

# Welcome to the Escaping Violence Payment (EVP) Program.

## Client Information Booklet.

You have received this booklet because you applied for the EVP program.

Here you will find a clear statement of your rights as an EVP client, as well as your responsibilities. Your privacy is important to us and this booklet states how we handle and use any personal information you provide.

We welcome your feedback, suggestions or complaints, and we explain several ways to send them to us. There are also details on how to find an advocacy service if you need support to express your views.

The EVP program is delivered by a national network of agencies. As an EVP client you will work with the agency most closely connected to your current location. Uniting Vic.Tas is the lead agency appointed by the Department of Social Services to manage the program and therefore the holder of centralised records.

## What are my rights and responsibilities in the EVP program?

Ensuring that you understand your rights and responsibilities is central to our commitment to providing quality services.

### Your rights

As a client accessing the EVP program, you have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity and feel welcome regardless of ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity or sexual orientation
- Be provided with services in a safe and secure environment free from abuse and neglect
- Be given information on your rights and responsibilities in an accessible language and format
- Have your privacy and confidentiality respected and protected
- Have access to your personal information held by the EVP program

- Be informed, consulted and encouraged to take an active role in decisions made about your support.
- Make complaints in the secure knowledge that they will be listened to respectfully, taken seriously and responded to promptly
- Give feedback on ways in which you believe the EVP program can be improved
- Access a support person or advocate.

### **Your responsibilities**

As a client accessing the EVP program, it is your responsibility to:

- Treat staff with dignity and respect and behave in a non-violent, non-threatening manner
- Participate in any activities in accordance with the policies, rules and guidelines of the service
- Attend scheduled appointments or notify staff members in good time if you are unable to attend
- Work towards the achievement of any plans and goals you have agreed to
- Not be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs when engaging with EVP services
- Not bring any illegal items or substances onto EVP program premises
- Have regard for your personal safety and that of others
- In an emergency, follow reasonable clear directives from staff if attending an EVP location.

### **How will the EVP program protect my privacy and store my information?**

The EVP program is committed to keeping your personal information private. The program recognises your right to privacy and confidentiality, and we are committed to protecting these. The EVP program is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles, and the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) and supporting State laws.

Your records are held centrally by Uniting Vic.Tas as the lead agency for the EVP program. This [Privacy Policy](#) sets out general information about how the program manages your personal information and how you can contact us to access and update the information we hold about you.

The EVP program will only ask for information that is required to give you access to the program and any other supports or help you may need. Your information will be stored in a secure database. Your information cannot be accessed by others without your direct and written consent. As a program funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) we are required to share data with the DSS in a secure database known as Data Exchange. The data we share on the Data Exchange is deidentified. You can choose to participate in Research and Evaluation to assist with identifying improvements to the program or your general experience of support. If you consent to participating in Research and Evaluation, your contact information can be utilised by a designated evaluator or researcher for the purpose of this activity only. You can withdraw your consent at any time.

### **What is personal information?**

Personal information is defined as any information which identifies or potentially identifies an individual, such as name, address, date of birth, health and medical information, or family details.

### **How we collect personal information**

We collect information from you in a private, confidential way and make sure you feel safe to share your information. We may also receive information from referring agencies. When collecting information, we will take reasonable steps to let you know why we are collecting it, who we will give it to and how we will use or disclose it. You can withdraw or alter your consent at any time.

### **Why we collect personal information**

Your personal information will only be used for the purposes for which it was collected. Its use will be directly related to providing EVP services and activities, such as assessing your eligibility, or to tailor services to meet your needs. We will ask for your consent if we need to share your personal information with other services or organisations.

## **Disclosure of your personal information**

We do not disclose sensitive information about you unless you agree or would reasonably expect us to disclose it. Please refer to the [Privacy Policy](#) for full details on what we consider 'sensitive'.

There are situations where the EVP program is required by law to disclose information without your consent. These may include, but are not limited to, when we believe that there is a concern regarding an individual's life, health, safety or welfare, for family violence protection or assessment purposes, where we have a legal obligation to provide information, or when we are required to report critical incidents to our funding body.

