

How to respond to disclosures of domestic and family violence

This is a guide to help staff and students respond to disclosures of domestic and family violence

Establish immediate safety

If the person is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical attention contact emergency services on 000.

ECU Security can be contacted 24 hours a day on (08) 6304 3333.

Find an appropriate place

If the disclosure happens in person, find a space to start or continue a conversation where the person feels comfortable and you can talk privately without feeling rushed or interrupted.

Listen and reassure

If someone talks to you about domestic and family violence, it's important that you:

- Believe them and take their fears seriously. This is no matter what you think of the person or the person who hurt them.
- Listen without interrupting or judging.
- Never blame the person experiencing the violence for what has happened to them.
- Understand that they may not be ready, or it may not be safe, to leave.
- Remember that domestic and family violence may not always be physical. It can also include controlling behaviour, emotional abuse, financial abuse, and educational sabotage.

Note: your role is not to investigate, nor are you expected to be a counsellor. Your role is to listen and then assist them to access the services they require.

Provide support and reporting options

You can offer support to the individual to consider their options for accessing support services and reporting an incident. ECU has support services that are available to staff and students. You can also provide details for available external confidential counselling services (see below).

The individual does not need to formally report an incident to access these services, either at ECU or externally.

Support options

Support options for students or staff impacted by domestic and family violence may include:

- Flexible work and study arrangements where appropriate.
- Access to internal support services and external referral information.
- Housing and transport advice and assistance.
- Support to report incidences both internally and externally.
- Physical safety measures, such as security escorts where required.

ECU support services

- ECU Security can be contacted at any time (day or night). ECU Security will also follow up with other ECU support staff or police and emergency services if required – 6304 3333.
- Download the Nowforce app: provides a direct line to our campus security personnel and is designed to help minimise response times to emergencies and routine security and safety situations. The app can be used anywhere, not just on campus.
- Out of Hours Crisis Line for ECU Students: 1300 583 032 or text 0488 884 232.



- Student Counselling Service: (08) 9370 6706.
- Student Health Service: Joondalup Campus – (08) 6304 5618
Mount Lawley Campus – (08) 9370 6814.
- Student Success Officers can help with referrals, provide financial and housing advice and support and help assist students with negotiating university life – (08) 6304 2988.
- University Contact Officers (UCOs) offer alternative confidential support.
- Staff Employee Assistance Program (EAP), including Manager Assist Hotline Service: 1300 307 912 or (08) 9388 9000.

Community support

- Police – 131 444.
- 1800Respect provides counselling and support services for people impacted by domestic and family violence – 1800 737 732 (24/7).
- Women's Domestic and Family Violence Helpline is a state wide 24 hour service providing support and counselling for women experiencing family and domestic violence – (08) 9223 1188 or free call 1800 007 339.
- Yorgum provides counselling for Aboriginal children and adults of all ages who have experienced family violence or sexual abuse – 1800 469 371.
- Waratah (Bunbury) provides free, specialised and therapeutic intervention, counselling and support services for people who have experienced sexual assault and/or sexual abuse and/or family domestic violence – (08) 9791 2884.
- MensLine Australia is a telephone and online counselling service for men with emotional health and relationship concerns – 1300 78 99 78.
- Multicultural Women's Advocacy and Support promotes the safety of women from migrant and refugee backgrounds – 9328 1200.
- Entrypoint is a free assessment and referral service assisting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in WA.

Practice self-care

Supporting someone who has experienced domestic and family violence can be challenging. It is important to take care of yourself after receiving distressing information.

If you require support as a staff member, please contact PeopleSense (ECU's Employee Assistance Program service) via phone on 1300 307 912 or (08) 9388 9000 or email reception@peoplesense.com.au

If you are a student you may want to access the Student Counselling Service.

For further information please refer to ECU's Domestic and Family Violence web page.

👉 ecu.edu.au/equity 📞 6304 6170 ✉ equity@ecu.edu.au