



## Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Safety Planning Tools



Queensland Government



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This guide has been developed with funding provided by The Services Union (Queensland) with a grant from the Office of Industrial Relations. It should be used in conjunction with the *When Domestic and Family Violence Comes to Work* publication and specialist training.

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## Authors

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## Disclaimer

This information booklet has been developed as a guide to support workplaces and their employees better understand and respond to domestic and family violence when it impacts on people at work. It is not a substitute for specialist advice about safety assessment and harm prevention. This should be sought from a specialist domestic and family violence service <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence/find-local-support>

## Acknowledgment of traditional owners

The Services Union, and our partner organisations acknowledge the First Nations peoples who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather for work and to live our lives. We pay our respects to Elders past present and future. We acknowledge the disproportionate impact of domestic and family violence (DFV) on First Nations peoples and that much remains to be done to redress the impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and the suffering that happens when violence is so prevalent in people's lives. We recognise the values of kinship and connection to country as important strengths of traditional culture with much to teach us.



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## About this Guide

This guide has been developed in response to many requests from employers and managers about how to assess and plan for the safety of people in workplaces who are at risk of or who are experiencing domestic and family violence (DFV). The words employee and worker are used interchangeably throughout this guide, and include volunteers and students on placement.

This guide outlines a process that can be used in conjunction with your workplace's DFV strategy or policy. Otherwise, a useful starting point for workplaces wishing to increase their DFV response capacity is to use the information contained in our "When Domestic Violence Comes to Work" publication, also available through Basic Rights Queensland or The Services Union. This can help to build an understanding of what DFV is, why it is a workplace issue, and how workplaces can act to support and keep employees safer.

This guide is designed for organisations wishing to take the necessary steps to identify risks in their workplaces related to DFV and to work in an employee-centred way to discuss the risks that DFV could pose to the employee at work.

The authors of this guide recognise that research in the area of work and DFV is limited and that there is still much to learn. The information in the guide has been based on published data and research. It has also drawn on the extensive experience of Working Women's Centres in Queensland (part of Basic Rights Queensland), the Northern Territory and South Australia. These centres have provided support and advocacy for women impacted negatively in their employment by DFV. Many employers have reflected on the value of having the support of these centres to guide them in supporting their employee through such difficult times.

The first section of the Guide (Domestic and Family Violence safety at work) provides a brief overview of the characteristics of DFV and why it may create safety risks at work. This section provides an overview of conducting a general safety audit to prevent perpetrators of DFV having access to or contacting employees in your workplace.

The main body of the Guide has three steps that will assist you to collect information and undertake an assessment of possible safety risks that can commonly exist for workplaces where employees are experiencing DFV. This information can then be developed into a plan that can be shared with appropriate people in the workplace to be able to respond to any incidents related to DFV for the person involved.

Ideally, the steps contained in this guide will be performed by a trained senior staff member as part of the process of responding to the disclosure of DFV by an employee.

Other circumstances may include where a manager or co-workers have recognised that the employee may be experiencing DFV and the employee has agreed to participate in safety planning.

Your workplace will likely have its own structures around safety and risk assessment. This can be enhanced by drawing on expertise from people trained to recognise and respond to DFV and identify suitable arrangements for safety that are appropriate to the workplace and the individual.

Everyone in the workplace has a role to play in helping to prevent DFV and keeping the workplace safe.





# Domestic and Family Violence safety at work

Domestic and family violence (DFV) is when one person behaves towards another person in a way that is physically or sexually abusive, emotionally or psychologically abusive, economically abusive, threatening, and/or coercive. It is when the behaviour of one person in any way controls or dominates another person or causes that other person to fear for their safety or the wellbeing of someone else.<sup>1</sup>

DFV occurs regardless of class, age, ethnicity, race, gender, income, sexuality, religion or ability. It is not limited to current or former intimate partner relationships, and may impact children, elders, and other family members and kin.

DFV usually escalates over time, becoming more serious and more frequent. If someone is fearful or feels scared of a partner, ex-partner or a family member they may be experiencing DFV.

Sometimes the violence may continue at work, creating safety risks not only to the employee but also to co-workers. DFV is not just a private problem; it can have impacts across the whole organisation. Workplaces can help employees who are impacted by DFV by providing appropriate (and tailored if necessary) measures, as well as fostering a culture where employees feel confident to request assistance.

