

Prevention of Family Violence Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assist all Council staff to strengthen family violence prevention and respond to the needs of victim-survivors through Council planning and engagement with residents of all ages and backgrounds through Council's range of diverse spaces, places and services.

Scope

The policy includes:

- Statement of Commitment to the Prevention of Family Violence
- Prevention of Family Violence Guiding Principles

This policy applies to Council staff including contingent labour, contractors, consultants and volunteers.

Policy statement

Statement of Commitment to the Prevention of Family Violence:

Moonee Valley City Council believes that everyone deserves to live free from violence.

Family violence is a violation of human rights and is unacceptable in all its forms. Everyone has a role to play in preventing and responding to family violence.

We commit to engaging with the community to strengthen family violence prevention and response in all the work we do.

Policy principles

Prevention of Family Violence Guiding Principles:

- Family violence is unacceptable in all its forms
- Family violence is a human rights violation and preventing it is a health and wellbeing priority
- Everyone has a role to play in preventing and responding to family violence
- Children are victim-survivors in their own right, and their voices and experiences must be heard
- Family violence is perpetrated in many ways and some community members are targeted and impacted more than others
- Unique forms of family violence are experienced by different community groups

- Different forms of inequality intersect to cause family violence in our community
- A whole-of-Council approach to prevention of family violence is necessary
- Partnerships and collaboration across Council, local organisations and community are essential to successful prevention and response to family violence
- Connection with lived experience advocates and the specialist family violence response sector is vital to our work
- Alignment of our action plans for priority populations and family violence prevention work with regional, state and federal prevention strategies is vital for success
- Continuous improvement of our prevention strategies is required through evidence based and best practice approaches, data collection, monitoring and evaluation

Responsibilities

The following Council departments and business units have direct and / or supporting responsibilities associated with this policy:

Role	Responsibilities
Audit and Risk Committee	The Audit and Risk Committee provides an oversight function regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's policies • Risk management system • Compliance controls • Audit functions
Umarkoo Wayi (All of us) Equity and Inclusion team	Oversees the development, implementation and evaluation of initiatives to support the organisation to adopt this policy.
Whole of organisation	Responsibility for the application of the policy principles when planning and delivering Council's services and programs

Definitions

Term	Definition
Family violence	‘Family violence’ is behaviour by a person towards a family member that is any of the following: physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically or economically abusive; threatening; coercive; in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person; or behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, violent behaviours referred to.
Family	‘Family’ can mean intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks, intergenerational relationships and family-like or carer relationships.

Related legislation and reference sources

Council’s Prevention of Family Violence Policy has been developed following a review of relevant federal and state government policy frameworks.

State	Federal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Free from Violence: Victoria’s strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.</u> • <u>Ending Family Violence: Victoria’s Plan For Change</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia</u> • <u>National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2022 - 2023</u>

In addition, the following regional reference sources were reviewed:

- Local government guide for preventing family violence and all forms of violence against women A practical guide to a whole-of-council model for addressing the underlying drivers of violence and promoting gender equality
- Preventing Violence Together: Western Region Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women

Related Council documents

MV2040 Action Plan

Strategic Direction 3: A city where people are healthy and safe

Objective 3.2: Protect population health and respond to emerging health issues

3.2.6 Support a strong prevention system to ensure child safety and to address men’s violence against women

Objective 3.4: Promote safety and community confidence

3.4.1 Attract ‘preventative’ funding and support improvements to accessibility of services

3.4.2 Promote neighbourhood-based programs that support community safety and resilience

MVCC Community Vision, Council Plan and Health Plan 2021-2025

Strategy F3. Prevent violence against women and families and support those experiencing it to access appropriate help, by working with partner organisations.

Strategies	Initiatives 22/23	Strategic indicators
Strategy F3. Prevent violence against women and families and support those experiencing it to access appropriate help, by working with partner organisations.	F3.1 Partner with Moonee Valley Legal Service to support the Moonee Valley Family Violence Network.	Positive mental and physical health. Safe environments for families and children.

MVCC Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

[Gender Equality Action Plan obligations](#)

The primary prevention of violence is identified as a component of Council’s Gender Equality Action Plan, which was developed to meet the new legal obligations of local government under the Gender Equality Act of 2020.

The following strategies and actions of the Plan speak directly to primary prevention work, requiring specialist input and external consultation facilitated by this portfolio:

Strategy 6.2: Continue Council’s commitment to the prevention of Violence against Women and Children

Key Action 2.1.4: Extend internal professional development opportunities and training to Councillors to raise awareness of the benefits of gender equity, inclusive practices and preventing violence against women.

Key Action 6.2.1: Refine internal Procedures, processes and supporting documents that address Family Violence.

Key Action 6.2.2: Raise awareness of Family Violence issues, support and resources available to staff through engagement activities.

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Approved	Date	Last Reviewed	Date	Next Review	Date
Major Changes	New Document or list only the major changes to the document				

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Acknowledgement of Country

Moonee Valley City Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land – the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, their spirits, ancestors, elders and community members past and present.