

CRISIS RESPONSE MODEL READINESS ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT:

A new Family Violence Crisis Response Model is being implemented in Victoria. The model aims to improve the way the family violence service system works together to support victim-survivors in crisis, and to ensure that victim-survivors are supported through coordinated responses which are consistent, clearly communicated, and jointly managed by the services involved. It prioritises crisis support provided at the local level, and where possible in line with victim-survivor choice and safety.

The Crisis Response Model is comprised of:

- Family Violence Case Management Program Requirements (as they pertain to crisis responses);
- Roles and responsibilities in providing emergency accommodation; and
- Roles and responsibilities after hours.

In addition to these guiding documents, the **Victorian family violence refuge eligibility and prioritisation framework** supports the aims of the Crisis Response Model by clarifying the model of referral, prioritisation and placement of victim-survivors into family violence accommodation services (also known as refuge).

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DOCUMENT PURPOSE:

The specialist family violence sector is expected to align its operations with the Crisis Response Model and associated practice frameworks by August 2023.

This document is intended to support Local Family Violence Services (including Family Violence Accommodation Services and The Orange Door Partner Agencies) to align their operations with the roles and responsibilities in providing emergency accommodation and the Victorian family violence refuge eligibility and prioritisation framework.

DEFINITIONS:

This paper uses the language of “victim-survivor” to refer to both adult and child victim-survivors. Safe and Equal acknowledges children and young people as victim-survivors of family violence in their own right, and notes that children and young people placed in emergency accommodation have distinct and specific support needs.

KEY CHANGES FOR LOCAL FAMILY VIOLENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

While Safe Steps and The Orange Doors remain the main entry points to crisis responses for victim-survivors needing emergency accommodation, it is acknowledged that all victim-survivors in emergency accommodation should have access to face-to-face support from a local family violence service, wherever they are accommodated. Practically, this means local level responses are being prioritised and Local Family Violence Support Services will play an increased and integral role in the delivery of crisis case management support, including the provision of emergency accommodation to victim-survivors across Victoria.

According to the model, all Local Family Violence Support Services are expected to:

- Undertake risk assessment / risk management and safety planning and manage emergency accommodation placement for existing and self-referred victim-survivors who make contact with their services, and
- Provide case management, referral and support to safely exit emergency accommodation to victim-survivors for whom they are providing an emergency accommodation response. Services' approach to case management and exit planning should be informed by the **Family Violence Case Management Program Requirements** and the **Refuge eligibility and prioritisation framework**.

Only services defined as The Orange Door partner agencies have additional responsibilities and are expected to:

- Accept allocations/referrals for case management responses from The Orange Doors and Safe Steps for victim-survivors in emergency accommodation, and
- Provide episodic outreach support to victim-survivors accommodated in their local area by The Orange Doors and Safe Steps.

Family Violence Accommodation services are expected to:

- Provide temporary supported accommodation for victim-survivors who cannot stay in their usual home due to a serious level of risk posed by the perpetrator, and
- Undertake refuge placement matching in alignment with the **Refuge eligibility and prioritisation framework** and utilising the Family Violence Accommodation Register
- Provide case management support to victim-survivors in family violence accommodation services, as per the **Family Violence Case Management Program Requirements**.

THE CHECKLISTS

The Roles and Responsibilities in providing emergency accommodation and the Refuge eligibility and prioritisation framework describe specific responsibilities for services in the areas of referral and risk assessment, provision of emergency accommodation and case management / case coordination. The following checklists have been developed to assist services to align their operations with the Model in each of these key areas.

<u>IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST – REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL FAMILY VIOLENCE SUPPORT SERVICES</u>		
<u>REFERRALS AND RISK ASSESSMENT</u>	<p>Ensure / establish a process to enable timely triage, risk assessment and safety planning for victim-survivors self-referring in crisis.</p> <p><i>For example, ensure availability of a duty worker who can undertake risk assessment, safety planning, information sharing etc. and manage intake for victim-survivors who self-refer in crisis.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>
	<p>Ensure / establish a process to enable continuous review of and updates to risk assessments and safety plans for victim-survivors in emergency accommodation.</p> <p><i>Ongoing risk assessment and safety planning should be embedded in all services' case management approaches. Services may wish to brief existing case management staff on this requirement and on the importance of maintaining up-to-date MARAM risk assessments for victim survivors receiving emergency accommodation and crisis case management support.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>
	<p>Ensure / establish a process to make sure that victim-survivors who are existing clients of the service are offered emergency accommodation in cases where their assessed level of risk increases.</p> <p><i>For example, ensure case management and outreach workers are trained and able to enact emergency accommodation placement in instances where a client of the service experiences an increase in their assessed level of risk.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/>