Creating opportunities for workers to feel more comfortable talking about how DFV is impacting their job can help prevent it from entering a workplace, and to respond effectively to it if it does.

There are important steps workplaces can take to support employees and to help prevent DFV. Employers, supervisors, managers, unions and co-workers as well as human resources (HR), and work health and safety (WHS) representatives can all play a role.

The primary concern for employers should be to maintain a safe workplace and to minimise the risk of harm to employees and others. Other guiding principles in responding to DFV at work include fairness and privacy, whilst upholding workplace rights and entitlements.

For more background information about understanding and recognising the signs of DFV at work, please see The Services Union “When Domestic Violence Comes to Work” publication or visit DFV Work Aware website: <https://www.dvworkaware.org>

DFV is a complex issue with the potential for serious harm and sometimes death. It is important that responses to DFV in the workplace are based on good policy and practice to help prevent and minimise the harm caused by DFV. Workplaces should develop and implement a Domestic and Family Violence Policy and provide regular training and information about their policy and related procedures to all employees.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 (Qld)*, section 8(1).

## COVID-19 and work from home

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia in 2020, many employees have shifted very quickly from their usual places of work to working from home. For many victims/survivors of domestic and family violence, this has placed them more firmly within the sphere of control of the person using violence and coercive control. This may place them at increased risk of violence, whether they live with the perpetrator or not. Conversely, the victim/survivor may be at risk of violence from the perpetrator when returning to their usual place of work, as the perpetrator may perceive the victim/survivor to be moving out of their sphere of control and attempt to re-establish that control through violence. It is important to be mindful of this when completing this safety planning tool and to also consult with local specialist DFV services to facilitate a safe process.

## Responding to DFV victims/survivors around safety

DFV often occurs in people's homes and private lives. However, DFV and its impacts can come to work and may present with some obvious or not so obvious signs.

These signs should be taken seriously. While it may be difficult to initiate a conversation or share your concerns, such interventions can help victims/survivors feel more supported at work and can help keep people safer.

## Warning signs of DFV

People experiencing DFV may be prevented or delayed in getting to work or experience frequent contact from the person using violence while at work. These warning signs may be less obvious in a work from home context, so it is important to be vigilant for any of these signs, and to proactively check on the wellbeing of employees.

This may lead to:

- Noticeable changes in attendance, lateness or needing to leave work suddenly or early (in a work from home context this might include being late to, or missing entirely, online meetings)
- Absenteeism without explanation
- Needing time off at short notice
- Reduced quality of work, missing deadlines or poor performance
- Increasing hours at work (to avoid going home). In a work from home context, the employee might increase their hours at work as a way of explaining to the perpetrator that they are not available to spend time with them
- Frequent interruptions or harassment at work by DFV perpetrator, which in a work from home context might be observed as interruptions during meetings by the perpetrator, or sudden and unexplained audio and video function being turned off during phone or online meetings
- Changes in behaviour, demeanour and presentation

### They may also:

- Have signs of physical abuse (bruises, injuries or dressing in clothing to disguise these), which might be observed in videoconference calls
- Show recent changes in personality or confidence or be experiencing mental health issues, which might be expressed as tiredness and being withdrawn
- Try to hide what is happening by making excuses, including unwillingness to participate in videoconference discussions
- Seem afraid or anxious or keen to keep their partner/other person who is using violence happy

## Talking to an employee about DFV at work

A quick guide to talking about DFV in the workplace has been included at the end of this booklet – please refer to this guide to help you plan a conversation with a worker.

If DFV has not been disclosed but is suspected, it can be important to reach out to the employee to express your concern and let them know help is available.

An employee who experiences DFV is less likely to disclose their situation or approach management directly if they do not feel confident that the workplace will respond with support and understanding. People experiencing DFV can often be socially isolated, and shame and fear can make them reluctant to ask for help. This may be compounded by working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Talking about DFV can be difficult and emotionally charged for both the person being abused and their co-workers or supervisors, and it needs to be handled with sensitivity.

It is important to remember that in DFV, the person using the violence seeks to control the victim/survivor and to take away their power. It can therefore be hard for the person experiencing the violence to leave the relationship, and it may take several attempts for the victim/survivor to break free. Whilst the onus is on the perpetrator to stop using violence, this may not be an immediate reality and the focus need to be on the victim's/survivor's safety.

