

Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) includes a wide range of behaviours committed in an intimate or family relationship including family members, children, partners/ex partners or caregivers. DFV is commonly understood as physical violence, but may also include emotional or verbal abuse, intimidation, spiritual or cultural abuse, sexual abuse, or restriction of access to finances or social connections.



DFV in the Workplace

Those experiencing DFV may be juggling multiple issues, often in silence. The impact on their health and wellbeing is significant and this can in turn have an impact on the workplace. It is important to understand that for some individuals, the workplace may be the only place where they feel safe, or where they can access support.

It is common for individuals to feel:

- Anxious (frightened, scared or have feelings of dread)
- Depressed (sadness or using language of worthlessness)
- Embarrassed (shame, fearful of being judged by others, fearful of losing their job)

How to provide support

- Believe them and listen without judgement
- Help them understand it is not their fault
- Be supportive, encouraging and honest
- Ask if they need help from a support service and offer to go with them
- Help them get advice and support by calling 1800 RESPECT or visiting their [website](#)
- In the workplace, provide training and education of DFV, particular for leaders



Signs to be alert to

Everyone responds differently to DFV – some of the more common indicators you may see in the workplace include:

- Frequently arriving late for work or taking more time off than usual
- Frequently checking in with their partner to report where they are and what they are doing
- Wearing covered clothing that is not weather appropriate
- Apprehensive and/or experiencing difficulty making decisions
- Becoming overwhelmed or emotional over minor matters
- Decline in their performance or unusual/unexpected errors
- They have physical injuries such as bruises, sprains or cuts
- Not engaging in activities where there may be a financial cost
- Appearing "on edge" or more nervous than usual
- Using self critical language "I am not worthy"
- Demonstrating low trust in others "I can't trust anyone"
- Using overly apologetic language
- Complaining of headaches, lack of sleep or stomach upset
- Whinging about difficulties in their relationship or home life
- Being withdrawn around others or showing little enthusiasm for events outside work
- Appearing overly anxious to please their partner and go along with what they say
- Reduced confidence or being unusually quiet