Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Organisation-focused Guide for MARAM and Information Sharing for Child and Family Services

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Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (the Centre) would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the past, present, and emerging Traditional Custodians and Elders of this country on which we work.

The Centre also acknowledges the injustices and trauma suffered as a result of European settlement, the Stolen Generations, and other policies such as the forced removal of children from their families, communities, culture and land. We respect the resilience of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the face of this trauma and respect their right to, and aspiration for, self-determination and empowerment.

Sovereignty was never ceded. This always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

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Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to assist the child and family services sector to navigate the information and resources currently available regarding the Family Violence Multi Agency and Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM), Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS). Collectively these reforms are called MARAMIS.

Child and family services are required to align their practice, policies, procedures and systems with the MARAMIS reforms to improve the collective service response to family violence and to promote the wellbeing and safety of children. MARAMIS also serves to keep perpetrators in view and hold them accountable for their actions. There is a significant amount of information and resources available about MARAMIS to assist organisations in implementing these reforms.

The guide provides an overview of the reforms and supporting resources for organisations. It does not replace the need to consult Family Safety Victoria (FSV), Department of Education and Training (DET) or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) resources but can be used as a complementary resource.

- Section 1 of the guide provides a high-level overview of MARAMIS and key resources.
- Section 2 of the guide provides a context for organisations that are aligning their policies, procedures, tools and other resources to MARAMIS.

Terminology and language

The language and definitions used in this guide are consistent with the MARAM Framework. To access an overview of definitions used, follow the link below:

Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework Definitions

MARAM alignment is defined by FSV as *Actions taken by Framework organisations to effectively incorporate the four pillars of the Framework into existing policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools, as appropriate to the roles and functions of the prescribed entity and its place in the service system*.

Acronyms

MARAMIS: MARAM (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment & Management Framework) + Information Sharing schemes

CISS: Child Information Sharing Scheme

FVISS: Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme

ISE: Information Sharing Entity

RAE: Risk Assessment Entity

Framework organisations: Organisations required to align with the MARAM Framework.

Prescribed organisations: Organisations and services prescribed to share information under the FVISS and the CISS.

Section 191 agencies: An agency with which a public service body or public entity enters into or renews a State contract or other contract or agreement in accordance with section 191; and which provides services under that contract or agreement relevant to family violence risk assessment or family violence risk management.

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Section 1: Overview of MARAM & Information Sharing Schemes

Background and context for MARAM and the Information Sharing reforms

Introduction and overview of the MARAMIS reforms

The Victorian Government's reforms commenced in 2018 for child and family services. These are the Family Violence Multi Agency and Risk Assessment and Management Framework and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, which are being rolled out alongside the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS). Together they are known as MARAMIS.

MARAM and FVISS provide an integrated legislative framework to improve the state's collective service response to family violence, while the CISS aims to facilitate information sharing to promote the wellbeing and safety of children more broadly. FVISS and CISS build on existing information sharing and privacy legislation to expand the capability of prescribed organisations in Victoria to collect and share crucial information to effectively assess and manage family violence, and to promote children's safety and/or wellbeing.

MARAMIS does not replace or override the formal mandated responsibilities of agencies such as Child Protection, family services and Victoria Police in regard to children and young people experiencing varying forms of child abuse and neglect but exists alongside these other obligations. The MARAMIS acknowledges that these agencies work to their own policies and procedures in relation to these matters.

The aim of MARAM and the FVISS is to make sure that people affected by, experiencing, or using family violence are provided with an appropriate, consistent, and capable response no matter where or how they engage with services. It aims to establish a system-wide, shared understanding of what family violence is and the roles of organisations in responding to this. The reforms provide a consistent framework to assess whether family violence is present, how it can impact people from different backgrounds and at different stages of life and how we can keep perpetrators of family violence in view and accountable. It acknowledges children as victim survivors in their own right and improves professional capacity to respond, ensuring people are more likely to get the help they need when they need it.

Using an intersectional lens

MARAMIS uses an intersectional lens throughout its tools and practice guidance as a core part of risk assessment. This assists practitioners to recognise how victim survivors uniquely experience family violence and barriers to family violence service responses. It recognises intersecting factors such as identity, systemic oppression, structural inequality, and discrimination and how these inform and shape experiences of family violence, including safety and wellbeing.

Section 144J (2)(e) of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (FVPA) specifically requires Information Sharing Entities (ISEs) to have regard to, and be respectful of, a person's cultural, sexual and gender identity and religious faith, in recognition of the fact that these aspects of identity and experience may affect their response to family violence and the process of sharing information under the FVISS.

Using an intersectional lens assists practitioners to consider how people's unique and individual experiences can interact and shape their experiences of, and responses to, family violence. This understanding is of particular importance when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse or faith communities, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people from small or interconnected communities such as rural and regional Victorians, people who have historical and/or sustained involvement with the social service system – including statutory services – people with a disability and older and younger people.

More information about intersectionality can be found here:

- Intersectionality and Family Violence and importance of data collection
- Understanding Intersectionality
- DVRCV: Feminism & Intersectionality

Children and young people as victim survivors in their own right

Historically, the impact of children and young people's experiences of family violence was not fully recognised or well understood. As a result, children's experiences were often viewed within the confined parameters of their parents' and caregivers' experiences.

MARAMIS recognises the unique needs and experiences of children and young people who experience family violence and establishes children and young people as victim survivors in their own right. This recognition allows for the appropriate risk assessment tools, safety plans, practice guides and training to assess and work with children and young people as victim survivors separately from their family.

Children are victim survivors of family violence whether they are directly targeted by the person using violence or not. They may be subject to physical, sexual, psychological or emotional violence, or to threatening, coercive and controlling behaviours by a perpetrator. Children and young people also experience family violence as victim survivors if they are exposed to the effects of a perpetrator's violence towards any family member, even if they do not witness that violence directly.

The impacts of family violence on children and young people may include increased risk of other vulnerabilities and harms, including bullying, mental health issues, abuse in their own intimate relationships, risk taking behaviours, homelessness, and disengagement from education.

Responses to family violence need to consider how family violence impacts on a child or young person's development, health and wellbeing (physical, emotional, and psychological), education, connection to their culture, and what is needed for the child or young person's recovery, including therapeutic responses.

All prescribed services and programs must complete an individual risk assessment for each child identified in the family where family violence is present. The children's risk assessment includes additional risk factors to the adult assessment and provides guidance on recognising observable signs of trauma at each age and stage of development.

Resources

- Learn more about working collaboratively with children, young people and families in the context of the reforms here MARAM and Information Sharing Resource Hub
- How MARAMIS meets the needs of Children and Young People (Victorian Government website)
- Working with Children and Young People (The Lookout website)
- CFECFW, DV Vic & NTV Webinar series: infants experiencing Family Violence, children experiencing Family Violence, adolescents experiencing Family Violence
- Tips for conversations with children and/or parents/carers about the Information Sharing Schemes
- Dr. Wendy Bunston webinar – Children as clients in their own right

MARAM tools

- Child Assessment Tool (Victim Survivor Responsibility 3, Appendix 7)
- Safety Plan for older children and young people (Victim Survivor Responsibility 4, Appendix 10)

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework

MARAM is established in law as a Legislative Instrument under Part 11 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*. MARAM guides risk identification, assessment, and management.

The *Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework: A shared responsibility for assessing and managing family violence risk* is the principal policy guiding document.

MARAM outlines how organisations can align to reforms, as required under Part 11 of the FVPA, by implementing the requirements of each Pillar[1] and reflecting relevant principles within their policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools.

MARAM outlines:

- An approach to practice which is underpinned by the ten Framework Principles[2]
- Four conceptual 'pillars' with which organisations can align their policies, procedures, practice guidelines and tools
- Information to support a shared understanding of the experience of risk and its impact on individuals, families, and communities
- Expectations of practice that are underpinned by a shared understanding of the range of roles across the service system, and consistent and collaborative practice.

To whom does the Framework apply?

Part 11 of the FVPA establishes the Framework as a legislative instrument.

Organisations required to align with the MARAM are referred to as 'Framework organisations'. The FVPA requires these organisations to align their policies, procedures, and practices with the Framework's Principles and requirements.

Resources

- The MARAM Framework can be found here.
- The Framework is broken down into sections here.
- The Framework is summarised into one page here.
- Appendix 1 is an overview of the MARAM Framework document created for this guide.
- MARAM Training is available, please see here for an overview of options available.

[1] Further information regarding the MARAM Pillars can be found on page 11 of this document.

[2] Further information regarding the ten Framework Principle can be found on page 10 of this document.

Legislative environment

The **FVISS** and **CISS** assist in the implementation of MARAM. The Schemes are grounded in existing legislation and help to maintain shared responsibility for responding to family violence risk, family violence risk management and help to create a more collaborative service system response.

FVISS Ministerial Guidelines

Part 5A of the FVPA and the *Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018* authorise prescribed information sharing entities to share information to assess or manage risk of family violence.

CISS Ministerial Guidelines

Part 6A of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* authorises prescribed information sharing entities to share information to promote the wellbeing and safety of children.

The list below provides links to relevant legislation, policies, and guidelines which inform and interact with the Information Sharing Schemes and the MARAM Framework.

Legislation / Policy / Guidelines
MARAM and Information Sharing Ministerial Guidelines and Resources
Family Violence Protection Act 2008
Children Legislation Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2019
Child Wellbeing and Safety Regulations 2019
Child Wellbeing Safety Act 2005
Children Youth and Families Act 2005
Child Safe Standards 2018
Reportable Conduct Scheme
Best Start Initiative 2019
Best Interests Framework 2007
Health Records Act 2001
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

MARAM Principles

The Framework is based on the belief that to provide consistent, effective and safe responses for people experiencing family violence, services need a shared understanding of family violence and of the responsibilities for the professionals involved to follow. To help achieve a shared understanding, the Framework principles support each Framework 'Pillar' (discussed on the following page) and help guide Victoria's family violence system-wide response.