Early identification by an employer that an employee is experiencing difficulties is a step towards offering appropriate support in a timely way. This in turn could mean that the employee is able to respond to the situation more effectively, minimising the impact on the workplace.

It may be easier for a person experiencing violence if the workplace is already aware of the impacts and signs of DFV and has sent clear and consistent messages to all employees that they will respond in non-judgmental and supportive ways. This can assist to build trust with employees who are affected and to reassure them that the workplace will assist them.



### Points to remember when starting a conversation:

- Ensure a private and safe space to talk with the employee, with no interruptions and enough time to be able to talk through any concerns. This may be challenging in a work from home situation, and may require some creative strategies, for example arranging to speak with the employee by phone or videoconference when they are in an alternative safe location
- If the person hasn't disclosed the DFV previously, start out by sharing with them some of the things you have noticed or are worried about. (You don't seem like yourself, or you seem worried or distracted at work and I am wondering if there is something going on that we may be able to assist you with?)
- The person may have never recognised or acknowledged that what they are experiencing is DFV or that they are a victim/survivor of DFV
- Let them know you are here to help and are not here to judge or give advice
- Let them know they are not to blame and DFV is not ok, and is not their fault
- Tell them you will keep the conversation confidential and can help support them with accessing entitlements to leave or other supports at work
- Be prepared for questions about privacy and confidentiality and the circumstances under which information relating to workplace safety may need to be shared with others at work
- Talk to them about safety and ask is there anything you can do to increase their safety
- Ask if they are willing to have a safety assessment conversation to help the workplace identify risks at work and to develop a plan to implement for keeping them safe
- If they do not agree, let them know the offer is still open and that you (or other identified personnel) are available to assist if requested
- Have the contact details for local domestic and family violence services to hand
- Be prepared to arrange an interpreter if needed <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>

## Workplace DFV policy

**A workplace DFV policy and accompanying procedures will usually outline provisions for access to safety, and flexible options for employees experiencing abuse. The Queensland Government provides an example [here](https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/documents/policy/support-employees-affected-domestic-and-family-violence-queensland-government-model) (<https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/documents/policy/support-employees-affected-domestic-and-family-violence-queensland-government-model>).**

This policy can include asking the employee to participate in making a Workplace Safety Plan (see pp. 9-10 for a guide) or being able to seek support from identified people in the workplace (such as a union representative or Contact Officers).

It is up to the person experiencing the violence to tell others about the violence. If it is identified that there is a continued risk, workplaces can take steps to help keep the person safer at work.

It can be supportive to ask the person to collaborate with you to develop effective and relevant responses to their concerns.

The effectiveness and acceptability of safety planning is greatly enhanced through the participation of the employee and it should ideally be developed with their full informed consent.

If the employee does not wish to participate in making a safety plan, then it may be possible to conduct a risk assessment with the information that is already known about the situation if a risk to the workplace has been identified. This is where a general safety plan or audit can be useful.

## General DFV work safety audit and planning

**While workplace settings can vary, keeping DFV on your workplace's risk assessment radar can help keep workers safer. DFV must remain on our radar during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Risks to assess include:

- How easy is it for non-employees to access your workplace? For example, is there an access code, a pass or security staff? Are there less obvious points of entry, such as via a carpark?
- How can non-employees contact people at work (email, phone etc.)?
- If your workplace has public access does it have CCTV or security presence?
- Who has access to information about your employees that might reveal work schedules, contact information or personal details? How is this information accessed?
- Think about secure parking and how public transport is accessed to and from your workplace
- Are there times when your employees work alone or are isolated for periods of time, including when working from home, on a rural property or with poor phone and internet reception?
- Are there alarms or warning systems in place? Are they easily accessible?
- Do you have lock down procedures in place?
- Are any groups of workers at greater risk? For example, reception, showroom or security staff

## Individual safety assessment and planning

Whether requested by a worker or determined by management, the following process may be useful to help your workplace to:

- Identify and plan responses to any threat or risk at work
- Identify ways an employee and others in the workplace can be safer at work
- Maintain agreed and up-to-date contacts, responses or actions if concerns about safety are raised

Tools contained in this guide are in three parts:

**PART 1:** Collect contact information and identify appropriate people at work to be involved.

**PART 2:** Share information, assess safety risks at work and identify strategies to increase safety.

**PART 3:** Collate the information to identify specific safety measures to implement in a Safety Plan.

Not all of the questions will be necessary or appropriate in your workplace, and some may already be part of your workplace safety protocols. The information gathered can be used to inform the development of an individual safety plan.