	<p>Ensure / establish a process to enable sharing of information with Safe Steps, The Orange Door, family violence accommodation services and other agencies, as needed.</p> <p><i>For example, brief existing case management staff on this requirement or establish teams / workers to manage crisis responses including timely information sharing with refuge, housing providers and other services receiving referrals for clients in crisis.</i></p>	○
<p><u>EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION</u></p>	<p>Establish relationships with in-area accommodation providers and develop relevant processes and procedures to enable placement of victim-survivors into emergency accommodation. *</p> <p><i>This work is currently being undertaken in the context of the Local Family Violence Motel Coordination Projects. Services may wish to refer to the Key Considerations for Motel Relationship Management for guidance on selecting accommodation providers and managing relationships with the same.</i></p> <p><i>*Services should note that while a service should pay for a minimum of 3 nights motel accommodation when coordinating emergency accommodation placement, victim-survivors must always be placed and supported in emergency accommodation for as long as is necessary to manage risk and safety.</i></p>	○
	<p>Establish processes and procedures to enable transport of victim-survivors to and from emergency accommodation.</p> <p><i>For example, services may wish to establish accounts with taxi services, Uber, Shebah etc. and should develop policies and procedures to support staff in their use.</i></p>	○
	<p>Provide guidance to workers on the serious risk threshold for the provision of emergency accommodation, including practice guidance on determining whether local-area accommodation is safe and appropriate for self-referred victim-survivors.</p> <p><i>Please note: Safe and Equal are seeking to develop further practice guidance to support practitioners to determine whether victim-survivors require and will benefit from an emergency accommodation response. It is generally accepted that a victim survivor assessed as being at serious risk, or at elevated risk and experiencing other compounding life circumstances, may require a crisis accommodation response.</i></p>	○

	<p>Establish a process for referral to Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre for victim-survivors who require out of area emergency accommodation.</p> <p><i>When referring to Safe Steps for out of area emergency accommodation, workers should do so via phone call to 1800 015 188 to ensure a swift response. A completed MARAM risk assessment is also required to facilitate out of area emergency accommodation placement.</i></p> <p><i>Please note: Safe and Equal are seeking to develop further practice guidance to support practitioners to determine whether victim-survivors require out-of-area emergency accommodation.</i></p>	○
	<p>Establish processes and procedures to enable provision of face-to-face outreach, including provision of material aid, to victim-survivors placed in emergency accommodation.</p> <p><i>According to the Crisis Response Model, Local Family Violence Support Services should provide face-to-face outreach to victim-survivors in emergency accommodation in line with the Case Management Program Requirements. Services should ensure internal processes and procedures are in place to enable activation of daytime outreach including use of Family Violence Crisis Brokerage for provision of material aid.</i></p> <p><i>Services should also engage with their local after-hours support service to establish processes and procedures in respect of referrals made for after-hours support.</i></p>	○
<p><u>CASE MANAGEMENT / CASE COORDINATION</u></p>	<p>Ensure / establish a process to enable allocation of victim-survivors placed in emergency accommodation to workers / teams responsible for crisis case management.</p> <p><i>For example, ensure that existing case management staff are briefed and aware that victim-survivors placed in emergency accommodation will form a part of their caseload, or else establish teams / workers to manage crisis responses.</i></p> <p><i>Please note: establishment of a team or designation of specific workers may not be required in every instance, and services should be informed by anticipated demand when considering how best to meet this requirement.</i></p>	○

