

This document aims to provide practical guidance to employees in regional manufacturing businesses that are impacted by family violence.

### **BRMG Statement on Family and Gender Based Violence**

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The Bendigo Regional Manufacturing Group (BRMG), stand firmly against family and gender based violence and all forms of abuse.

As a membership our commitment to safety, respect, and dignity extends beyond the confines of our workplaces and into the communities where we live and serve.

#### **Our Commitment**

**Supportive Workplace:** We strive to create an environment where all employees feel safe and supported.

**Awareness and Education:** We are committed to raising awareness about family violence and its impacts.

**Community Engagement:** BRMG actively supports local initiatives that combat family violence and aid survivors.

**Policy and Advocacy:** We will advocate for policies that protect individuals from family violence and support survivors' rights.

Family violence is a societal issue that requires collective action.

Our BRMG Membership is committed to being part of the solution, promoting a culture of respect that upholds the safety and well-being of every individual.

Together, we can make a difference.

### **What is family violence**

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Family violence is when a partner, ex-partner, carer, family member or someone you are in a 'family-like' relationship with uses threatening, controlling or violent behaviour that makes you scared for your own – or someone else's – safety and wellbeing.

### **What does family violence look like?**

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Family violence can take many forms, including (but not limited to):

- **Physical or sexual** – Attacking or hurting you, making you afraid to say 'no', or using force to scare you.
- **Emotional, psychological, cultural or spiritual** – Putting you down, making you feel worthless, or stopping you from practicing religious, spiritual, or cultural rituals.
- **Financial** – Managing or controlling your money.
- **Threatening** – Saying they will hurt your family, pets or harm themselves if you leave; threatening to tell others about your visa or immigration status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or personal health information; or telling you that you will lose your children if you don't do as you are told.

## Family and Gender Based Violence Employee Factsheet

- **Coercive** – Making you feel guilty when you see family or friends, or making you doubt your own memory and interactions (sometimes called 'gaslighting').
- **Controlling or dominating** – Stalking or monitoring you.

### **Who is affected by family violence?**

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Family violence can affect people of all genders, ages, abilities, sexual orientations, and social, cultural, and religious backgrounds.

It can occur between current or former spouses; current or former de facto partners; parents and children; siblings; grandparents and grandchildren; against elders; in LGBTIQ+ relationships; between relations according to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship rules; within shared households; and against pets.

Family violence also harms children's health, wellbeing, and development.

### **How can your employer support you?**

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#### **Family violence leave**

Under the Fair Work Act, employees (including part-time and casual employees) are entitled to **10 days of paid** family and domestic violence leave each year.

Employees who are experiencing family and domestic violence can take this leave to deal with the impacts of family and domestic violence where it is not practical to do so outside their work hours. This might include:

- making arrangements for your own or a family member's safety (including relocation), or
- attending court or accessing police services, or
- attending counselling, or appointments with medical, financial, or legal professionals.

Employees can access the full amount of leave from the day they start work. The leave can be taken as single or multiple days, or as part days by agreement. An employee's leave balance renews each year on their work anniversary and doesn't accumulate from year to year.

**Confidentiality** – Your employer must take reasonable steps to keep information about notice or evidence for family and domestic violence leave confidential.

**Notice and evidence** – You must let your employer know as soon as possible if you need to take leave. An employer may ask for evidence.

**Pay slips** – Your employer must not mention paid family and domestic violence leave on payslips.

**Protections from discrimination** – It's unlawful for an employer to take adverse action against an employee (or potential employee) because they are (or have been) experiencing family and domestic violence.

For more information refer to: [Fair Work Ombudsman Family and domestic violence leave factsheet](#)

### Other ways your employer might be able help

Ask your employer if they can:

- Refer you to the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** (if available)
- Offer **flexible working arrangements**, for example:
  - working remotely,
  - flexible or altered working hours,
  - changes to your duties (temporary or ongoing)
  - relocation or transfers
  - staying on site after hours if that helps you feel safer.
- Limit electronic communication, for example:
  - **block or filter** calls, emails or other communications.
  - **change** email addresses or phone numbers
- **Refer you to or help you access support services**
- Assist in any other ways.

### How do I respond if someone at work tells me they are impacted by family violence?

#### 1. Recognise

If you notice someone you work with displaying signs of experiencing family violence create a safe and private space to check in and share your observations using non-judgemental language.

#### 2. Respond

If you receive a disclosure of family violence:

- Listen without interruption or judgement
- Reassure that the violence is not their fault, and it is never okay
- Believe and validate their experiences
- Provide information that will support the person to make their own choices (as much as possible)
- Maintain confidentiality as strictly as possible.

#### 3. Refer

Provide information about workplace supports and specialist support services who can help the person to explore their options. Remember you are not a counsellor.

For more information about the signs of family violence, and starting a conversation refer to: [Safe + Equal, Identifying family violence.](#)

### Support services

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call **000**.

#### [1800RESPECT](#)

- 1800 737 732 (24 hours, 7 days)
- National domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service.

#### [The Orange Door in Loddon](#)

- 1800 512 359
- Located at 57 View Street, Bendigo

- Adults, children and young people's family violence services, child and family services, Aboriginal services, and services for people who use violence.

They can help with:

- safety planning with you to help keep you and your family safe
- accessing ways to support any immediate safety concerns
- connections to housing services
- financial support to relocate and purchase essentials, including access to the Escaping Violence Payment scheme
- security concerns, such as tech sweeps and small-scale home security interventions like lock changes and window repairs
- referrals to legal, financial, and counselling services.

### [Safe Steps](#)

- <https://www.safesteps.org.au/>
- 1800 015 188 (24 hours, 7 days)
- Counselling service who can:
  - Assess your risks, and explore options to increase your safety, whether you want to stay in the relationship or leave
  - Create a personal safety plan designed to keep you and your children safe
  - Assess eligibility for, and organise access to safe crisis accommodation for you, your children and any pets, following risk assessment findings and accommodation availability
  - Support you with how you may be able to stay in your home with your children – if it is safe to do so - when the abuser is required by law to leave
  - Explain your legal rights and entitlements including connecting you with Victoria Police or helping you to apply for an intervention order
  - Refer you to local services that can provide specialist legal, financial, cultural, and family support.

### [Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

- For information on Family and domestic violence leave
- [fairwork.gov.au/fdvleave](http://fairwork.gov.au/fdvleave)

### [No to Violence – Men's Referral Service](#)

- [ntv.org.au](http://ntv.org.au)
- 1300 766 491 (24 hours, 7 days)

Counselling service to support men concerned about their behaviour.