## Preparing for the assessment

**Be familiar with the questions in this guide before you commence.**

Ensure that you are comfortable with the level of training you have received and seek support if you do not feel confident to make the assessment.

Be mindful of privacy and confidentiality, and the limits to these. For example, if the worker shares that the person using violence has access to firearms, the employer may be required to tell other people, particularly if there is an immediate risk of danger. This may include contacting the police and specialist DFV services, as well reporting any child protection concerns (particularly if there are [mandatory reporting requirements](#)).

Prepare a list of up-to-date referrals to [specialist DFV services](#).

Have information about [Domestic Violence Orders \(DVOs\)](#) and a copy of any relevant workplace policies and procedures or other information published by your workplace about DFV at hand.

Arrange a suitable time and location and seek permission from the employee to discuss their DFV situation as it relates to work, including providing up to date contact details for emergency or other contacts.

If the employee requires information in languages other than English, these can be found at:

<http://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence/my-situation-is/how-do-i-help-my-community-understand-domestic-violence/domestic-and-family-violence-resources>

## Part 1: Workplace and Emergency Contact Details

Explain your role to the employee and let them know that while you are not an expert in DFV, you will be working with them to support them and optimise their safety at work. Ask for consent to work with them (and their union representative if requested) to conduct this Safety Assessment. Advise them that they can choose which parts they do and do not consent to, and that they can change their mind about consenting to this process and different parts of this process.

Permission by employee granted (yes / no)			
Employee Details		Manager's Details	
Title		Full Name	
First Name		Position	
Last Name		Email	
Email Safe to email?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Phone (w)	(m)
Phone	(h) Safe to call? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	(m) Safe to call? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Safe to text? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Safe to vmail? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>HR or Contact Officer Details</b>
	(w)	Full Name	
Employee #		Position	
Position		Email	
Work Team		Phone (w)	(m)
Employment Status	F/T    P/T    Casual Job Share    Volunteer/student	Notes:	

**People to contact in an emergency or if the person does not come to work when expected**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Email	Phone: (M) (H)
Relationship to Employee	
<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Email	Phone: (M) (H)
Relationship to Employee	
<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Email	Phone: (M) (H)
Relationship to Employee	

# Part 2: Workplace Safety Assessment Questionnaire

## Instructions

- Check boxes as you go
- Highlight any areas where risk is apparent to revisit and seek further advice
- Make notes about any action to be taken
- TBD = to be done

## 1. Specialist DV Support

### Ask about current support and access to specialist services

Ask if the employee has sought or received support from a specialist DFV service. <i>If not, provide appropriate referral information.</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/>
If “yes”, ask if they have completed a <a href="#">personal safety plan</a> . If “no” explain that a personal safety plan performed by a DFV specialist service can assist in increasing personal safety, and also in identifying potential safety strategies for the workplace or while travelling to work.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/>
Ask if any details of any existing personal safety plan relate to the workplace or travelling to work. Ask if the existing personal safety plan can be provided to inform this safety assessment.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/> Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date requested / / Date received / /
Ask if the Employee agrees to an exchange of contact details between the appropriate workplace person and the employee’s contact at the specialist DFV Service. <i>(Note contact details for contact at specialist DFV Service)</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date requested / / Date received / /
Ask if the employee has access to support outside of work (family, friend, EAP, psychologist, social worker, counsellor or legal representative). Ask if any of these people may be added to emergency contacts.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/>
Name	Phone	Relationship
Name	Phone	Relationship



Name	Phone	Relationship
Confirm if the employee agrees that information relating to the safety of the employee or the workplace with nominated contacts can be exchanged under relevant circumstances. Note any specific circumstances.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Notes:		

## 2. Confidentiality

### Clarify and reach an understanding about how information will be managed

Check that the employee has been advised and understands that the provision of information in relation to DFV will remain confidential. Confirm what information has already been given to other employees or managers at work and check the employee is aware of this and agrees.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Confirm that the employee has been advised that information will only be shared on a “need to know” basis. However, if a risk to the safety of the employee or others at or outside work is identified, action may need to be taken and information shared to prevent harm.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Ask if the perpetrator of the violence performs any role where they may have access to personal information or contact details of the employee (for example, if they are in the same organisation or through intranet access). <i>If so, identify steps that may be required to support the employee and prevent the disclosure of unwanted contact or information.</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Steps required:	


