work out the level of threat to your safety.

We do this by asking some questions about what has happened in the past and your current circumstances. We will also ask you about your fears and concerns. Your answers will give us a clearer picture of your situation and needs. This is called a threat assessment.

A threat assessment can be done by a support worker, your doctor, someone from Health, Housing or Education, a police officer or another professional person.

## Referring you to support services

After working out the level of threat to your safety, one way for us to help you is to make a referral to a support service.

A referral includes information about you, for example: your name, phone number, what has happened, information about any court notices or protection orders, and a copy of any threat assessment. The referral includes information about the person who hurt you, so that the service understands your situation and needs.

A referral is automatic when police officers attend a domestic violence incident or where there are domestic violence proceedings in court.

## Keeping your information secure

Your information is strictly confidential and will only be shared with a support service that is bound by law to keep it secure.

Your information will never be shared with the person who hurt you.

## A safe method of contacting you

If we make a referral to a support service, we want to make sure that the service contacts you in a way that does not make you unsafe at home.

For this reason, we will ask you for a safe method and time to contact you.

The support service will follow your instructions when contacting you.

## Support services for you and your family

After the referral is made, a support service will contact you and offer you help with different issues you may face.

Support may include:

- safety planning
- emergency accommodation
- counselling
- access to financial assistance
- court support, or
- other services you may need to increase your safety.

## Working with you

Important decisions about your safety should be made by you and in most cases we will seek your consent before making a referral to a support service.

Where an automatic referral is made by the police or the court, your consent will be sought straight afterwards, when the support service contacts you.

You can also choose to opt out of a referral made by the court when the court officer talks to you.

## Keeping you safe

Generally, we will seek your consent to share your information. But if you are at serious threat of further violence there may be times when we need to share information without your consent. Services will only do this to take actions to protect your life, health or safety or that of other persons.

If this happens, we will let you know, where possible before or as soon as possible after. We will also tell you why we shared the information and who it was shared with.

## Making sure your information is correct

If you think that some of the information held about you by a service is incorrect, you can ask to look at your file and ask that the information is corrected. You should talk to your support worker about this.

## Making a complaint

If you believe that your information has been shared inappropriately you should speak to your support worker or the manager of the support service and ask how you can make a complaint.

You can also contact:

- Information and Privacy Commission NSW on **1800 472 679**
- Victims Access Line on **1800 633 063**
- Aboriginal Contact Line on **1800 019 123**.

## More information

You can find out more information about:

- what information can be shared
- how your information can be used
- how your information will be stored and protected
- how you can correct your information if it is wrong
- how you can make a complaint about a possible breach of your privacy.

An information sharing protocol is located at:

[www.domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au](http://www.domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au)