## **Protection of your personal information**

Your records will be stored securely in a safe and secure centralised system. We will take all reasonable care to ensure the confidentiality of your information and to protect it from misuse, loss, or interference. We will only keep personal information for as long as it is required, after which time it will be disposed of securely. In accordance with the Notifiable Data Breach Scheme, the EVP program will notify you if your personal information has been involved in a data breach likely to result in serious harm. If we are unable to contact you, then we will post a notification on our website that an eligible data breach has occurred.

## **Accessing your personal information**

The EVP program strives to ensure that all the personal information we hold is relevant, accurate, complete and up to date. You have the right to access your personal information held by the EVP program. You also have the right to correct the information held about you, unless there is a sound reason under privacy legislation for EVP not to allow this.

Depending on the nature of your request, we may ask you to verify your identity. The EVP program will take all reasonable steps to provide access to the information you request and reserves the right to charge for any reasonable costs incurred in complying with your request.

## Updating your personal information

Please contact us if your details have changed or if you think there is something incorrect with the information, we hold about you.

## How can I provide feedback, compliments, and complaints to the EVP program?

The EVP program is committed to providing quality services and recognises that your feedback provides valuable information to help us improve the services we provide.

### Compliments and suggestions

We welcome compliments and suggestions to help us continue providing quality services. Where appropriate, we'll forward compliments to appropriate staff and management and provide you with the outcome of any decisions made regarding your feedback and suggestion(s).

### Complaints

If you wish to lodge a complaint, the EVP program will make sure you are not penalised or denied any services. We're committed to resolving your complaints. If you make a complaint, we will:

- Investigate the complaint and keep you informed throughout the process
- Act with fairness and objectivity and manage the complaint with professionalism and courtesy
- Provide you with a response on completion of our investigation.

### Feedback

If you have a complaint or want to provide feedback about our services, you can do so in the following ways:

- Speak to your main contact at the EVP program. If you are not happy with the outcome, or if you are not comfortable speaking with your main contact, then contact the program manager
- Contact your local EVP agency
  - NSW/ACT: [Wesley Mission](#)
  - QLD: [UnitingCare QLD](#)
  - WA: [Uniting WA](#)
  - VIC/TAS & NT: [Uniting Vic.Tas](#)

- SA: [Uniting CountrySA](#) , [Uniting Communities](#) , [UCWB - UnitingCare Wesley Bowden](#), or [UnitingSA](#)
- Complete the national EVP online [Feedback form](#)
- Email [consumerfeedback@unitingvictas.org.au](mailto:consumerfeedback@unitingvictas.org.au) (please include which state you are located in)
- Phone 1800 EVP EVP (1800 387 387)

## External advocacy and complaints services

You can ask a family member, friend, or an independent advocacy/complaint body to help you in putting forward your views to the EVP program. Independent advocacy agencies play an important role in ensuring the rights and interests of clients are respected and safeguarded. They can provide you with information and support in representing your views to and ensure that your concerns are heard and responded to.

There are a range of advocacy and complaints services. The one most appropriate for you will depend on the service(s) you access. A good place to find an advocacy service is on [Advocacy Finder \(Ask Izzy\)](#)

## Further help and supports

### Family, domestic and sexual violence support

<b>1800RESPECT</b>	National sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service. This service is free and confidential. Available 24/7.	1800 737 732 <a href="http://www.1800respect.org.au">www.1800respect.org.au</a>
<b>Full Stop Australia</b>	National trauma counselling and recovery service for people of all ages and genders experiencing sexual, domestic and family violence. This service is free and confidential. Available 24/7.	1800 943 539 <a href="http://www.fullstop.org.au">www.fullstop.org.au</a>
<b>Rainbow Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence Helpline</b>	For anyone from the LGBTIQ+ community whose life has been impacted by sexual domestic and/or family violence. This service is free and confidential. Available 24/7.	1800 497 212

**Well Mob** Social, emotional, and cultural well-being online resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. [www.wellmob.org.au](http://www.wellmob.org.au)

**Men’s Referral Service** For anyone in Australia whose life has been impacted by men’s use of violence or abusive behaviours. Available 7 days. 1300 766 491 [www.ntv.org.au](http://www.ntv.org.au)