### 3. Establish the risks and discuss strategies to minimise them

<p>Does the employee have any concerns about their safety at work (including work from home) in relation to DFV? <i>If yes, explore what these concerns are and who might be involved.</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/> Date completed: / / Actioned by _____</p>
<p>Ask if a specialist DFV service has identified any safety concerns relating to the workplace. Ask if these concerns could be passed on to the appropriate person at work.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Ask if there have been any threats made by the perpetrator related to work (i.e. coming to work, disrupting, threats to reputation etc.)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Has the employee experienced any abuse or violence while they've been at work (<i>ask about things like SMS, email, visits or phone calls – as well as implied threats to come to the workplace</i>)? <b>It may be necessary to complete a workplace incident report for past events, especially if they have been disruptive or caused harm.</b></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Does the perpetrator have access to weapons, or have they talked about obtaining or using weapons?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>If it is disclosed that the perpetrator of the violence has made threats relating to work or is in possession of or has access to weapons, ask the employee to make this disclosure to their specialist DFV service or to the police. If you are concerned about the possibility of weapons being bought to the workplace, contact the police.</b></p>	
<p>Notes:</p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	
<p> </p>	

## 4. Domestic Violence Order (DVO)

<p><b>Discuss and assess status</b></p> <p>Ask the employee if there is a DVO in place. Have information available about protection orders if they do not already know about this.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> TBD <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date: / /</p>
<p>If a DVO exists, does it cover the workplace or are there terms involving work?</p> <p><i>If there is a DVO, request a copy of the DVO for safe keeping at work.</i></p>	<p>Copy of DVO received</p> <p>Date: / /</p>
<p>If there is a DVO in place, has the perpetrator ever been charged with breaching the DVO? <i>Record details.</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If there is not a DVO in place, ask the employee if they are interested in applying for a DVO and provide information about DVOs.</p> <p><a href="http://www.qld.gov.au/law/crime-and-police/abuse-family-matters-and-protection-orders">www.qld.gov.au/law/crime-and-police/abuse-family-matters-and-protection-orders</a></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If the employee wants to obtain information about a DVO, suggest that the workplace could be included in the DVO and discuss practicalities of this.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

## 5. Name and details of perpetrator if a DVO is in place for the workplace

(obtain a photo if possible)

Name:	Address:
Phone:	Email:
Height:	Hair Colour:
Vehicle type, make, model and colour (include all vehicles):	Vehicle registration(s):

**Ensure the photo is provided to appropriate persons at work such as security, reception or other employees who may work in a public-facing role or where the perpetrator may attempt access.**





## 7. Contact Officers

### Establish role of support people at work

<p>Offer support and contact from appropriate identified people at work and the circumstances in which these people may be contacted. For example, their manager is the contact for absence or to request flexible work arrangements or leave, and the contact, union delegate and/or designated other trained person is the contact for DFV related support (<i>review safety plan, personal contacts or referrals</i>).</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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### Identified contacts at work

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Phone	Email
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Phone	Email
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Phone	Email
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Phone	Email

## 8. Employee access to entitlements or other support at work

### DFV Leave and other flexible work arrangements

If your workplace has a DFV support policy, explain the options available to the employee and give examples of when leave can be accessed (indicate the level of evidence which may be required to support such requests).

Explain to the employee their entitlements under the Fair Work Act in relation to accessing [unpaid leave](#) and to their Right to Request a [Flexible Work Arrangement](#).