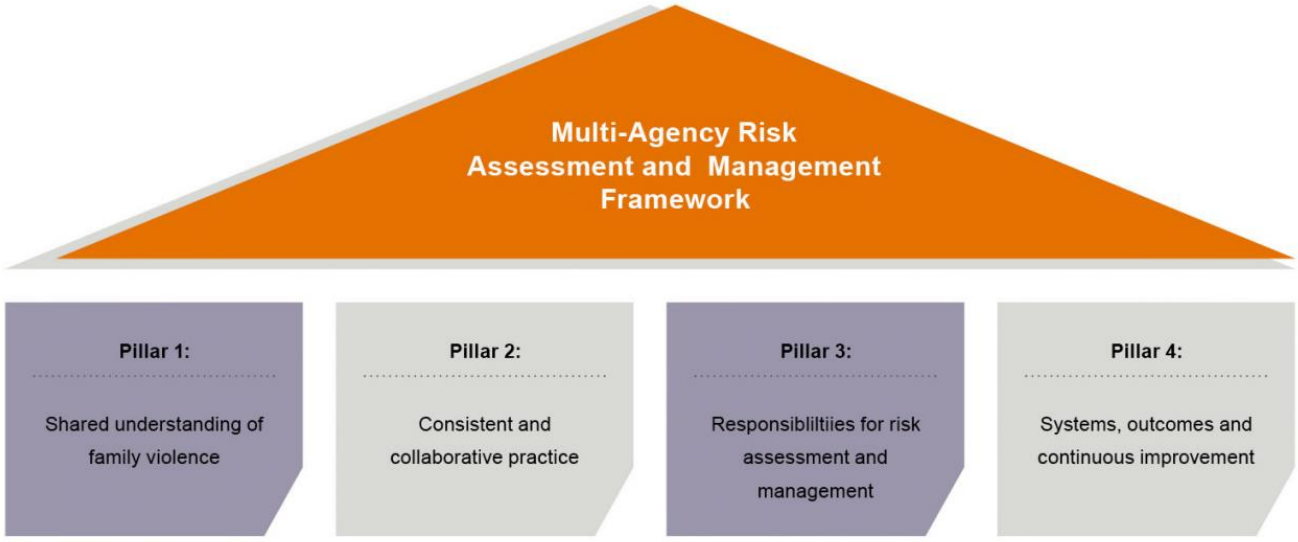
1. FAMILY VIOLENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE	• Family violence involves a spectrum of seriousness of risks and presentations. • Family violence unacceptable in any form across any community or culture.
2. COLLABORATIVE AND COORDINATED RESPONSES	• Professionals should work collaboratively to provide coordinated and effective risk assessment and management responses. • This includes early intervention when family violence first occurs to avoid escalation into crisis and additional harm.
3. UNDERSTAND THE DRIVERS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE	• Professionals should be aware, in their risk assessment and management responses, of the drivers of family violence. • These predominantly are gender inequality, which also intersect with other forms of structural inequality and discrimination.
4. VICTIM SURVIVORS' AGENCY	• The agency, dignity and intrinsic empower of victim survivors must be respected by partnering with them as active-decision making participants in risk assessment and management. • This includes being supported to access and participated in justice processes that enable fair and just outcomes.
5. CHILDREN AS VICTIM SURVIVORS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT	• Family violence may have serious impacts on the current and future physical, spiritual, psychological, developmental and emotional safety and wellbeing of children, who are directly or indirectly exposed to its effects. • Children should be recognised as victim survivors in their own right.
6. FAMILY VIOLENCE IMPACTS ON CHILDREN	• Services provided to child victim survivors should acknowledge their unique experiences, vulnerabilities and needs. • This includes, the effects of trauma and cumulative harm arising from family violence.
7. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TO ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES	• Services and responses provided to people from Aboriginal communities should be culturally responsive and safe, recognising Aboriginal understanding of family violence and rights to self-determination and self management. • Services and responses should also take account of their experiences of colonization, systemic violence and discrimination and recognise the ongoing and present day impacts of historical events, policies and practices.
8. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TO DIVERSE COMMUNITIES	• Services and responses provided to diverse communities and older people should be accessible, culturally responsive and safe, client-centred, inclusive and non-discriminatory.
9. PERPETRATORS ARE IN VIEW AND ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS	• Perpetrators should be encourage to acknowledge and take responsibility to end their violent, controlling and coercive behaviour. • Service responses to perpetrators should be collaborative and coordinated through a system-wide approach that collectively and systematically creates opportunities for perpetrator accountability.
10. ADOLESCENT VIOLENCE IN THE HOME REQUIRES A DIFFERENT RESPONSE	• Family violence used by adolescents is a distinct form of family violence. • It requires a different response to family violence used by adults, because of their age and the possibility that they are also victim survivors of family violence.

MARAM Pillars

The MARAM Framework is structured according to 'Pillars' that aim to establish a system-wide approach and shared responsibility for family violence risk assessment and management. Each Pillar has its own objective.

The Pillars are set at the organisational level and are designed to build knowledge and skill and support the effectiveness and integration of the system-wide response to family violence in Victoria. Listed below are the headings for each Pillar and a description of what organisations need to consider.

Tip: The MARAM alignment organisation self-audit tool uses the Pillars as 'headings' to organise alignment activities. The tool also provides examples of how organisations can demonstrate capability under each Pillar.



1. Figure 2 on p. 12 of the MARAM Framework document illustrates the four pillars.

Pillar 1: Shared understanding of family violence

Pillar 1 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.

Framework organisations demonstrate an evidence-based, shared understanding of family violence risk and impact, including:

- An understanding of what constitutes family violence, including family violence that is deemed a criminal offence
- Drivers and gendered nature of family violence including power imbalances and gender inequality
- Intersectionality and how it shapes experiences of family violence
- Impact of family violence including trauma effects
- Recognising children and young people as victim survivors in their own right
- Measuring family violence risk
- Evidence-based risk factors
- Perpetrator behaviour and approaches to strengthen accountability
- Understanding that family violence used by adolescents is a distinct form of family violence and requires a different response to adults
- Recognition that some people may experience particular risks, forms of family violence and barriers to accessing support.

Pillar 2: Consistent and collaborative practice

Pillar 2 builds on the shared understanding of family violence created in Pillar 1 by developing consistent and collaborative practice for family violence risk assessment and management across different professional roles and sectors.

Framework organisations use a shared approach to identify, screen, assess and manage family violence risk. Framework organisations use tools that are consistent with the evidence-based risk factors and share information relevant to family violence risk assessment and management with other services in accordance with relevant laws.

- Seriousness of risk is assessed through the Structured Professional Judgement model (see below).
- Risk identification screening and assessment is completed using tools that are consistent with evidence-based risk factors.
- Approaches to risk assessment for child or adult victim survivors include:
    - Self-assessment
    - Identification and screening, including routine screening
    - Brief Assessment
    - Intermediate Assessment
    - Comprehensive Assessment by specialist professionals*
    - Perpetrator Behaviour and Comprehensive Risk Assessment by specialist professionals*
    - Assessing and managing risk of adolescents who use family violence*
    - Risk management comprises all activities that keep victim survivors safe and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and behaviours
    - Sharing relevant information
    - Collaborative practice.

*Remember, some professionals also have a role in risk assessment and management at either the intermediate or comprehensive levels.

Assessing risk: Structured Professional Judgement

Structured Professional Judgement is defined in MARAM as a professional determination of level of risk, considering:

- A victim's self-assessed level of risk, safety and fear
- Assessment against evidence-based risk factors
- Information sharing to inform assessment
- Professional judgement, using an intersectional analysis lens.

More information can be found here (follow link to Structured Professional Judgment model)

2. Model of Structured Professional Judgement

Pillar 3: Responsibilities for risk assessment and management

Pillar 3 builds on Pillars 1 and 2 and describes responsibilities for facilitating family violence risk assessment and management. It provides advice on how professionals and organisations define their responsibilities to support consistency of practice across the service system, and to clarify the expectations of different organisations, professionals and service users.

Framework organisations understand their responsibilities in risk assessment and management practice and how these relate to the operation of Part 5A of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, as applicable. Framework organisations assign responsibilities of services and services provided within them in accordance with the responsibilities listed below.

- Responsibilities of relevant organisation, services and service providers are determined.
- Description of each organisation's responsibilities:
    - Responsibility 1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement
    - Responsibility 2: Identification of family violence
    - Responsibility 3: Conduct intermediate risk assessment
    - Responsibility 4: Conduct intermediate risk management
    - Responsibility 5: Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals.
    - Responsibility 6: Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation)
    - Responsibility 7: Comprehensive assessment
    - Responsibility 8: Comprehensive risk management and safety planning.
    - Responsibility 9: Contribute to coordinated risk management
    - Responsibility 10: Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management.
- Assisting organisation to determine how to apply the responsibilities.

Pillar 4: Systems, outcomes and continuous improvement

Pillar 4 outlines how organisational leaders and governance bodies contribute to, and engage with, system-wide data collection, monitoring and evaluation of tools, processes and implementation of the Framework.

Framework organisations establish or use existing relevant governance and advisory structures to implement the Framework; collect consistent information about the evidence-based family violence risk factors, through tools aligned to the responsibilities, of service users' individual experience of the forms of family violence; undertake activities to change organisational culture and practice to promote continuous improvement in risk assessment and management practice, information sharing and enhanced collaboration with other services.

- Establishing and/or reviewing relevant organisational governance structures to support implementation and alignment to MARAM and Information Sharing
- Reviewing the Framework
- Measuring outcomes
- Organisations, services and service providers collect consistent data about family violence risk
- Aggregated data is used to understand service user outcomes and systemic practice issues to support continuous practice improvement.

MARAM Responsibilities

All organisational leaders in prescribed framework organisations are required to understand the roles and responsibilities of professionals and services within their organisation. Identifying and mapping these roles within and across the organisation will support a shared understanding of these.

Shared responsibilities will assist professionals and services to work together to identify, assess and manage family violence risk through information sharing, secondary consultation and referral.

Responsibilities 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10 as outlined below apply to **all** relevant professionals and services within prescribed organisations.

Some professionals also have a role in risk assessment and management at either the *intermediate* (Responsibilities 3 and 4) or *comprehensive* (Responsibilities 7 and 8) levels.

More information on mapping your organisations and services to responsibilities is provided on page 32. An example of a completed mapping tool for a Child and Family Services organisation is also provided at the end of this resource.

Responsibility 1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement	Ensure staff understand the nature and dynamics of family violence; facilitate an appropriate, accessible, culturally responsive environment for safe disclosure of information by victim survivor service users; and respond to disclosures sensitively. Ensure staff recognise that any engagement of a service user who might be a perpetrator must occur safely and not collude or respond to coercive behaviours.
Responsibility 2: Identification of family violence	Ensure staff use information gained through engagement with service users and other providers (and in some cases, through use of screening tools to aid identification/or routine screening of all service users) to identify indicators of family violence risk and potentially affected family members. Ensure staff recognise that any engagement with a service user who might be a perpetrator must also be culturally responsive and respond to coercive behaviours in a safe, non-collusive way.
Responsibility 3: Intermediate risk assessment	Ensure staff can competently and confidently conduct intermediate risk assessment of adult and child victim survivors using Structured Professional Judgement and appropriate tools, including the Brief and Intermediate Assessment tools. Where appropriate to the role and mandate of the organisation or service, and when safe to do so, ensure staff can competently and confidently contribute to risk assessment through engagement with a perpetrator, including using Structured Professional Judgement and the Intermediate Assessment, and contribute to keeping them in view and accountable for their actions and behaviours.
Responsibility 4: Intermediate risk management	Ensure staff actively address immediate risk and safety concerns relating to adult and child victim survivors, and undertake intermediate risk management, including safety planning. Those working directly with perpetrators attempt intermediate risk management when safe to do so, including safety planning.