**My Blue Sky** Provides free legal and migration support to people experiencing forced marriage and other forms of modern slavery in Australia. 02 9514 8115 [www.mybluesky.org.au](http://www.mybluesky.org.au)

**Say it out Loud** A national resource for LGBTQ+ communities and service professionals working with people who have experienced sexual, domestic, and family violence. [www.sayitoutloud.org.au](http://www.sayitoutloud.org.au)

## Crisis support and suicide prevention

**Lifeline** A national charity providing all Australians experiencing emotional distress with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. Available 24/7. 13 11 14 [www.Lifeline.org.au](http://www.Lifeline.org.au)

**National Suicide Call Back Service** A nationwide service providing telephone and online counselling to people affected by suicide. Available 24/7. 1300 659 467 <https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/>

**Thirrili Postvention Response Service** The Indigenous Suicide Postvention Response Service supports individuals, families and communities affected by suicide or other significant trauma. Available 24/7. 1800 805 801 <https://thirrili.com.au/postvention-support/postvention-services>

## Mental health support and advice

**Beyond Blue** Provides information and support to help anyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health. 1300 224 636 [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

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<b>Head to Health</b>	Digital mental health services from some of Australia’s most trusted mental health organisations.	<a href="http://www.headtohealth.gov.au">www.headtohealth.gov.au</a>
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<b>13 YARN</b>	Support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping. Available 24/7.	13 92 76 <a href="https://www.13yarn.org.au/">https://www.13yarn.org.au/</a>
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<b>ReachOut</b>	Online mental health service for young people and their parents in Australia.	<a href="http://www.au.reachout.com">www.au.reachout.com</a>
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<b>MensLine Australia</b>	A telephone and online counselling service offering support for Australian men.	1300 78 99 78 <a href="http://www.mensline.org.au">www.mensline.org.au</a>
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<b>Kids Helpline</b>	Free, confidential online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. Available 24/7.	1800 551 800 <a href="http://www.kidshelpline.com.au">www.kidshelpline.com.au</a>
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<b>1800 ELDERHelp</b>	A free call phone number that automatically redirects callers seeking information and advice on elder abuse with the phone service in their state or territory.	1800 353 374
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<b>Open Arms – Veterans &amp; Families Counselling</b>	Mental health support for Navy, Army and Air Force personnel, veterans, and their families.	1800 011 046 <a href="http://www.openarms.gov.au">www.openarms.gov.au</a>
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## Other support

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<b>Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)</b>	Provides access to phone and on-site interpreting services in over 150 languages.	131 450 <a href="http://www.tisnational.gov.au">www.tisnational.gov.au</a>
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<b>Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS)</b>	Helps to address language barriers faced by Indigenous people in the Northern Territory. Interpreters are trained to work in a wide range of settings and environments including legal and justice systems, health care, education, social services, and community engagement.	(08) 8999 8353 (24 hours) Fax (08) 8923 7621 Email <a href="mailto:ais@nt.gov.au">ais@nt.gov.au</a>
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**National Relay Service (NRS)**

Allows people who cannot hear or do not use their voice to communicate with a hearing person over the phone.

Voice relay number  
1300 555 727  
TTY number 133 677  
SMS relay number  
0423 677 767

**eSafety Commissioner**

A complaints-based reporting scheme for cyberbullying of children, serious adult cyber abuse, image-based abuse (sharing, or threatening to share, intimate images without the consent of the person shown) and illegal and restricted content.

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/report>

**Find services near you**

Australia’s National Research Organisation for Women’s Safety Support Directory

[www.anrows.org.au/support-directory](http://www.anrows.org.au/support-directory)

National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence – Sexual Violence Support Directory

[www.nasasv.org.au/support-directory](http://www.nasasv.org.au/support-directory)

Ask Izzy is a website that connects people in need with housing, a meal, help with money, family violence support, counselling and much more. Ask Izzy is free and anonymous.

[www.askizzy.org.au](http://www.askizzy.org.au)

The Disability Gateway assists all people with disability, their families and carers to locate and access services across Australia. The Disability Gateway helps people find relevant information and navigate services more easily and provides access to services in the health, housing, employment and transport sectors.

1800 643 787  
NRS 1800 555 677  
Interpreter 13 14 50