For more information: [www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/family-and-domestic-violence-leave](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/family-and-domestic-violence-leave)



Advise and discuss with the employee any flexible work arrangements that may be supportive in responding to the DFV. This may include changes to work hours, location, or other changes that support the person to seek assistance, or to not be contacted at work by the perpetrator. This might include returning from work from home to the usual place of work, if it is safe to do so.	Amendments made? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any work adjustments that would assist with performance or managing safety at work? <i>Detail below</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the employee need to take time off work for reasons which might assist in responding to the DFV (either full or part days), to attend medical, legal and/or court appointments, and/or to attend to childcare, school, accommodation, financial and/or other related issues?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If the workplace has a DFV policy, does the employee have a copy, and understand the policy?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Are there other specific workplace supports you may be able to provide the employee? <i>Detail below</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Notes:


## 9. Safety at work

### Assess the risk factors for harm occurring at work

Ask the employee to talk you through a typical workday including any childcare arrangements and travel to and from work, if you do not have this information.	Completed / /
Identify possible points of contact with the perpetrator, or concerns about contact at work or while travelling to work or while working from home.	Completed / /
Does the employee work near a window or in a public location? Identify possible safety or contact risks ( <i>Are they always in mobile range, do they drive a work vehicle or visit other workplaces?</i> )	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Completed / /
Does the employee know if the perpetrator has access to any swipe cards or codes for entry into the workplace?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Completed / /
Is there a visitor log or sign in to enter the workplace?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a reception area or public interface?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there times that they are alone at work?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and discuss ways to reduce or eliminate the risk of the employee working alone. <i>Detail below</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure the employee is aware of emergency procedures or duress buttons and how to use these if they are available.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Ask the employee if they can identify any circumstances where another work colleague or someone else in the workplace could be put at risk	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, discuss options to address the above situations and seek consent from the employee to speak to other employees who may be involved and/or at risk.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Completed / /
Discuss and review potential DFV hazards and ensure the employee is aware of the process for reporting and recording threats or incidents.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If working from home, does the employee have access to a charged phone with reception to call for help if needed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If working from home, is the employee able to access exits from the room and building they are in if needed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure any documentation about this is securely stored.	
Notes:	


## 10. Travelling to and from work

### Assess journey risk

How does the employee travel to and from work each day? Include information about where they might usually park, or any public transport used.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Completed / /
Identify a plan for safe travel and include items such as:	
<p>Where to park?</p> <p>How to safely enter and exit the work premises?</p> <p>Does the employee need to be accompanied to car or transport?</p> <p>Is an alternative mobile or duress alarm required?</p> <p>Discuss alternative start and finish times</p>	<p>Discuss alternative journey plans</p> <p>Discuss alternative work locations if available</p> <p>Ensure that other commitments such as school or childcare arrangements are included in the plan</p> <p>Ask the employee if there is anything they are aware of that may assist in keeping them safer</p>
Notes:	

## 11. Observations and assessment of additional risk factors

Does the employee have children in their care? If so, ask if they have concerns about the safety of their children or any other family members.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the employee have any pets or companion animals? If so, ask if they have concerns about the safety of the animals and advise them of the <a href="#">Pets in Crisis Program</a> (a partnership of DV Connect and RSPCA)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the person have a disability? (Note any special needs the employee may have in obtaining assistance to address the DFV)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any cultural or language barriers the person may have in seeking to address the DFV that may require specialised referral? Note resources in community languages are available.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the person experience any psychological or mental health issues (including depression, anxiety or trauma) they may need assistance in addressing? (make a note about any of your observations about their mental wellbeing).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the person experience any physical health issues they may need assistance in addressing?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the person mentioned or have you or other employees observed any issues such as indications of substance abuse or dependency?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your impression about how fearful the person is about their safety or the safety of others? What gives you this impression?	
Ask the person if there is anything else they think that the workplace should be aware of in relation to the DFV.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Notes:	

## 12. Other issues for consideration

Make sure you know what options might be available at your workplace

Temporary or permanent relocation to alternative work site options.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Period of absence from work (with agreement about returning to work).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Financial assistance (pay in advance or loan) if financial circumstances require.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Other “in kind” support such as payment for relocation, assistance with providing a mobile phone, assisting with safety-related expenses such as changing locks or installing security lighting at home.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Checking the account details that the person would like to be paid to (this may change or may need to be split).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Offering to securely store copies of important documents (passports, birth certificates etc.)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

## 13. What if the victim/survivor and perpetrator are both employees?

**These situations must be carefully managed, and it is appropriate to ask if there are any domestic violence orders (DVO) in place that might limit contact or make it necessary to eliminate contact at work.**

If there are two-way DVOs in place, seek assistance from specialist DFV service to develop a strategy to implement at work. Always ensure that the parties are not spoken to together about the violence.

Do not make joint referrals to EAP for both parties together and advise your EAP provider about the situation if possible before employees make contact.

