

# Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) Factsheet

## Background

The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) has been designed to increase the safety and wellbeing of Victorians by supporting prescribed services to identify, assess and manage family violence risk effectively. MARAM sets out key principles and pillars that should be embedded into an organisation's policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools. MARAM also identifies the responsibilities of various organisations and staff across the system.

MARAM has been established in law under a new Part 11 of the **Family Violence Protection Act 2008**. It creates a shared responsibility between prescribed services and sectors. This collaborative approach provides more options to keep victim survivors safe and it supports a more coordinated approach to keep perpetrators in view and accountable for their actions.

Aligning policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools to MARAM is a gradual process, with organisations beginning from different starting points and continuing to improve over time. It is not expected that all organisations will be able to implement all the requirements of MARAM immediately but will work towards greater alignment over time.

Everyone has a role to play in assessing and managing family violence risk. Your role will be dependent on the nature of your work and contact with those experiencing family violence. Identification, assessment and management of family violence risk is a shared responsibility across a broad range of services, organisations and sectors. Leaders will also hold MARAM responsibilities and have a role to play in ensuring the MARAM reforms are appropriately implemented in the organisations.

MARAM is being rolled out with the Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes. Information sharing is a key enabler of the MARAM reforms. More information and Ministerial Guidelines regarding the Schemes is available on the [Vic Gov website](https://www.vic.gov.au/information-sharing-schemes-and-the-maram-framework) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/information-sharing-schemes-and-the-maram-framework>>.

## Benefits of MARAM

- All parts of the service system will have a shared understanding of family violence, risk assessment and management.
- Practitioners have evidence-based tools to guide assessment and appropriate risk management action.
- There is a clear understanding of the responsibilities of other parts of the system to coordinate and implement safety and accountability planning.
- Ensure the broad range of experiences across the spectrum of seriousness and presentations of risk are represented, including for Aboriginal and diverse communities, children, young people and older people, across identities, and family and relationship types.
- Help support people experiencing family violence and keep users of family violence in view and accountable.

## What is family violence?

MARAM seeks to ensure all professionals have a shared understanding of family violence. This enables a more consistent approach to risk assessment and management across the service system and helps keep perpetrators in view and accountable and victim survivors safe. According to Victorian law, family violence is behaviour by a person towards a family member that is physically, sexually, economically, emotionally or psychologically abusive. It includes behaviour that is threatening or coercive or that controls or dominates the family member and causes them to feel fear for their own safety or wellbeing or that of another family member or person. This includes behaviour that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of such abuse.

MARAM outlines key understandings of family violence that should underpin the work of all prescribed services including:

- Family violence is a behaviour that controls or dominates a family member and causes them to fear for their own or another person's safety or wellbeing.
- Family violence is a choice by a perpetrator to use behaviours for the purposes of power and control. Perpetrators use coercive tactics and violent controlling behaviour to gain power over one or more victim survivors. Responsibility for the use of violence rests solely with the perpetrator.
- Family violence is deeply gendered and rooted in structural inequalities. While both men and women can be perpetrators or victim survivors of family violence, overwhelmingly, perpetrators are men, who largely perpetrate violence against women (who are their current or former partner) and children.
- Family violence can occur in a range of ways across different relationship types and communities, including but not limited to the following:
  - Children and young people as victim survivors in their own right who have unique experiences, vulnerabilities and needs
  - Older peoples' experiences of family violence, often described as elder abuse, from intimate partners, adult children or carers, or extended family members
  - The experiences of family violence may vary across communities and people from Aboriginal or diverse backgrounds may additionally experience structural inequalities.

## MARAM Responsibilities

There are three levels of MARAM responsibilities: Screening and Identification, Brief and Intermediate and Comprehensive. MARAM responsibilities underpin each of these levels.

1. Screening and Identification	2. Brief and Intermediate	3. Comprehensive
<p>A practitioner who may come in contact with family violence victim survivors whilst providing universal services.</p>	<p>A practitioner who in the line of their work has some contact with people experiencing or using family violence but where responding to family violence is not their core role or function.</p>	<p>A practitioner whose role is to respond to people experiencing or using family violence.</p>
<p><b>MARAM Responsibilities:</b> <b>1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement</li><li>2. Identification of family violence</li><li>5. Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals</li><li>6. Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation)</li><li>9. Contribute to coordinated risk management</li><li>10. Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management</li></ul>	<p><b>MARAM Responsibilities:</b> <b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Intermediate risk assessment</li><li>4. Intermediate risk management</li></ul>	<p><b>MARAM Responsibilities:</b> <b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. Comprehensive assessment</li><li>8. Comprehensive risk management and safety planning.</li></ul>

## MARAM alignment

Prescribed organisations are required to effectively incorporate the four pillars of the Framework into existing policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools. MARAM alignment requires that embedding activities are guided by the 10 MARAM principles, incorporate the contents of the four pillars (and in particular the evidence-based risk factors and MARAM aligned tools) and assign MARAM responsibilities. An Organisational Embedding guide and supporting resources are available on the [VicGov website](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>> under Organisational focussed resources. The following steps have been recommended for organisation leaders to support MARAM alignment:

1. Read MARAM policy and practice documents.
2. Identify or establish governance to oversee the change process.
3. Read, understand and determine MARAM responsibilities for roles within their organisation.
4. Assess organisational landscape for interactions with family violence and existing tools used.
5. Identify and review organisational policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools that will require updating to reflect MARAM. Also identify the need for any new materials as appropriate.
6. Assess training needs and implement a training strategy.

## Training for DHHS funded workforces

### Training for organisational leaders:

Leading Alignment MARAM training is available for organisational leaders, CEOs, directors or senior managers across all organisations/agencies prescribed under MARAM. The training is pitched at a senior level and organisational decision-makers leading the embedding of MARAM in the organisational context. To register for the training, visit [Vic Gov MARAM website](https://www.vic.gov.au/training-for-information-sharing-and-maram) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/training-for-information-sharing-and-maram>>

### MARAM training for practitioners:

Training will be available for practitioners from DHHS funded workforces/organisations who have roles that align with the Brief and Intermediate and the Screening and Identification levels of MARAM.

For further information and links to training visit [the department's Providers website](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence-risk-assessment-and-risk-management-framework) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence-risk-assessment-and-risk-management-framework>>.

## Further information

Resources to assist organisations and workers implement MARAM and upskill in family violence knowledge and practice are available on the [Vic Gov MARAM website](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>>.

The MARAM Practice Guides provide guidance in assessing and managing family violence risk. They support you to:

- recognise a wide range of risk factors, including for children, Aboriginal people, older people and diverse communities across identities, family and relationship types
- keep perpetrators in view and hold them accountable for their actions and behaviours.

These resources include Practice Guides, Organisational Embedding Guide, Framework documents and updated Practice Notes (including Practice Notes on responding to COVID-19).

A summary of each MARAM Responsibility Practice Guide for victim survivors is available on the [Vic Gov MARAM website](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>>.

Further resources and training options are being developed to assist organisations and workers implement MARAM. These will be made available through the [department's Providers website](#)

< <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence-risk-assessment-and-risk-management-framework>>.

For further information: [InfoSharing@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:InfoSharing@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <[infosharing@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:infosharing@dhhs.vic.gov.au)>

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Available at [Providers web site Family violence multi-agency risk assessment and management framework](#)  
<<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/family-violence-risk-assessment-and-risk-management-framework>>