Responsibility 5: Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management & referrals	Ensure staff seek internal supervision and further consult with family violence specialists to collaborate on risk assessment and risk management for adult and child victim survivors and perpetrators, and make active referrals for comprehensive specialist responses, if appropriate.
Responsibility 6: Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation)	Ensure staff proactively share information relevant to the assessment and management of family violence risk and respond to requests to share information from other information sharing entities under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, privacy law or other legislative authorisation.
Responsibility 7: Comprehensive assessment	Ensure staff in specialist family violence positions are trained to undertake Comprehensive assessment of risks, needs and protective factors for adult and children victim survivors. Ensure staff who specialise in working with perpetrators are trained and equipped to undertake Comprehensive risk and needs assessment to determine seriousness of risk of the perpetrator, tailored intervention and support options, and contribute to keeping them in view and accountable for their actions and behaviours.
Responsibility 8: Comprehensive risk management and safety planning	Ensure staff in specialist family violence positions are trained to undertake comprehensive risk management through development, monitoring and actioning of safety plans (including ongoing risk assessment), in partnership with the adult or child victim survivor and support agencies. Ensure staff who specialise in working with perpetrators are trained to undertake comprehensive risk management through development, monitoring and actioning of risk management plans (including information sharing); monitoring across the service system (including justice systems); and actions to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. This can be through formal and informal system accountability mechanisms that support perpetrators' personal accountability, to accept responsibility for their actions, and work at the behaviour change process.
Responsibility 9: Contribute to coordinated risk management	Ensure staff contribute to coordinated risk management, as part of integrated, multidisciplinary and multiagency approaches, including information sharing, referrals, action planning, coordination of responses and collaborative action acquittal.
Responsibility 10: Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management	Ensure staff are equipped to play an ongoing role in collaboratively monitoring, assessing and managing risk over time to identify changes in assessed level of risk and ensure risk management and safety plans are responsive to changed circumstances, including escalation. Ensure safety plans are enacted.

Information Sharing Schemes

Background

The **Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)** and the **Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS)** are the two key information sharing schemes attached to MARAM. FVISS allows for information sharing for family violence risk assessment or management purposes for both children and adults, while CISS allows for information to be shared to promote the wellbeing and/or safety of children.

The Information Sharing Schemes were introduced in response to Royal Commissions, coronial inquests and independent inquiries over the past decade that identified poor information sharing as a barrier to service collaboration with detrimental outcomes for children and families. The Information Sharing Schemes enable schools and other Information Sharing Entities to access and share relevant information to promote the wellbeing or safety of children or to assess or manage family violence risk.

The Schemes streamline information sharing arrangements and are designed to work together to supplement existing legislation. The Schemes expand legal permissions to support professionals who work with children, families, victim survivors and perpetrators of family violence and help to create a more collaborative, integrated system to improve safety and wellbeing outcomes.

Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme

The FVISS authorises information to be shared to assess and/or manage family violence risk in relation to children or adults. The FVISS assists the service system to manage victim survivor safety and hold perpetrators in view and accountable for their actions and behaviours.

The FVISS facilitates prescribed entities to fulfil their information sharing responsibilities under the Framework. It authorises the sharing of information relevant to family violence risk to be shared between prescribed information sharing entities (ISEs)[3] to assess and manage that risk, based on a shared understanding of family violence and risk under Pillars 1 and 2 and associated practice guidance. Information can be shared in relation to both children and adults.

Consent is not required from anyone to share information when a child is at risk. However, the child and/or any adult victim survivors should be consulted about the sharing of the information where it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so. Where no children are at risk, consent from the adult victim survivor is required to share their information, unless it is necessary to share that information to lessen or prevent a serious threat.

Information sharing requests made under FVISS must relate to one of the following purposes:

- A family violence assessment purpose
- A family violence protection purpose (to manage risk, including ongoing risk assessment).

Under the FVISS, prescribed organisations/workforces can share perpetrator information without consent. If the person is an alleged perpetrator, information may still be shared with RAEs for a family violence risk assessment purpose to determine if they are a perpetrator. This includes information about adolescents who use family violence.

MARAM (discussed above) guides information sharing in a family violence context.

Information sharing should also be guided by relevant professional practice frameworks.

Case Study: Please click here for a case study exploring the application of both CISS & FVISS

[3] Further information about information sharing entities (ISEs) can be found on page 19 of this document.

Child Information Sharing Scheme

The CISS, established under Part 6A of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, enables prescribed information sharing entities (ISEs) to share information with each other in order to promote the broader wellbeing and/or safety of a child or a group of children.

CISS enables prescribed organisations and services to share information with each other to promote the wellbeing and/or safety of a child or group of children.

For the purposes of managing risk to a child's safety, the CISS permits sharing with an adult with parental/caring responsibility (who is not the perpetrator).

The CISS prioritises wellbeing and/or safety over privacy. Consent from a child is not required to share information if it is considered that the sharing of information would promote the wellbeing and/or safety of a child. However, where it is safe, appropriate, and reasonable, a child or young person should be directly engaged with to obtain consent if possible.

Sharing information using the CISS can help provide wrap around support services to children facing disadvantage, promote early identification of their emerging needs, and support making prompt and effective interventions.

Please click here for a case study exploring the application of the CISS.

What should you do if you cannot share information under CISS?

Organisations and services should share information and collaborate as permitted by law. If you do not meet the thresholds for sharing under the CISS, other child safety reporting and information sharing obligations still apply - including mandatory reporting obligations, reporting to Child Protection if there is a significant risk of harm, and information sharing with Child Protection.

Can my organisation share information about a child whether or not there is family violence present?

Information sharing entities (ISEs) can share information to promote the wellbeing or safety of a child whether or not family violence is present. Information can be shared:

- under FVISS to assess or manage family violence risk
- under CISS to promote the wellbeing or safety of a child.

However, FSV advises: ISEs should be mindful that sharing information in the context of family violence may pose particular and complex risks for children and other family members, and when considering sharing to promote child wellbeing or safety they should be alert to whether family violence risk may be present. When sharing information in a family violence context, ISEs should therefore take all reasonable steps to plan for and maximise the immediate and ongoing safety of children and all family members at risk of family violence. Information sharing should occur in accordance with a relevant safety plan.

Risks related to information sharing are not always easily identified, so it is important to access relevant expertise. As set out in the MARAM Framework and relevant MARAM Practice Guides, ISEs should engage with services that are authorised and skilled to determine appropriate actions and promote collaborative practice around families and children.

Case studies

Information sharing case studies developed by CFECFW are provided below to assist understanding of the practical application of the CISS and FVISS for child and family services. Please find the case studies listed below:

- Integrated Family Services
- Youth and Family Therapy with a Focus
- Youth and Family Support
- Highlighting the application of the CISS

What is an ISE?

An Information Sharing Entity (ISE) is a service or organisation that is prescribed under the FVISS and/or CISS. Only services and organisations that are prescribed as ISEs can share information under the FVISS and CISS. Most Child and Family Services are prescribed as an ISE however some are also classified as Risk assessment Entities (RAE). The Regulations prescribe those Child and Family Services as ISE's as described within the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005.

If you are sharing information with another ISE, you must make sure you verify the person you are sharing with is from that ISE. Under the FVISS, an ISE can also share perpetrator information with a victim survivor to assist them manage their risk.

All organisations and services prescribed as ISEs can access the online ISE list. This online list is a searchable database that can be used to identify other organisations and services prescribed under the Schemes.

What is an RAE?

Risk Assessment Entities (RAEs) are a sub-set of ISEs. RAEs are a group of ISEs, which also have the responsibility to establish and assess the level of risk. As such, information can only be shared (by request or proactively) with RAEs for a family violence assessment purpose. See below for a table outlining the role of RAEs when information sharing under the schemes.

RAEs are generally specialist family violence organisations, services and/or programs are equipped with the specialist knowledge and expertise to conduct thorough risk assessment and management. Child Protection, Child FIRST, The Orange Door and Victoria Police are also RAEs.

What information can you share as an ISE?

Information that is relevant to assessing and/or managing family violence, or promoting the safety and/or wellbeing of a child or group of children can be shared provided that:

- The information will assist another ISE to carry out one or more of the following activities:
    - making a decision, an assessment or a plan relating to a child or group of children
    - initiating or conducting an investigation relating to a child or group of children
    - providing a service relating to a child or group of children
    - managing any risk to a child or group of children
- The information is not excluded.
    - Excluded information includes information that may endanger a person's life or physical safety, prejudice an investigation or a coronial enquiry, contravene legal professional privilege, contravene a court order or law that prohibits the disclosure of the information, is contrary to public interest or contravenes a court order or law that prohibits the disclosure of the information (See Section 41Q of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act and Section 144C of the Family Violence Protection Act)
- Sharing the information does not contravene another law
- The applicable consent requirements have been met.

You are still required to share information the way you currently do under your existing permissions and legislative responsibilities. The Schemes do not affect existing reporting obligations to Child Protection or Police (e.g., Mandatory Reporting).

Is my organisation or workforce prescribed under the Schemes?

Prescription of ISEs has occurred in different phases. An initial group of services was prescribed for FVISS in February 2018. Phase One commenced in September 2018 with MARAM and CISS and the prescription of further services and organisations for all three reforms. Phase Two commenced on 19 April 2021 with universal services including education and healthcare.

Organisations prescribed in both Phase 1 and 2 can be found here.

Who can you share information with?

Organisations/workforces that are prescribed under one or more of the Schemes are referred to as Information Sharing Entities (ISEs).

You may only share information using the Schemes with services and organisations that are also ISEs. However, there are circumstances in which information may be shared with individuals concerned to manage risk. To manage risk to a child's safety and/or wellbeing, information may be shared without consent (if necessary) with the child or their parent/guardian. Additionally, perpetrator information may also be shared with the victim survivor to manage risk to their safety and/or that of the children.

You are also able to share information with other organisations/workforces (whether prescribed or not) using your existing permissions to share.