Be clear that any violence or abuse perpetrated through or at the workplace will not be tolerated; that the workplace has work health and safety responsibilities to all workers and vice versa; and that it may result in disciplinary action that could include termination of employment.

Provide the person using the violence with a referral to a service that specialises in assisting people in these situations. Consider providing support, such as time off or flexible arrangements if the person agrees to access such services.

This may become particularly challenging if both parties reside at the same location and one or both are working from home. Please seek advice from a specialist DFV service regarding how to proceed in this situation.

<p>If the perpetrator is in the same workplace, ask the employee if a specialist DFV service has identified any safety strategies to put in place. Also ask the employee to help you identify any specific strategies that they think are necessary to keep them and the person using violence separate from one another in the workplace</p>	
<p>If a DVO is in place this may also involve discussing the situation separately with the person using the violence and insisting on compliance. Seeking specialist advice from a DFV service is recommended prior to this discussion in order to frame the conversation as effectively and safely as possible (<i>An assessment of the risk of violence being perpetrated at work including using work resources should also be undertaken</i>).</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Completed / /</p>
<p>Notes:</p>	
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## Part 3: Documenting agreed actions

Agreed immediate actions to be taken to increase safety, including people at work to be informed on a “need to know” basis

Notes:

Recommended short-term safety measures that may need approval to implement

Notes:

**Recommended longer-term strategies that may need approval to implement**

Notes:

**Referrals made: names and contact details of agencies**

Notes:

Make sure that you are supported by your workplace to conduct this kind of safety assessment. If you are uncertain about the process then seek support from a specialist DFV service about planning your approach with the employee.

## Final steps:

- Review the collected information to develop an individual workplace safety plan for the person experiencing DFV and gain any necessary approvals to take the agreed actions. The individual workplace safety plan outlines the steps that the employee and workplace will address the risks of DFV on the workplace
- Adapt the template individual workplace safety plan at Appendix A of this booklet or draft an individual workplace safety plan that suits your workplace
- Share the draft plan with the person involved and seek their feedback
- With the worker's consent, share the draft plan with their local specialist DFV service and seek their feedback
- Consolidate and finalise the plan
- Implement the plan, involving others on a need-to-know basis
- Monitor the effectiveness of the plan and proactively schedule regular reviews, keeping both the workplace and the employee up-to-date. Update information as soon as possible, for example, if there is a new contact officer
- Establish a feedback mechanism that allows staff involved to identify what works and what doesn't, so that safety strategies can be improved in a timely way
- Ensure records are stored securely in accordance with privacy legislation and organisational policies and procedures

If any of the information you have collected in this assessment raises concerns about safety of the employee or other people at work (or outside of work), then talk with the employee about immediately contacting a specialist DFV service or the police for assistance.

If you are concerned about safety risks at the workplace that you don't believe can be managed with reasonable measures, then consider seeking direct specialist advice from a DFV service about the situation. If possible, do this with the support and consent of the employee experiencing the violence.

In situations where you consider that there is a high risk of harm outside of work, or that a DFV order may be being breached, talk to the employee about contacting the police. If the breach relates to the workplace then contact the police directly.

The individual safety plan you develop should be responsive to the nature and context of any threatening behaviours or identified targets of the violence in your workplace. The information you collect can provide information about motivations behind the abusive behaviours, and help you to be prepared if the person using violence does target the workplace or your employee.

## Some things to consider when developing an individual safety plan:

- Establish clear communication procedures for the employee to report a threat at work.

- In a work from home context, establish how to regularly and safely maintain contact with the employee.
- Provide the perpetrator's photo or physical description to reception, security, and/or staff working nearby.
- Screen the victim's/survivor's calls or emails to reduce harassment.
- Change and/or vary work start and/or finish times work to avoid a pattern being identified by the perpetrator.
- Establish processes for keeping up-to-date emergency contact details, in case the employee is late or absent from work.
- Arrange for access to secure parking or an escort to transport.
- Relocate the employee to an alternative workplace if available.
- Provide a [flexible work arrangement](#).
- Assist the employee to connect with community services providing specialist DFV support.
- Support co-workers and managers to recognise or report warning signs such as sudden changes in behaviour, attendance or performance.

