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| Information Sharing Schemes and the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)  |
| Factsheet for Victorian Department of Health Workforces |
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# What are the Information Sharing Schemes?

The Victorian Government has introduced laws to make it easier for professionals to collaborate with each other, and better support the children and families they are working with:

* **The Child Information Sharing Scheme** (CISS) forms Part 6a of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* and enables the sharing of information to promote the wellbeing or safety of a child or a group of children. The CISS prioritises wellbeing and safety over privacy. This allows professionals to collaborate and share information, without consent, where they can prevent potential future harm or help a child thrive.
* **The Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme** (FVISS) forms Part 5a of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* allows the sharing of information to assess or manage family violence risk in relation to both children and adults. The FVISS enables the service system to manage victim survivor safety and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and behaviours. Where no children are involved, consent from the adult victim survivor is required, only when it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so. Information sharing requests made under FVISS must relate to one of the following purposes:
	+ for a family violence assessment purpose
	+ for a family violence protection purpose (to manage risk, including ongoing risk assessment and management).

# Who can you share information with?

Organisations 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 organisations/workforces that are also ISEs. In addition, you can share perpetrator information with the victim survivor to manage a risk to safety and information under CISS to manage risk to a child’s safety. You can continue to use your existing information sharing permissions with other organisations/workforces.

Health services that are prescribed under the information sharing schemes include:

* Bush Nursing Centres
* General practitioners and general practice nurses
* Health services (hospitals)
* Ambulance Victoria
* Community health services
* Alcohol and Other Drugs services
* State-funded residential aged care services (Public sector residential aged care services PSRACS)
* Mental health services (community-managed and designated services)
* Early Parenting Centres
* Maternal and Child Health services

Victoria Police, courts, Child Protection, state-funded family violence specialist services, schools and early childhood education and care services are also ISEs.

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. Access the list via the [VicGov website](https://iselist.www.vic.gov.au/ise/list/) <https://iselist.www.vic.gov.au/ise/list>.

# What information can you share?

You can share information that is relevant to assessing and/or managing family violence, or promoting the safety or wellbeing of children can be shared provided that:

* 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 reporting obligations to Child Protection or Police.

# What is MARAM?

The Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes are being implemented with the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM). MARAM has been designed to increase the safety and wellbeing of Victorians by supporting prescribed services to identify, assess and manage family violence risk effectively.

MARAM sets out key principles and pillars that should be embedded into an organisation’s policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools, and identifies the responsibilities of various organisations and staff across the system. MARAM has been established in law under a new Part 11 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*.

Your role in assessing and managing family violence risk will be dependent on the nature of your work and contact with those experiencing family violence. Identification, assessment and management of family violence risk is a shared responsibility across a broad range of services, organisations and sectors.

# MARAM Responsibilities

There are three levels of MARAM responsibilities: Screening and Identification, Brief and Intermediate and Comprehensive. MARAM responsibilities underpin each of these levels.

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| **1. Screening and Identification** | **2. Brief and Intermediate** | **3. Comprehensive** |
| A practitioner who may come in contact with family violence victim survivors whilst providing universal services. | A practitioner who in the line of their work has some contact with people experiencing or using family violence but where responding to family violence is not their core role or function. | A practitioner whose role is to respond to people experiencing or using family violence. |
| **MARAM Responsibilities:** **1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10**1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement2. Identification of family violence5. Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals6. Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation) 9. Contribute to coordinated risk management10. Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management | **MARAM Responsibilities:** 1, 2, **3, 4**, 5, 6, 9 and 103. Intermediate risk assessment4. Intermediate risk management | **MARAM Responsibilities:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, **7, 8**, 9 and 107. Comprehensive assessment8. Comprehensive risk management and safety planning. |

# MARAM alignment

Prescribed organisations are required to effectively incorporate the four pillars of the Framework into existing policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools. MARAM alignment requires that embedding activities are guided by the 10 MARAM principles, incorporate the contents of the four pillars, especially the evidence-based risk factors and MARAM aligned tools, and assign MARAM responsibilities. The following steps have been recommended for organisation leaders to take to support MARAM alignment:

1. Read MARAM policy and practice documents.
2. Identify or establish governance to oversee the change process.
3. Read, understand and determine MARAM responsibilities for roles within their organisation.
4. Assess organisational landscape for interactions with family violence and existing tools used.
5. Identify and review organisational policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools that will require updating to reflect MARAM. Also identify the need for any new materials as appropriate.
6. Assess training needs and implement a training strategy.

# Training and resources for health workforces

### Training for organisational leaders

**MARAM Leading Alignment training** is available for organisational leaders who have decision making responsibilities to embed MARAM within the organisation’s context. The training promotes an understanding of the MARAM framework, including key strategies and requirements such as practice, policies and procedures necessary to align with MARAM.

Further information and course enrolment are available on the [DVRCV website](https://training.dvrcv.org.au/course-details/?course_id=78680&course_type=w) < <https://training.dvrcv.org.au/course-details/?course_id=78680&course_type=w>>.

### Training for healthcare workers

**A summary of training for health workforces is available at: <**[**https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework**](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management-framework)**>**

### MARAM and ISS resources for organisations

**The Organisational Readiness Checklist** is for organisational leaders to determine the responsibilities under both information sharing schemes and to identify policies and procedures that require updating to reflect obligations under both schemes. The checklist is available at: https://www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing

[**Ministerial Guidelines**](https://www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing) have been developed on both information sharing schemes to provide direction to ISEs on how to apply Part 5A in sharing information with other ISEs in relation to assessing or managing risk of family violence and includes guidance and resources to ensure that information is shared appropriately and responsibly < <https://www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing>>.

All services prescribed as ISEs can access the online **ISE list.** Access the list via the [VicGov website](https://iselist.www.vic.gov.au/ise/list/) <https://iselist.www.vic.gov.au/ise/list>.

**MARAM Organisational Embedding guide** and supporting resources are available on the [VicGov website](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>> under Organisational focussed resources.

Resources to assist organisations and workers implement MARAM and upskill in family violence knowledge and practice are available on the [Vic Gov MARAM website](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources) <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>.

### Further information:

For further information about training and resources available to support health workforces to implement these reforms, please email: infosharing@health.vic.gov.au

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