Sharing Permissions (under FVISS)

Prescribed Org/Service	Information Sharing Entity (ISE)	Risk Assessment Entity (RAE)
Sharing/Requesting Purpose	Family Violence **Protection** Purpose only.	Family Violence **Assessment** Purpose and **Protection** Purpose
Risk Information	-Relevant Child & Adult Victim Survivor information -Third Party information -Perpetrator only	-Relevant Child & Adult Victim Survivor information -Third Party information -**Alleged** Perpetrator and Perpetrator.

Resources to help you implement the Information Sharing Schemes

There are a range of online guides and templates to assist with implementing the information sharing schemes, which can be found here.

- The Ministerial Guidelines and the Schemes
    - Child Information Sharing Scheme
    - Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme
    - Information Sharing Guides, Templates and Tools
- How to request information
    - Requesting information under the CISS - A Case Study
    - Guides, Templates and Tools for Information Sharing under FVISS (see Section 5. Request Information)
- How to share information
    - A guide on how to share information
    - Responding to requests under the CISS - A case study
    - Guides, templates and tools for information sharing under FVISS (see Section 6. Share Information)
    - Consent form and tips for conversation with adult victim survivors
    - Tips for conversations with children and/or parents/carers about the Information Sharing Schemes
    - Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities – Information Sharing Schemes
    - Please also see the diagram below that guides ISEs on how to share information.
- Fact sheet: How to use the Schemes together

ISE Information Sharing Guide

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Who can share?

Information sharing entities (ISEs) are authorised to share information. These ISEs are:

- **Prescribed by regulations**

Why they can share...

Relevant information about a person (adult or child) who is a victim survivor, perpetrator or a third party can be shared for the purpose of:

- **Establishing and assessing risk**
- **Managing risk**

When can they share?

ISEs can share information:

- **Voluntarily with other ISEs**
- **In response to a request from another ISE**

What cannot be shared...

- **Excluded information***
  - **ISEs cannot share information that would contravene another law that has not been specifically overridden by the scheme.**

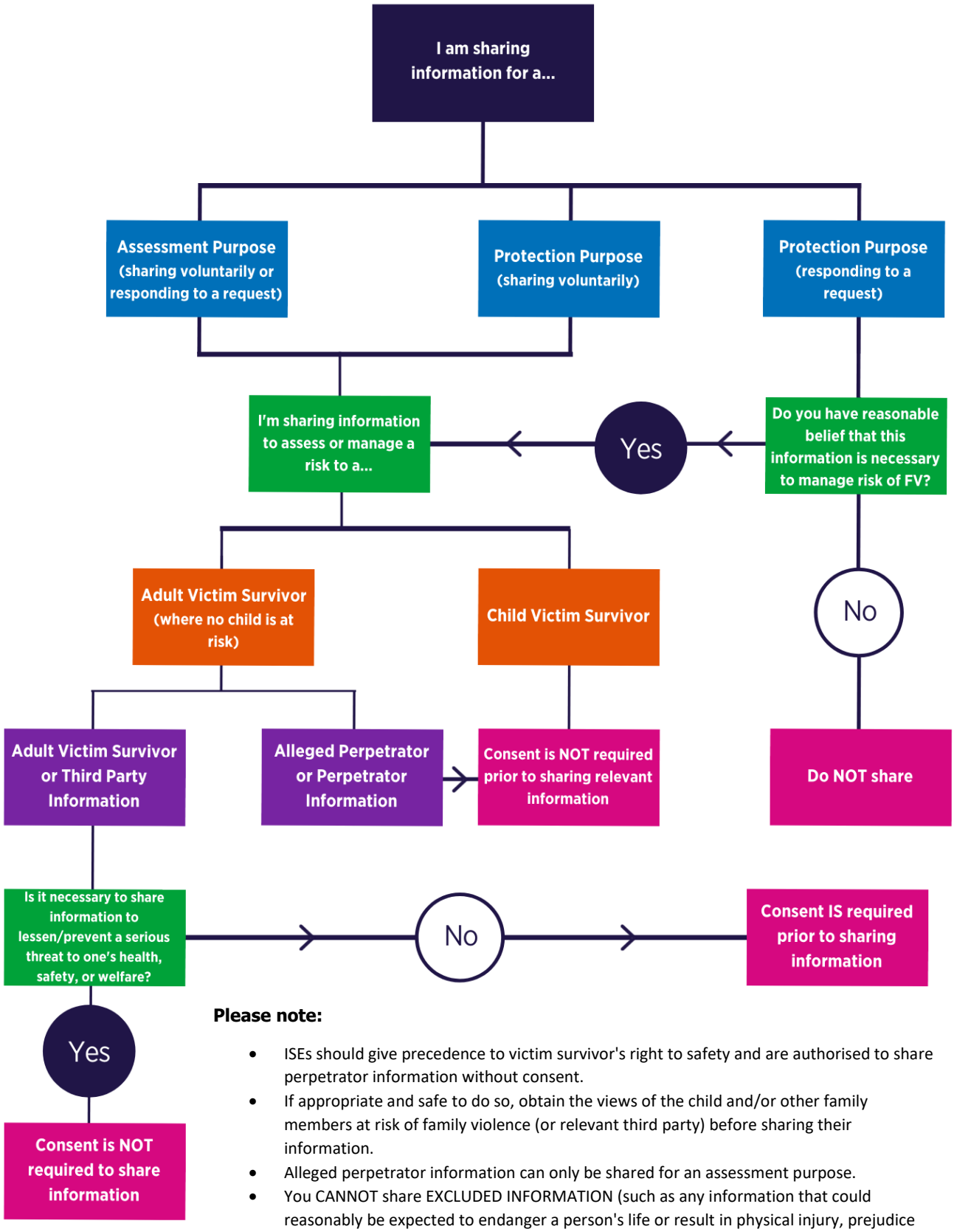
Adult Victim Survivor An ISE reasonably believes that there is a risk that the person may be subjected to family violence.	**CONSENT REQUIRED** (from the adult victim survivor) Prior to sharing their information unless there is a serious threat or the information relates to assessing or managing a risk to a child victim survivor (no consent - see below)
Child Victim Survivor An ISE reasonably believes that there is a risk that the person (under the age of 18 years) may be subjected to family violence.	**NO CONSENT REQUIRED** (from any person) If their information is relevant to assessing or managing risk of family violence to a child victim survivor.
Perpetrator An ISE reasonably believes that there is a risk that the person may commit family violence.	**NO CONSENT REQUIRED** (from the perpetrator) Prior to sharing their information to assess or manage risk of committing family violence.
Alleged Perpetrator A person who is alleged to post a risk of family violence.*	**NO CONSENT REQUIRED** (from the alleged perpetrator) Prior to sharing their information to establish or assess risk of committing family violence.
Third Party A person whose information is relevant to assessing or managing a risk of family violence.	**CONSENT REQUIRED** (from the third party) Prior to sharing their information unless there is a serious threat or the informaiton relates to assessing or managing a risk to a child victim survivor (no consent - see above)

Please note:

- *Excluded information (including but not limited to) if sharing the information might endanger a person's life or a police investigation, contravene a court order, or is subject to legal professional privilege.
- *Information about an alleged perpetrator can only be shared in the risk assessment phase.
- All ISEs must respond to information requests unless an exemption applies.
- A good faith defence protects individuals who share information in good faith and with reasonable care.

FVISS Information Sharing Guide

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

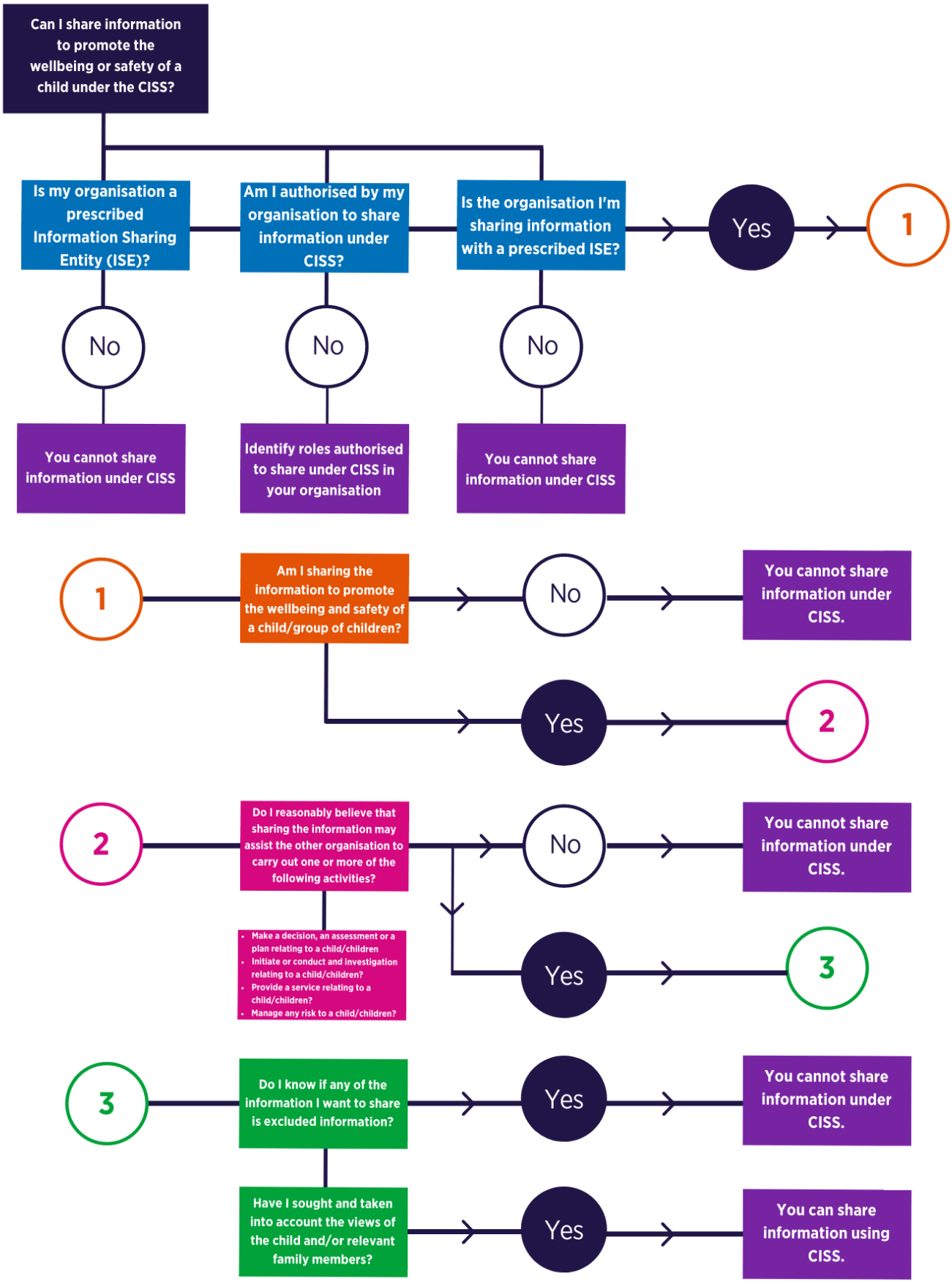


Please note:

- ISEs should give precedence to victim survivor's right to safety and are authorised to share perpetrator information without consent.
- If appropriate and safe to do so, obtain the views of the child and/or other family members at risk of family violence (or relevant third party) before sharing their information.
- Alleged perpetrator information can only be shared for an assessment purpose.
- You CANNOT share EXCLUDED INFORMATION (such as any information that could reasonably be expected to endanger a person's life or result in physical injury, prejudice legal proceedings or a coronial inquest or inquiry, or disclose privileged information.)

