



Family and Domestic Violence Support Guidelines for Managers

The Department of Health is committed to providing a supportive workplace for employees who are experiencing and/or disclosing Family and Domestic Violence (FDV).

This guide is designed to assist managers to understand their obligations in situations where an employee may be experiencing FDV.

To support victims of family and domestic violence, a comprehensive package of support is available and includes:

- ten days non-cumulative paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave
- flexible work arrangements and safety plan agreements
- access to employer sponsored confidential counselling services.

The Department will also ensure that:

- procedures are in place for managing leave applications and disclosure
- the privacy of employees is protected and confidentiality is maintained at all times
- underpinning internal administrative arrangements are established to implement FDV leave and support.

It is recognised that FDV is a complex issue and the Department has two dedicated officers who are able to assist managers and employees in their capacity as FDV Contact Officers:

- Michael Cooper, Senior HR Consultant
- Toni Johannesen, Senior HR Consultant.

Please also refer to [Implementation Guidelines: Premier's Circular 2017/07 Family and Domestic Violence – Paid Leave and Workplace Support](#).

Step 1: Ensuring the employee is safe at work

Should an employee disclose that they are experiencing FDV, you should ask the employee whether there are any immediate concerns about their safety at work.

If yes, then as soon as practicable you should contact one of the FDV Contact Officers who will work with you and the employee to ensure that a *Workplace Safety Plan* is put in place. This plan will include:

- What to do if the perpetrator attempts to enter the building:
 - deny physical access to the building
 - ensure employee is informed of attempted access
 - decide what the department, manager and employee will do after being informed of attempted access.
- What to do if the perpetrator attempts contact:
 - ensure employee is informed of attempted contact
 - decide what the department, manager and employee will do after being informed of attempted contact (provide a safe space or secure work room, change phone numbers, divert or filter emails, etc.).

Arrangements and modifications should be between the employee, their manager and the FDV Contact Officer to ensure all parties feel confident with the arrangements.

Step 2: Providing Support to the employee

Employees experiencing FDV may require flexible arrangements and modifications in the workplace to enable them to deal with health, legal or financial matters, attend court or care for others.

Arrangements and modifications may include:

- providing a quiet room to enable the employee to have confidential conversations with a service provider or legal representative
- utilising flexible working arrangements as per the *Public Service and Government Officers CSA General Agreement 2017* (PSGOCGA 2017)
- utilising part-time working arrangements as per the PSGOCGA 2017
- utilising FDV leave as per the Premier's Circular 2017/07: *Family and Domestic Violence – Paid Leave and Workplace Support*.

Providing FDV leave to all affected employees to assist with time required for:

- counselling
- medical or legal practitioner appointments
- legal proceedings
- relocation or making other safety arrangements
- other matters of a compassionate or pressing nature related to the family and domestic violence which arise without notice and require immediate attention.

FDV leave is confidential and will not appear on leave summary records. Arrangements for booking FDV leave will need to be made with the FDV Contact Officer to ensure confidentiality.

Any combination of the above can be used to provide support to the employee. In consultation with the employee and FDV Contact Officer, an appropriate support plan will be put into place to ensure the employee maintains employment within a safe work environment.

Step 3: Contacting an FDV Contact Officer

Once the issue has been raised, you should contact an FDV Contact Officer to:

- discuss any workplace plans to be arranged and any assist required with the implementation of subsequent workplace arrangements.

The FDV Contact Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the department meets its obligations under the PSGOCGA 2017.

Supporting evidence and other matters to note

Supporting evidence of family and domestic violence may be required to access paid leave entitlements, however, this should not be onerous on the employee. Leave may be granted without supporting documentation when the employer is satisfied that it is not required.

- Evidence may be in the form of a document issued by the police, a court, a legal service, a health professional or a counsellor, or a refuge service. A statutory declaration may also be provided.
- Only the employee will retain a copy of the evidence and information will not be kept on an employee's personnel file.

The situation for the employee can change at any moment, so it is important to ensure that they are supported and can come forward to either yourself or the FDV Contact Officer to discuss any concerns.