	<p>Establish a process for determining whether a victim-survivor is eligible for and wishes to be referred to family violence accommodation services (refuge).</p> <p><i>The Refuge eligibility and prioritisation framework establishes eligibility requirements for referral to refuge. Services should ensure that workers have read and understand the framework.</i></p> <p><i>Services should also establish a procedure for referral of victim-survivors who meet the risk threshold described in the framework to Safe Steps for placement on the statewide Family Violence Accommodation Register.</i></p> <p><i>Please note: When referring to Safe Steps for placement in refuge a completed refuge referral form and MARAM risk assessment is required. Work is currently underway to finalise a new referral form, however as at March 2023 a pre-existing form is still in use and can be accessed upon request to Safe Steps.</i></p>	○
	<p>Establish a process to enable regular communication with Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre in respect of any victim-survivor referred for refuge placement.</p> <p><i>Services should brief workers on the requirement to communicate with Safe Steps weekly while a victim-survivor awaits the outcome of a referral to refuge. It is particularly important that workers communicate with Safe Steps if a victim-survivor who has been referred to Safe Steps for refuge placement experiences an escalation in their family violence risk.</i></p>	○
	<p>Ensure provision of case management support – including face to face outreach – to victim-survivors in emergency accommodation in line with the Case Management Program Requirements for Specialist Family Violence Services.</p> <p><i>The Case Management Program Requirements establish comprehensive expectations for services in the provision of case management support to victim-survivors, including those in emergency accommodation.</i></p> <p><i>Safe and Equal are seeking to develop practice guidance to support workers and services to apply the Case Management Program Requirements to the emergency accommodation service delivery context.</i></p>	○

	<p>Ensure provision of support to victim-survivors to safely exit emergency accommodation.</p> <p><i>For example, ensure that case managers have knowledge of local area homelessness and housing services and programs, Safe at Home options and understand how to utilize FSP and PSI funding to support victim-survivors in their safe transition out of emergency accommodation.</i></p> <p><i>Safe and Equal are seeking to develop specific practice guidance for services on how to support a safe exit from emergency accommodation including guidance around safety planning in the event that a victim-survivor returns to an unsafe home or relationship.</i></p>	<p>○</p>
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<u>IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST – ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ORANGE DOOR PARTNER AGENCIES</u>		
<u>REFERRALS AND RISK ASSESSMENT</u>	<p>Establish a process for receiving and actioning referrals / allocations for lead crisis case management support from Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre and The Orange Doors.</p> <p><i>For example, services may wish to establish an email inbox and/or a specific contact number for use by the Orange Doors and Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre when allocating / referring victim-survivors for local area emergency accommodation and case management support.</i></p> <p><i>Services should also ensure processes and procedures are in place to enable the transfer of responsibility for payment of emergency accommodation from Safe Steps and The Orange Doors to their own service, noting that during any period of transition, referral or handover, the referring agency must pay for a minimum three-night stay and related costs at the time of transfer.</i></p>	○
<u>CASE MANAGEMENT / CASE COORDINATION</u>	<p>Establish / ensure a process for receiving and actioning requests for episodic face-to-face outreach for victim-survivors accommodated by The Orange Doors and Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre.</p> <p><i>For example, services may wish to establish an email inbox and/or a specific contact number for use by the Orange Doors and Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre when referring victim-survivors for face-to-face outreach support.</i></p>	○

<u>IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST –REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE ACCOMMODATION SERVICES</u>		
<u>REFERRALS AND RISK ASSESSMENT</u>	<p>Ensure that victim-survivors seeking placement in refuge are referred and matched in alignment with the Refuge Eligibility and Prioritisation Framework</p> <p><i>Family violence accommodation services should ensure that workers have read and understood the Framework and may wish to update processes and procedures to ensure that matching and acceptance of referrals is undertaken according to the same.</i></p> <p><i>Family violence accommodation services should also ensure that all refuge places are listed on the Family Violence Accommodation Register. Places that are not currently able to support the intake of a new client can be marked as ‘Unavailable’.</i></p>	○
<u>CASE MANAGEMENT / CASE COORDINATION</u>	<p>Ensure provision of case management support to victim-survivors is in line with the Case Management Program Requirements for Specialist Family Violence Services.</p> <p><i>The Case Management Program Requirements establish comprehensive expectations for services in the provision of case management support to victim-survivors, including those in family violence accommodation services.</i></p>	○
	<p>Ensure provision of support to victim-survivors to safely exit family violence accommodation services.</p> <p><i>For example, ensure that case managers have knowledge of local area family violence, homelessness and housing services and programs, Safe at Home options and understand how to utilise FSP and PSI funding to support victim-survivors in their safe transition out of refuge accommodation.</i></p>	○