

ACT Public Sector

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Toolkit

Information about **paid leave, responding to disclosures, and support services**

Domestic, family and sexual violence is everybody's business. It is never OK.

The ACT Public Sector (ACTPS) is committed to supporting people who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence.

The ACTPS Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Toolkit provides guidance to employees experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence – or supporting others.

The Toolkit includes:

- > **Advice about paid leave for domestic, family or sexual violence purposes**
- > **Guidance on responding to a disclosure of domestic, family or sexual violence from a colleague**
- > **Information about supports for people impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence.**

All ACTPS staff can access training about domestic, family and sexual violence.

All staff members have a foundational e-learn module as part of their core learning on HRIMS. Managers have an additional module. All staff are encouraged to complete the training, to learn more about these issues.

Staff who are not comfortable completing the training can be exempted by emailing their manager or human resources area.

Leave for domestic, family and sexual violence purposes

ACTPS Enterprise Agreements have leave provisions for domestic, family and sexual violence purposes. The language in the agreements usually refers to “family, domestic or sexual violence leave”.

Paid leave is available to those experiencing violence, or supporting an immediate family member.

All employees, including casual employees, have access to up to 20 days or shifts per calendar year of paid leave.

Leave is intended for purposes including but not limited to:

- > accessing support services
- > attending legal or justice proceedings
- > supporting children's needs
- > dealing with issues such as accommodation or health needs arising from experiences of violence
- > travelling to and from appointments relating to any of the above
- > any other reason relating to responding to or recovering from the effects of experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence.

Anyone applying for leave under these provisions should apply through the OneGov Service Centre portal, listing the type of leave as “**other**” and “**where leave cannot be granted under any other provision**”. Details do not need to be included in the form.

Managers should keep all information about the leave application confidential.

Managers should keep track of the days of leave per calendar year in a confidential location. If sighting evidence for the leave, they should return this to the employee immediately and not save a copy or attach it to a leave request.

If an employee changes reporting lines, managers should consult with the employee about who they wish to have take over records of leave taken, and approval of this leave type.

Consult your Enterprise Agreement for more information about this leave type including information about evidence and interactions with other leave types.

Responding to a disclosure of domestic, family or sexual violence

Victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence may choose to disclose about past or current experiences to colleagues and/or managers.

Someone who discloses to you is putting a lot of trust in you.

It's important to provide a supportive and appropriate response. You can do this by:

- > listening
- > believing them
- > not blaming them for what has happened
- > asking them what they need from you, or if they would like help accessing supports
- > ensuring they remain in control of any actions taken as a result of their disclosure.

It is important that someone making a disclosure is not forced to act on it. You can talk about their options, but remember: they are best placed to understand how to keep themselves safe.

If you supervise someone who discloses to you, there are other things you can do to support them.

If the employee is comfortable, you could:

- > discuss flexible work arrangements or a change in duties that might support them
- > let them know about the paid leave provisions outlined in this Toolkit
- > help them access other supports available through the ACTPS, including the Employee Assistance Program
- > ask if they need any changes to their work environment to support their safety, e.g. a designated parking spot, change of email/phone number or change of work location.

You can also proactively use practices that support safety for staff who may be experiencing violence, even if they never tell you, e.g. not giving out colleagues' information unless you have their permission, and ensuring staff in your team do the same.

Remember to respect the confidentiality of the person making the disclosure.

You should not share this information with others unless the person wants you to. The exception to this is that you can speak to your human resources area for guidance. If you need to do this, make sure to let the person know you are sharing their information, and that it will remain confidential within human resources.

It is a reality that some staff in the ACTPS are choosing to use violence.

People using violence can and should seek assistance from specialist services such as:

- > Domestic Violence Crisis Service: 02 6280 0900
- > EveryMan: 02 6230 6999

If you find out an ACTPS employee is using domestic, family or sexual violence, you can contact the organisations above for more information on how to approach the situation.

If domestic, family or sexual violence has occurred or is believed to have occurred at a workplace, a report should be made to police.

Supports for people impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence

Everyone deserves to live free from domestic, family and sexual violence.

In an emergency, call police on 000.

Supports are available through the ACTPS.

Supports include:

- > paid leave, as outlined in this Toolkit
- > flexible work arrangements, where this is helpful
- > Employee Assistance Program – find out more on the [ACTPS Employment Portal](#).

The ACT has specialist support services for people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence.

- > Police (non-emergency): 131 444
- > Domestic Violence Crisis Service (24/7): 02 6280 0900 | www.dvcs.org.au
- > Canberra Rape Crisis Centre: 02 6247 2525 | crcc.org.au
- > Victim Support ACT: 1800 822 272 | www.hrc.act.gov.au/victim-support
- > YWCA Domestic Violence Support Service: 02 6185 2000 | www.ywca-canberra.org.au
- > Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT: 1800 733 233 | www.alsnswact.org.au
- > Legal Aid ACT – Family Violence and Personal Protection Unit: 1300 654 314 | www.legalaidact.org.au
- > Women's Legal Centre: 02 6257 4377 | wlc.org.au

National services are also available.

- > 1800 RESPECT (24/7): 1800 737 732 | www.1800respect.org.au
- > Lifeline (24/7): 13 11 14 | www.lifeline.org.au
- > 13YARN (24/7): 13 92 76 | www.13yarn.org.au
- > Kidsline (24/7): 1800 55 1800 | www.kidshelpline.com.au
- > Mensline (24/7): 1300 789 978 | www.mensline.org.au

You can find more information and support services on the [Community Services Directorate website](#).