CISS Information Sharing Guide

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare



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Section 2: Organisational alignment to MARAM & Information Sharing Schemes

Organisational alignment to MARAM and Information Sharing

Family Safety Victoria has provided step-by-step guidance on how organisations can work towards aligning to MARAM and embedding processes that strengthen information sharing practices.

MARAM alignment is defined by Family Safety Victoria as: '*Actions taken by Framework organisations to effectively incorporate the four pillars of the Framework into existing policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools, as appropriate to the roles and functions of the prescribed entity and its place in the service system.*'

There are no predefined start points or timelines that organisations are required to adhere to on their MARAM alignment journey. Organisations have the flexibility to work towards alignment over time and can make decisions about how they will prioritise their alignment activities (e.g. introducing changes to risk assessment tools over time). Organisations are encouraged to begin with identifying where alignment is occurring already and then move to developing a plan to build on those activities. It is not expected that organisations will align to MARAM in one swift move, it will take time and is a progressive journey.

However, it is important to note that organisations do need to be prepared to share and/or request information using the Information Sharing Schemes. Once an organisation is listed as an ISE, they are obligated to respond to requests to share information using the Schemes.

Organisational Embedding Guide

The Organisational Embedding Guide has been developed to support organisational leaders in the process of implementing and aligning to MARAM. The Guide is the first document that organisations should look at after familiarising themselves with MARAM and Information Sharing more broadly. The guide consists of three key resources which can be used as part of embedding MARAM:

Step 1: Use the MARAM organisational self-audit tool (assess current level)

Step 1 is for organisations to assess the current progress of their MARAM alignment.

The MARAM organisational self-audit tool contains a series of milestones to work towards as part of MARAM alignment, with specific examples on how to reach the milestone. The examples are supported by resources and are broken into sections using the MARAM Pillars.

Step 2: Complete a project implementation plan (plan activities based on audit)

Step 2 is for organisations to prepare an implementation plan based on the activities they have highlighted in the MARAM self-audit tool as being the next priority.

A sample implementation plan is available to download as an accessible Excel document for completion by organisations here.

Step 3: Complete implementation review (continue to monitor and audit)

Step 3 is to review the success of implementation activities.

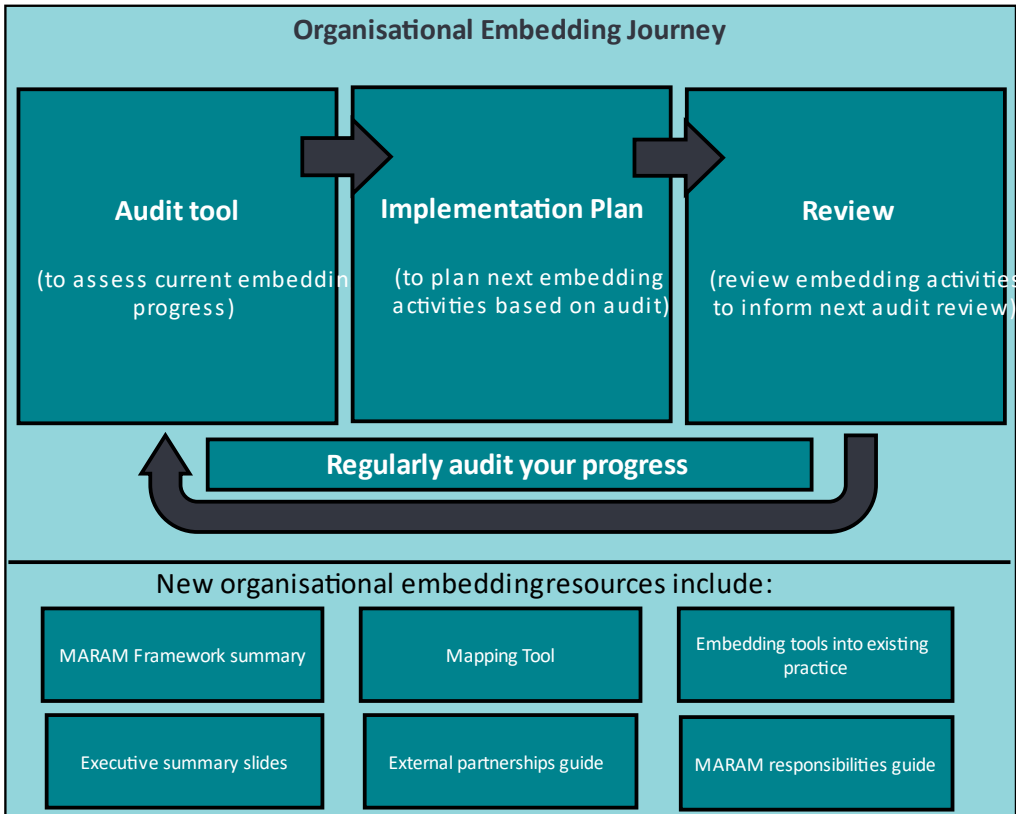
The Review implementation activities guide suggests three ways to review the success of implementation activities: Qualitative Review, Case File Audit & Quantitative Review

Additionally, Family Safety Victoria has provided the following video explaining how to use the embedding guide. The link to the video can be found here.

3. Video explaining How to use the MARAM Organisational Embedding Guide

Organisational Embedding Journey

This one-page overview of the Organisational Embedding Journey shows the three steps in the organisational embedding process and how, when repeated, they can help create continuous improvement for your organisation. These three steps are supported by a range of resources to assist with organisational embedding and alignment as shown in the diagram below.



Step 1: Alignment Checklist (Audit Tool)

See this link for organisational focused resources and then navigate to the *MARAM Alignment Checklist.* This will open a PDF version of the checklist that will help you prioritise what your organisation does in your first year of prescription to work towards alignment.

The checklist indicates timelines for example alignment activities, as listed below:

First three months:

1. Read policy and practice documents:
   - □ Organisational leaders and staff read the MARAM policy document, legislative instrument, risk assessment and management tools and associated practice guidance for working with victims and perpetrators

2. Identify or establish governance:
   - □ Identify or establish governance structures within your organisation to oversee this reform
   - □ Identify suitable system-wide governance structures for overseeing this reform in your local area

3. Read, understand and determine responsibilities:
   - □ Organisational leaders read and understand Pillar 3: Responsibilities for risk assessment and management in the MARAM Framework
   - □ Organisational leaders use the MARAM Responsibilities: Decision Guide for Organisational Leaders to determine responsibilities for staff

Tip: see page 32 of this guide for information on mapping roles. A completed example spreadsheet is included at the end of this document (appendix 3)

4. Assess organisational landscape for:
   - □ Touch points with people who may be using or experiencing family violence, including children
   - □ Existing risk assessment processes and tools being used by your organisation (general and family violence specific).

First six months:

5. Identify and review organisational policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools that will require updating to reflect the principles and pillars of MARAM. Also identify the need for any new materials as appropriate. This may include:

   - □ Local area Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)
   - □ Consent and release of information forms
   - □ Client intake and assessment processes and relevant forms
   - □ Privacy and confidentiality policies and procedures (ensure relevancy with legislation and regulations)
   - □ Manuals e.g. induction manuals, service information, practice manuals
   - □ Training manuals
   - □ Record keeping obligations
   - □ IT systems e.g. Client Relationship Management (CRM) systems, reporting systems
   - □ Existing referral pathways
   - □ Workplace support policies and procedures e.g. working with children policies, use of language services, organisational risk management procedures, evaluation policies, provision of employee assistance programs to support staff who may be triggered by family violence content
   - □ Clinical supervision templates.

First six months continued:

6. Assess training needs:

□ Identify staff to undertake organisational policy and leadership training. These should be organisational leaders who are accountable for ensuring their organisation aligns to MARAM, and will make changes to the organisational policies, procedures, guidelines and tools accordingly. They will have a central role in supporting the introduction of MARAM to their organisation and sectors, and will ensure its sustainability over the long term.
□ Identify staff to undertake professional training in family violence risk assessment and risk management in line with the organisation's pre-determined responsibilities. This includes the use of the appropriate tool(s) and associated practice guidance (when available). These should be professionals who work directly with clients, and team leaders who supervise those professionals
□ Ensure staff register for relevant training sessions
□ Roll out the MARAM and information-sharing e-learning across the organisation (when available)
□ Identify and plan for remaining staff to attend MARAM training progressively from 2019 onwards. Organisations should continue to access CRAF training until MARAM training is available.
□ Identify and plan for staff to attend other, service-specific family violence training.
□ Identify other learning, development and training opportunities that already exist within your organisation that could be adapted to incorporate framework content e.g. training to build cultural competency, working with interpreters, working with children.