## Recording DFV-related information in the workplace

- Any written record, including any agreed workplace arrangements should be held in a secure place separate from employee records.
- Any decision to disclose the DFV to people in the workplace without the consent of the employee (for example where there is a serious workplace safety risk) should be documented.
- All incidents of violence, threatening behaviour or breaches of security in the workplace should be recorded and retained for evidence purposes if required. The record must be clear, accurate and include dates, times, locations, and any witnesses.
- Any breaches of domestic violence orders should be recorded and reported to the police with the consent of the victim/survivor.

Keeping accurate records of issues and incidents related to DFV is important and can be provided to police or to the employee when seeking protection orders to be used as evidence of the violence.

Any actions taken by workplaces in relation to employees experiencing DFV should prioritise **safety**.

# Signature Page

Name and position of person conducting assessment

Name	Position
Signature	Date

Signature and approval to use the information contained in this assessment and to proceed with developing draft safety plan (employee)

Name	Position
Signature	Date

Date of review/s of safety assessment or actions (agree with the employee about dates and process)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Quick guide: Talking to people at work about domestic and family violence

- Approach any discussion with sensitivity, without judgement, and in a private location.
- Inform employees that your organisation recognises that DFV can impact work and that it is safe to discuss safety or other concerns at work, including in a work from home context.
- Assure the employee that you will respect their wishes and keep the matter confidential as far as possible with the exception being any serious workplace health and safety concerns.
- Assure them they are not to blame, and validate the disclosure (recognising this may be painful or embarrassing).
- Keep the focus on the impact the abuse is having on their work life and discuss a support strategy including things the workplace can do to assist.
- Collaborate with the employee and their representative in making assessments about their safety and in determining which strategies are best to implement.
- Avoid giving advice (except about workplace entitlements or policies) and explain the limitations of your role.
- Don't become personally involved; rather be helpful with communication, information and support.
- Try to keep the focus of the conversation related to the workplace but ensure the person is getting support around safety outside the workplace by referring them to a specialist DFV service.
- Take time to explore any concerns about work safety or perpetrator contact at work, including in a work from home context, and discuss the safety measures that might assist.
- Provide useful information such as referrals to legal and DFV services, EAP providers or to state or national telephone assistance services (such as 1800 RESPECT).
- Take care of yourself and take advantage of workplace supports such as EAP if you feel stressed or impacted by the situation at work.
- Encourage your workplace to display and promote material that takes a stance against DFV.
- Keep records of discussions or interviews in a secure place separate from employee records.
- Seek assistance from people at work who may be more experienced than you in this area, and from specialist DFV services.
- Understand the impact that trauma can have on people who experience DFV and that they may not always be able to clearly discuss or recall facts about their situation with you.

For more information see the booklet *When Domestic and Family Violence Comes to Work* (available from The Services Union or Basic Rights Queensland).

This workplace resource is intended as a guide only and has been developed by Basic Rights Queensland for The Services Union with the support of funding from the Queensland Office of Industrial Relations. It is strongly recommended that workplaces undertake specialised training in the field of domestic violence safety assessment to maximise effectiveness and minimise the chances of harm.



## Appendix A: Template – Individual DFV Workplace Safety Plan

This individual DFV workplace safety plan accompanies and complements the information gathered in Parts 1 and 2 of the Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Safety Planning Tools booklet. It is intended as a template to be adapted to the needs of the employee and workplace.

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact officer name: \_\_\_\_\_

Union representative name: \_\_\_\_\_

Health and safety representative name: \_\_\_\_\_

See Part 2, section 6 Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Safety Planning Tools booklet for contact details

### Specialist DFV service contact details

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Key contact: \_\_\_\_\_

### Details and description of person using violence recorded in Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Safety Planning Tools booklet

Date	Risk	Safety strategy	Who is responsible for what?	Timeframe
dd/mm/yyyy	e.g. vulnerable to stalking to/from transport	e.g. security escort	e.g. contact officer will arrange security escort, security escort will be available at required times, and employee will make use of security escort	e.g. immediate and ongoing


Communication strategy

e.g. 1.  
 Employee has been supplied with a work mobile phone and a contact officer or manager will make contact by (text/phone) at the start and end of each shift.

Domestic Violence Order attached: Yes  No

Expiry date: dd/mm/yyyy

Copy of personal safety plan (e.g. developed with specialist DFV service) attached: Yes  No

Review date: dd/mm/yyyy