



DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Information for students and staff during COVID-19

Western Sydney University is dedicated to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all its students and staff, and recognises that for those in unsafe home environments the new pressures and restrictions enforced as a result of COVID-19 may bring increased anxiety, risk and exposure to issues such as domestic and family violence.

Domestic and family violence (DFV) is behaviour by a partner, ex-partner, or a family member which is violent, bullying, threatening, coercive or controlling. This may include threats or actual harm which is physical, psychological, sexual, financial, or verbal. We understand that DFV does not discriminate and affects all communities regardless of gender, sexuality, cultural background, disability, age or economic status.

IF YOU ARE AFFECTED BY DFV DURING COVID-19

If you are experiencing DFV during COVID-19 the University will work with you to facilitate opportunities for a safe study and work environment. We encourage you to make contact with the relevant support service option outlined below:

Students should contact **Student Wellbeing Services** on 1300 668 370 (select option 4 then option 1)

Staff should speak to their supervisor, the **Office of Human Resources (OHR)**, the **Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)** or the **Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing team (WHSW)**.

UNIVERSITY SUPPORTS

Counselling and Wellbeing support

For students affected by DFV, the University's **Student Wellbeing** Service can provide counselling support and may be able to offer financial assistance in some cases if needed. Students should contact **1300 668 370** (select option 4 then option 1) for advice and support.

For staff the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** offers a confidential counselling and support service. This service is available to all staff, including their family members at no cost. You can access support via **AccessEAP** online or by phoning **1800 818 728**. The University may also be able to make alternative work arrangements for staff experiencing DFV when working in a home environment. Contact **OED** for further advice.

Safety and Security

Other possible safety precautions that may be available include the removal of staff contact information from the Staff Directory, arranging a **security** escort to and from vehicles when on campus, and any other safety measures as appropriate to the individual circumstances.

The safety of our students and staff is a priority. If there is a threat of harm to any individual on campus as a result of a DFV matter, either through phone or email contact or in person, advice should be sought from Campus Safety and Security. If there is an immediate life threatening situation call the NSW Police on 000, and then notify **Campus Safety and Security** if time permits on 1300 737 003.

Adjustments to Study and Exam or Work Arrangements

For Students - Special provisions relating to a student's study progression may be provided if they are affected by DFV such as study break options or extensions on assessments to help manage matters related to DFV. Special Exam provision may also be available for students who do not have a safe space to undertake their exam in the home environment. **Student Wellbeing** can be contacted for advice and to assist in coordinating any arrangements with Course Advisors or Lecturers.

For staff - A staff member experiencing DFV may access up to **10 days** paid Domestic and Family Violence Leave per year, and any other paid or unpaid leave available to them for the purpose of attending appointments, making relocation or safety arrangements, or other activities related to their circumstances. Additional paid leave may also be



granted based on individual circumstances. A staff member supporting a family member experiencing DFV may request leave without pay and/or apply for personal leave for that purpose. A staff member experiencing, or supporting an immediate family member experiencing DFV can also request a change in their working arrangements. Staff should speak to their supervisor or [HR Advisor](#) for advice on flexible work options available.

OTHER SUPPORTS

Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services can assist with financial support if eligible and also links to other support services.

1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)

1800RESPECT has social workers who are available and a 24-hr national family and domestic violence phone counselling service.



Domestic Violence Hotline 24-hour line - 1800 65 64 63

The Domestic Violence Line is a NSW state-wide telephone crisis counselling and referral service for women and persons who identify as female.

Mens Line Australia (1300 78 99 78)

MensLine is a service for men who are victims of domestic and family violence or are experiencing emotional health and relationship concerns and are looking for support.



Daisy and Sunny Apps

The [Daisy app](#) connects individuals to domestic and family violence support services in your local area. The [Sunny app](#) provides the same supports for women with disability. The apps, developed by 1800RESPECT, are free to download with a built in safety feature.



INFORMATION FOR LECTURERS & STUDENT SERVICES STAFF

If a student discloses a concern for their safety or wellbeing as a result of a DFV matter, a lecturer or student service staff member should:

- encourage the affected student to seek counselling support via the [Student Counselling Service](#)
- provide the student with this resource, or direct them to the [Domestic and Family Violence webpage](#)
- refer the student to the [Student Wellbeing Service](#) for further advice and support.

Lecturers and Students Services staff can seek advice from the University's [Student Wellbeing Service](#).

Exam Convenors - special exam provisions are available for students in DFV situations who do not have a safe space to undertake online exams in the home environment. Contact the [Student Wellbeing Service](#) for advice.

INFORMATION FOR MANAGERS & SUPERVISORS

If a staff member discloses a concern for their safety or wellbeing as a result of a DFV matter, a supervisor should:

- encourage the affected staff member/s to seek counselling support via the [AccessEAP Program](#)
- advise the staff member of the [Domestic and Family Violence Policy](#), and related entitlements, and
- refer the staff member to the appropriate [HR Advisor](#), or the Executive Director OHR.

Additional provisions may also be available to the staff member regarding their work environment if they are working remotely due to COVID-19. Managers and supervisors can seek advice from their [Senior HR Partner](#) or the [OED](#), and should also refer to the [Domestic and Family Violence Support - Information for Managers and Supervisors](#) resource for more information.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

More information and resources are available on the Domestic and Family Violence webpage:

westernsydney.edu.au/equity_diversity/equity_and_diversity/gender_equality/family_and_domestic_violence