First 12 months:

7. Create partnerships:

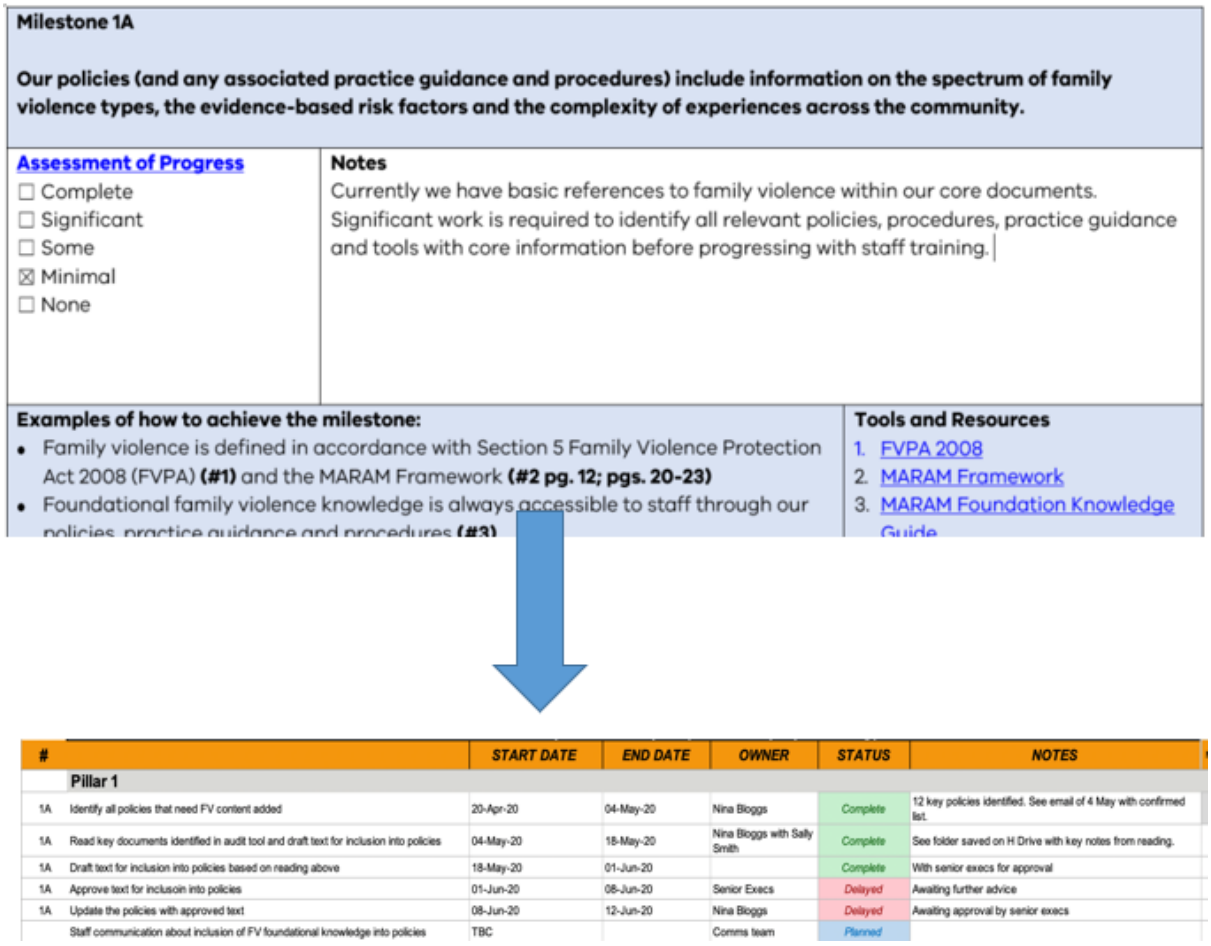
□ Identify existing partnerships and networks across your local area for collaboration
□ Identify opportunities for new partnerships for greater collaboration with other agencies in your local area.

Step 2: Project Implementation Plan

Step 2 is for organisations to prepare an implementation plan based on the activities they have highlighted in the MARAM self-audit tool as being the next priority.

A sample implementation plan is available to download as an accessible Excel document for completion by organisations. You can access the table here by navigating to 'Step 2: Project implementation plan' and clicking on link to download a spreadsheet.

A screenshot has been included below that demonstrates how the Alignment Checklist (Audit Tool) can inform the Project Implementation Plan.



Milestone 1A

Our policies (and any associated practice guidance and procedures) include information on the spectrum of family violence types, the evidence-based risk factors and the complexity of experiences across the community.

Assessment of Progress	Notes
☐ Complete ☐ Significant ☐ Some ☒ Minimal ☐ None	Currently we have basic references to family violence within our core documents. Significant work is required to identify all relevant policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools with core information before progressing with staff training.

Examples of how to achieve the milestone:

- Family violence is defined in accordance with Section 5 Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (FVPA) **(#1)** and the MARAM Framework **(#2 pg. 12; pgs. 20-23)**
- Foundational family violence knowledge is always accessible to staff through our policies, practice guidance and procedures **(#3)**

Tools and Resources

1. FVPA 2008
2. MARAM Framework
3. MARAM Foundation Knowledge Guide

#		START DATE	END DATE	OWNER	STATUS	NOTES
	Pillar 1					
1A	Identify all policies that need FV content added	20-Apr-20	04-May-20	Nina Bloggs	Complete	12 key policies identified. See email of 4 May with confirmed list.
1A	Read key documents identified in audit tool and draft text for inclusion into policies	04-May-20	18-May-20	Nina Bloggs with Sally Smith	Complete	See folder saved on H Drive with key notes from reading.
1A	Draft text for inclusion into policies based on reading above	18-May-20	01-Jun-20		Complete	With senior execs for approval
1A	Approve text for inclusoin into policies	01-Jun-20	08-Jun-20	Senior Execs	Delayed	Awaiting further advice
1A	Update the policies with approved text	08-Jun-20	12-Jun-20	Nina Bloggs	Delayed	Awaiting approval by senior execs
	Staff communication about inclusion of FV foundational knowledge into policies	TBC		Comms team	Planned	

Tips

- Each example from the audit tool that is selected for inclusion on the implementation plan may have several steps required to complete it.
- The implementation period may be for any determined period – weeks, months or years. Once the tasks identified have been completed, you can return to the audit tool to select your next activity areas
- You may have different implementation plans for different areas of focus (e.g. you could make a separate plan for each Pillar, each service etc) or capture all activities on one master implementation plan.
- You may choose to plan multiple activities across all four pillars at the same time or choose to focus on limited activities, dependent upon the capacity of the organisation.

Step 3: Review Implementation Activities

FSV suggests three ways to review the success of implementation activities in your organisation.

A. A qualitative review involves asking staff members questions and reflecting on and analysing their responses. This helps your organisation understand how the workforce is experiencing implementation, which is important because they have close contact with service users. The qualitative review could take place at a workshop with key staff members and managers, by anonymous online survey, focus groups or during an all-staff forum.

Tips for conducting a qualitative review:

- Ask for openness. Emphasise the importance of being open and honest, and make sure people aren't concerned about reprisal. Consider making the survey anonymous.
- Be objective. Describe what has happened in objective terms, and then focus on improvements.
- Document success. Document practices and procedures that led to project successes and make recommendations for applying them to similar future projects.
- Look with hindsight. Pay attention to the 'unknowns' (now known) that may have increased implementation risks. Develop a way of looking out for these in future projects.
- Focus on the future. Remember, the purpose is to focus on the future, not to assign blame for what happened in the past. This is not the time to focus on any one person or team.
- Look at both positives and negatives – identify key achievements and challenges when looking at lessons learnt.

B. A case file checklist involves making a random selection of representative case files from across the organisation and staff members and assessing them according to a checklist of information.

Risk assessment checklist:

- ❑ evidence of use of structured professional judgement
- ❑ recorded evidence of a victim survivor self-assessed level of risk
- ❑ recorded evidence-based risk factors
- ❑ information sharing – request made of another framework organisation
- ❑ information sharing – voluntary/proactive sharing undertaken
- ❑ asked relevant identity-specific questions
- ❑ evidence of an intersectional analysis
- ❑ separate risk assessment undertaken for each child

Risk management checklist:

- ❑ regular and updated risk assessments undertaken
- ❑ secondary consultations take place
- ❑ evidence of multi-agency involvement and coordination
- ❑ evidence of referrals to relevant services
- ❑ information sharing – request made of another framework organisation
- ❑ information sharing – voluntary sharing undertaken
- ❑ safety plan completed for each victim survivor, including children

Information sharing checklist:

- ❑ information provided to victim survivor about how their information can/will be shared
- ❑ consent obtained (where relevant, if not relevant or views sought, mark as completed)
- ❑ record keeping completed as per organisational policy (in line with legislation).

C. A quantitative review is a data-based review to determine whether policies and procedures are being applied in practice. FSV have outlined the resources below to support this process:

Family Violence Data Collection Framework (FVDCF):
The FVDCF supports the collection of more robust data. It is expected that the FVDCF may be included voluntarily as part of any organisational systems updates. Under a maturity model, organisations are not expected to collect the data identified here immediately but can work towards collecting this data over time and in the future. The FVDCF includes:

- a common set of family violence and demographic data items
- definitions and standards
- advice on reporting practices that will make information on family violence more useful.

Online versions of the MARAM risk assessment tools are available through the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) platform (and the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform [SHIP]). These systems allow users to complete, store and print MARAM risk assessments in an online environment. This provides a basis for easy reporting on the number, status and overall risk level of risk assessments entered into these systems. If your organisation is interested in adopting or trialling TRAM, please contact tram@familysafety.vic.gov.au.

Example sources of data for review

Screening data
Total number of service users:
- screened for family violence
- identified as a victim survivor
- identified as a perpetrator
- identified as an adolescent using violence

Risk assessment data
Number of cases where risk assessment has taken place, and as a percentage of those cases:
- where a referral has been made
- where secondary consultations have taken place
- with requests for information made to another framework organisation
- where voluntary information sharing took place
- went on to complete a risk management safety plan

For risk assessments of victim survivors, include a breakdown of the risk factors present in each case, and any identity demographics recorded.

Total number of risk assessments can be broken down into categories of 'at risk', 'elevated risk', 'serious risk' and 'serious risk – requires immediate protection'.

Risk management data
Number of cases where management has taken place, and as a percentage of those cases:
- where a referral has been made
- where secondary consultations have taken place
- requests for information made to another framework organisation
- voluntary information sharing took place

Referrals and secondary consultations data
- Total referrals, by type of framework organisation:
- made to other framework organisations
- received from other framework organisations
- Total number of requests for, or provision of, secondary consultations related to family violence

Information-sharing data
Total information-sharing requests received:
- including type of framework organisation making the request
- number of declined requests

Total information-sharing requests made:
- including type of framework organisation the request was made to
- number of declined requests

Number of voluntary shares of information.

Mapping Roles to MARAM Responsibilities

Organisations should identify and map their responsibilities as part of the alignment process. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to categorising workforces and determining appropriate responsibilities. It requires a detailed understanding of each organisation's operations and may vary according to each service, program, team, working hours and office location (e.g. regional versus metro offices).

Under the Decision Guide for MARAM Responsibilities, most child and family services organisations must align with Responsibilities 1-6 and 9-10. In addition, some, but not all, services will also need to align with Responsibilities 7 and 8 (specialist family violence focused services/programs with comprehensive risk assessment and management responsibilities).

The table on page 31 (taken from the Decision Guide for MARAM Responsibilities) lists organisational responsibilities, including risk assessment and management responsibilities and expectations, and can be used to guide mapping of responsibilities in your organisation, program or team.

FSV outlines the following suggested steps to mapping your organisation to the MARAM responsibilities.

Suggested steps to identify responsibilities in your organisation

❑ Identify the closest related tier for your organisation from the Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework (see next page)

❑ Identify whether your organisation has workers who fall within a higher tier

❑ Cross reference the tier with the 'Decision guide for organisational leaders' (link above).

Team Leaders & Managers

Organisations should consider the role of team leaders and managers.

Responding to family violence may impact upon the wellbeing of staff members, and this can be mitigated if they are fully supported in meeting the MARAM responsibilities.

Consider:

- How will managers be trained in the MARAM responsibilities, even if not directly undertaking identification, screening, assessment, management or sharing roles?
- Training management in responding to staff disclosures of family violence (which may be by a victim survivor or perpetrator). A greater awareness of family violence and responding to family violence in the workplace often leads to more disclosures by staff members and managers need to be equipped to respond.
- Managers have a role in supervision staff members' response to family violence, as well as providing support. What supervision processes will be put in place for managers to promote family violence supervision?

Mapping arrangements with external agencies & services

Organisations will also need to consider mapping responsibilities to external agencies.

This is particularly the case if an organisation holds responsibility for identification and screening, but not risk assessment and risk management responsibilities (noting that limited safety planning is still required after screening). It is also worthwhile noting if you use another agency or service to do secondary consultations, e.g. Does the organisation or service coordinate with a specialist family violence service to support the process of assessing and managing risk collaboratively?

Consider:

- Who within the organisation will hold the responsibility for managing risk pending referrals being accepted?
- Who will be responsible for keeping referral and secondary consultation lists and resources up to date?
- In cases where coordinated responses are required, will this be handled by the case worker or by management?
- How will information sharing requests and shares be recorded and monitored?
- Who will manage relationships with external partners to ensure quality of information sharing and referrals, and promote communities of practice?
- How will feedback loops with external agencies be managed?

Tiers of responsibility (Capability Framework)

The *Responding to Family Violence Capability Framework, December 2017* (Capability Framework) describes the four 'Tiers' of workforces that have responsibility for responding to victim survivors and/or perpetrators of family violence. This Framework was in circulation prior to the MARAM resources but is still useful for understanding how workforces have historically been categorised and remains valuable for mapping roles and responsibilities using MARAM.

This list provides a broad overview of the Tiers within which different workforces can understand the scope and limits of their role and expertise.

These Tiers were featured in the FSV 'inverted pyramid' until more recently, see: MARAM Responsibilities Decision Guide for Organisational Leaders (old version) which can assist in mapping staff responsibilities and training needs under MARAM.

It should be noted that the Tiers below do not always encapsulate or address the complexity and diversity of individual roles and programs within specific services and sectors under MARAM. For example, a tier 4 organisation might provide education services, but also employ welfare officers who hold capabilities described in Tiers 2 or 3.

Tier 4: Workers in universal services and organisations

Includes workplaces, education services, early childhood services, sport and recreation organisations and faith-based institutions.

Tier 3: Workers in mainstream services and non-family violence specific agencies

Health care services, drug and alcohol services, housing services, mental health services, Centrelink, individuals providing therapeutic services, emergency services, Maternal and Child Health services, youth services, disability services, culturally and linguistically diverse services, Aboriginal services, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse and intersex services, aged care services.

Tier 2: Workers in core support services or intervention agencies

Courts and court services, legal and paralegal agencies and services, corrections police family dispute resolution services, forensic physicians and medical staff providing sexual assault crisis care, child protection, child and family services, family and relationship services, homelessness services.

Tier 1: Specialist family violence and sexual assault practitioners

State-wide family violence crisis and specialist services, Support and Safety Hubs, family violence outreach services, women's refuges, Centres Against Sexual Assault, perpetrator intervention services, men's family violence telephone/online services, crisis family violence and sexual assault telephone/online services, specialist family violence or sexual assault professionals operating in in Tier 2 or 3 services, specialist family violence or sexual assault services for Aboriginal or culturally and linguistically diverse women and children or women and children with a disability.

Decision guide for organisational leaders (table version)

The table below illustrates the relationship between staff roles, MARAM Responsibilities, MARAM resources and Tiers discussed above in the *Capability Framework.* The table presents the information found in FSV's inverted triangle/pyramid infographic, which can be found here.

In large organisations, it is likely MARAM responsibilities will be held across different job roles.

Identification and screening may be undertaken by an office administrator, an assessment by an intake worker, and management by a case manager.

Role description	MARAM Responsibility levels	Tier
All professionals The professional's role: • Addresses universal needs of service users • Is not primarily related to a person's experience or use of family violence. • Can involve identifying or screening for family violence.	**Screening & Identification level** Foundation Knowledge Guide Responsibility 1: Safe engagement Responsibility 2: Identification Responsibility 5: Secondary consultation and referral Responsibility 6: Information sharing (as authorised) **Led by Specialist Services** Responsibility 9: Coordinated risk management Responsibility 10: Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management	4
The professional's role: • is associated with family violence risk but is not focused on this risk alone • is to engage with people in crisis situations or cohorts who are at high risk of experiencing or using family violence • involves therapeutic intervention, a crisis service, case management support or broader needs assessment and management. • can incorporate addressing family violence risk assessment and management into their usual work.	**Brief & Intermediate level** In addition to the above: Responsibility 3: Intermediate risk assessment Responsibility 4: Intermediate risk management	3 2
The professional's role: • is directly related to increasing victim survivor safety or addressing perpetrator risk • includes family violence case management, crisis services or family violence therapeutic interventions or provides sustained support including safety planning and risk management. • involves working with victim survivors and perpetrators of family violence in a specialist capacity.	**Comprehensive level** In addition to the above: Responsibility 7: Comprehensive assessment Responsibility 8: Comprehensive risk management and safety planning	1

MARAM Responsibility Practice Guides

In addition to the above information about the 10 responsibilities for prescribed services, there are two sets of practice guides (*victim survivor* focused practice guides and *perpetrator focused* practice guides).

The practice guides below support practitioners, team leaders and managers to understand their responsibilities under the MARAM Framework regarding the identification, assessment and ongoing management of family violence when working with victim survivors and adults who use violence.

Please note: Both Foundation Knowledge Guides contain background information on the key elements of MARAM and Information Sharing. It is advised to begin with the Foundation Knowledge Guide before moving on to reading the practice guides for each responsibility.

There is some overlap in content between the two sets of guides, as many of the same principles and practice concepts apply to working with victim survivors and perpetrators. Each guide gives detailed advice on how to make sure your practice aligns with your organisation's MARAM framework responsibilities.

MARAM Victim Survivor-Focused Practice Guides

The MARAM Victim Survivor Practice Guide can be found here.

MARAM Responsibilities

Responsibility 1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement

Responsibility 2: Identification of family violence risk

Responsibility 3: Intermediate Risk Assessment

Responsibility 4: Intermediate Risk Management

Responsibility 5: Secondary consultation and referral, including for comprehensive family violence assessment and management response

Responsibility 6: Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation)

Responsibility 7: Comprehensive Risk Assessment (Specialist Family Violence Services only)

Responsibility 8: Comprehensive Risk Management and Safety Planning (Specialist Family Violence Services only)

Responsibility 9: Contribute to coordinated risk management

Responsibility 10: Family Violence: Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management

MARAM Perpetrator-Focused Practice Guides

This Guide offers guidance for professionals working with adults using family violence. The MARAM Perpetrator Practice Guide can be found here.

MARAM Responsibilities

Responsibility 1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement

Responsibility 2: Identification of family violence risk

Responsibility 3: Intermediate Risk Assessment

Responsibility 4: Intermediate Risk Management

Responsibility 5: Secondary consultation and referral, including for comprehensive family violence assessment and management response

Responsibility 6: Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation)

Responsibility 7: to be released in late 2021

Responsibility 8: to be released in late 2021

Responsibility 9: Contribute to coordinated risk management

Responsibility 10: Family Violence: Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management

Training

There are a range of self-paced and virtual training options available depending on the Tier/s level of responsibility you hold in your organisation.

Family Safety Victoria provides a short guide to assist you to find the right training options for your organisation. Click here to open the MARAM Training Decision Tree.

Information Sharing training

All training for the information sharing reforms, including an introduction to MARAM, in the form of online webinars and eLearning courses are accessed through the Information Sharing and MARAM Online Learning system. To enrol in this training, you will need to sign up and log in to the Learning Management System here.

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing workforces

Information sharing training has been developed for child and family services professionals to understand how to share and request information under the schemes to promote the wellbeing and safety of children and assess and manage family violence risk.

Child and family services workers should access the DFFH Information Sharing eLearn modules here.

The three modules each take approximately 20 minutes to complete and cover Essentials for Professionals, Purposes and Requirements, and Consent and Privacy.

All other workforces

Training has also been developed for all other workforces, agencies and organisations that do not fall under the previous category. The training can be accessed here.

This module outlines when and how to use the FVISS and CISS and provides an introduction to the MARAM Framework.

Training for organisational leaders

MARAM Leading Alignment Training

This training has been developed for staff who have decision making responsibilities leading the embedding of MARAM in the organisational context. It is suitable for organisational leaders, CEOs, Directors, or senior managers across all organisations/agencies prescribed under MARAM. It can be accessed through the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) here.

Other optional training

Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) offers a range of virtual training, including:

- Family Violence Foundations (self-paced)
- Introduction to Preventing Violence Against Women (PVAW) – Foundation course
- MARAM Comprehensive Risk Assessment & Management (Specialist)
- MARAM Comprehensive Family Violence (Specialist) – Renewing Practice from CRAF to MARAM.

MARAM Collaborative Practice Training: The training focuses on collaborative practice and the foundational aspects of MARAM, including risk assessment and collaboration for ongoing risk management through respectful and sensitive engagement with victim survivors, information sharing, referral and secondary consultations. Contact the Principal Strategic Advisor (PSA) in your area to access this training here.

Useful resources

FAQs

- Frequently Asked Questions – This resource from the Victorian Government provides detailed information and responses to common questions from information sharing entities (ISEs) about CISS, FVISS and MARAM.

Training

- MARAM and Information Sharing E-Learning Modules (Victorian Government)
- MARAM Training – Decision Tree

Victorian Government

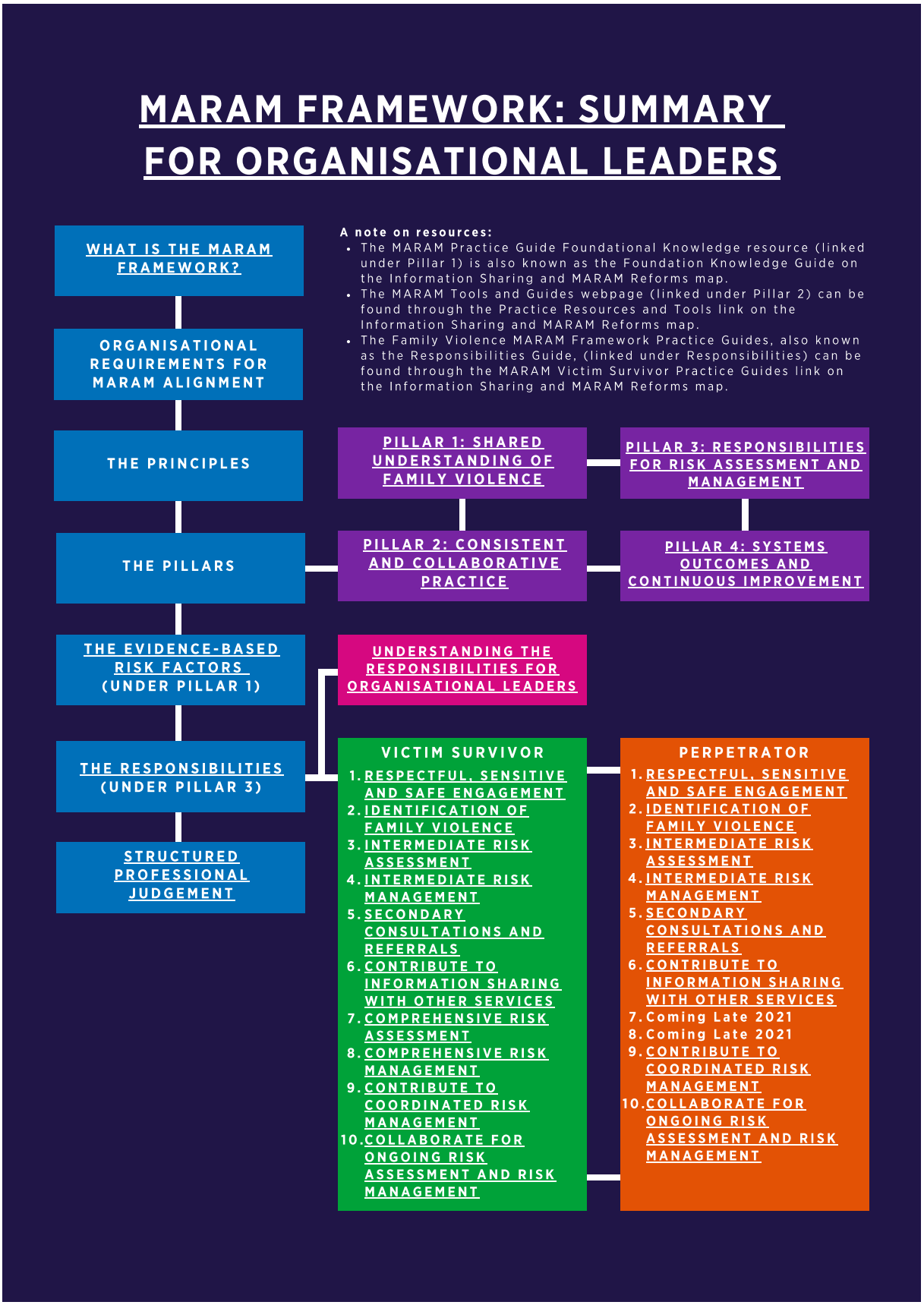
- Family Safety Victoria Updates
- Dhelk Dja – Safe Our Way
- DET Guidance on Information Sharing Schemes
- Information Sharing Enquiry Line 1800 549 646 infosharing@familysafety.vic.gov.au

Other

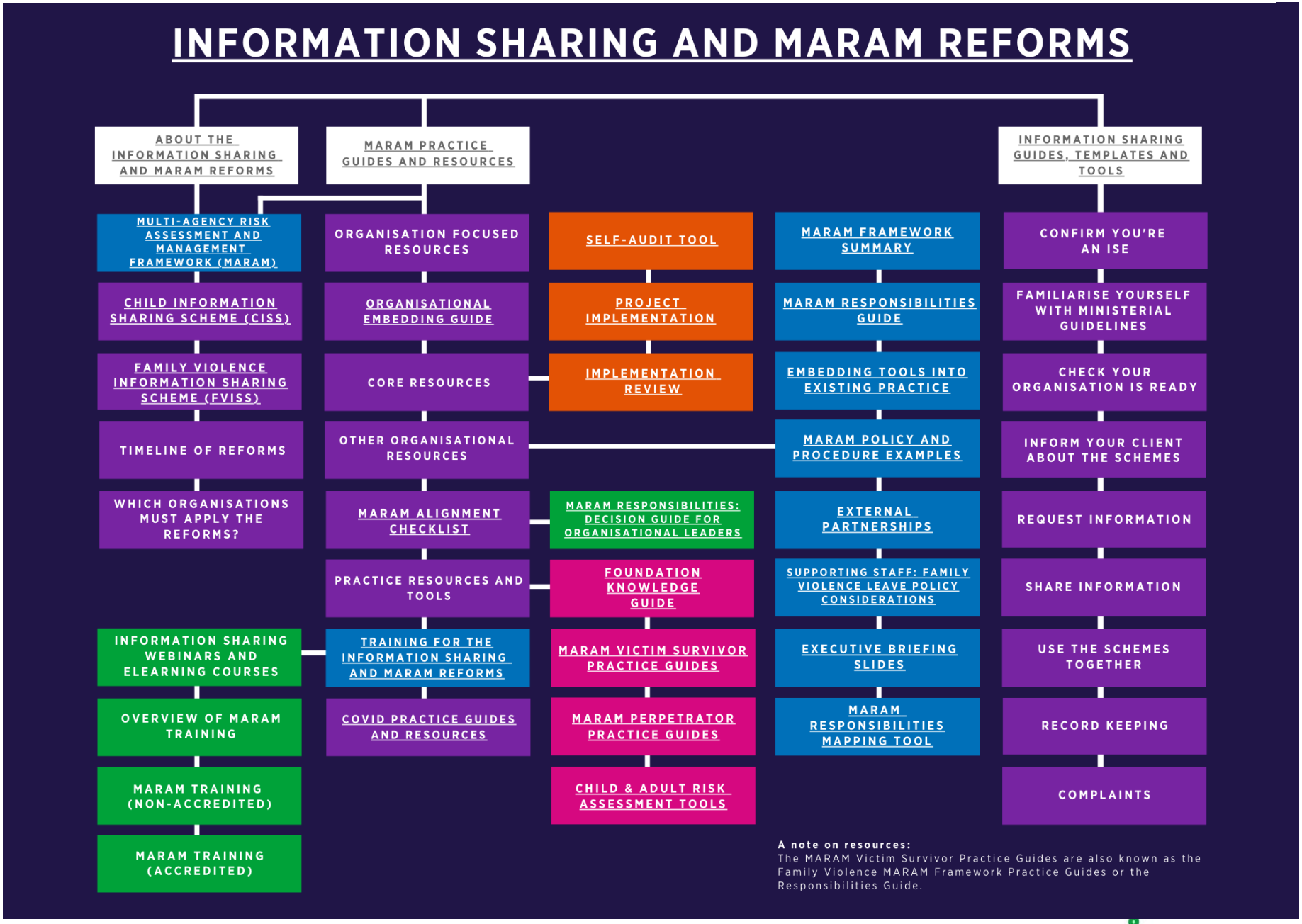
- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare MARAM and Information Sharing Resource Hub – The Centre has created a collection of resources to support the implementation of the MARAM framework and Information Sharing Schemes. These resources are intended to increase knowledge, confidence and capacity among child and family services, and allied sectors, to work collaboratively and effectively with children and their families.
- MARAM Alignment Working Group – The MARAM Alignment Working Group brings together members who are responsible for service design and MARAM alignment in their organisations and program areas to work towards a unified approach to MARAM alignment across the service system. If you are interested joining the Working Group, please contact the Chair, Pearl Goodwin-Burns, at pearl.goodwinburns@cfecfw.asn.au

Appendices

Appendix 1. Map of the MARAM Framework: Summary for Organisational Leaders webpage



Appendix 2. Clickable map of available online resources from the Victorian Government on Information Sharing and MARAM Reforms



Appendix 3. MARAM Responsibilities Mapping Tool CFS Example

ORGANISATION	CFS Example
ORGANISATION AREA (IF NOT WHOLE ORGANISATION)	
NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING:	

Responsibility 1 Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement
Responsibility 2 Identification of family violence risk
Responsibility 3 Intermediate risk assessments
Responsibility 4 Intermediate risk management
Responsibility 5 Secondary consultations and referrals
Responsibility 6 Contribute to information sharing with other services
Responsibility 7 Comprehensive risk assessment
Responsibility 8 Comprehensive risk management
Responsibility 9 Contribute to coordinated risk management
Responsibility 10 Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management

NOTE: This summary is automatically updated to align to the information in the Mapping Tool tab.

	PROGRAM AREA	ROLE TITLE	POSITION KEY RELEVANT TASKS	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10
Example				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
1	*CFS example*	*Executive Leadership*	*Development and direction of strategy.*	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
2	*CFS example*	*Program Manager, Team Leader*	*Program coordination/delivery of services.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
3	*CFS example*	*Practice Lead*	*Lead practice and program development and delivery.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
4	*CFS example*	*Family Services Program (Family Violence Focused)*	*Provides specialist family violence advice and assistance.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	*CFS example*	*Family Services Practitioner/Case Manager*	*Initial and ongoing assessment of vulnerable children and families.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
6	*CFS example*	*Family Relationship Practitioner*	*Providing support to separated families to assist with children's contact and/or engagement in parenting programs. Ongoing risk assessments of child/ren and family.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
7	*CFS example*	*Residential Care Worker*	*Provide professional support and ensure the wellbeing for children and young people who reside in Residential Care.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
8	*CFS example*	*Intake and Assessment*	*Assessing risk on intake, responsible for screening and identification, provide a range of short term interventions.*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
9	*CFS example*	*Administrative Staff (Receptionist)*	*Greets clients, escalates concerns, maintains records*	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
10	*CFS example*	*Administrative Staff (Back of House)*	*Finance, HR, operations.*	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes