

Future-proofing Safety

COVID-19 and family violence in Victoria

Service Sector Survey

Project Information Sheet for Services and Practitioners

About our research

We are the [Australian Institute of Family Studies](#). We are partnering with Drummond Street Services' [Centre for Family Research and Evaluation](#) who are leading the *Future-proofing Safety* project, and RMIT University's [Centre for Innovative Justice](#) to examine service interactions for people who experienced and used family violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, along with sector partners [Good Shepherd](#) and [GenWest](#). The project is funded by [Family Safety Victoria](#).

The *Future-proofing Safety* project is looking across Victoria's community services system to understand how **services responded to family violence** during **COVID-19**. We will look at how **client service needs changed**, how **services adapted**, whether there were any **gaps** and **weaknesses** within the family violence service system and broader sector and the means of addressing these gaps in the short, medium, and long term. We will also explore key elements of disaster/crisis response planning for services going forward.

The research will involve **multiple studies**, including a **survey of practitioners** working across a range of organisations delivering services in family violence, alcohol and other drugs, mental and physical health, disability, legal, housing and cohort specific contexts to understand what happened in this unprecedented crisis, so that we are ready to respond to crises in the future.

About the sector survey

The purpose of the **sector survey** of practitioners is to understand **practitioners' views** on how **client experiences of family violence changed during COVID-19**, as well as how **client service needs changed** and **how services changed** to meet these needs. The survey will also examine the **strengths and limitations of services** to adapt to clients' changing needs as well as practitioners' views on key elements of disaster/crisis response plan for services.

We need as many responses as possible to ensure that the survey findings are representative and reliable.

How to participate

All **practitioners** who have worked in the **community services system in Victoria** are invited to participate in this survey.

If you would like to participate, please [open the online survey](#).

Your privacy and safety

We take your **privacy and personal security** very seriously, and **safeguards** are in place to protect it.

Participation in this research is **confidential** and **completely voluntary**. Your decision to participate is **confidential** and will not affect your professional relationships or entitlement to services in any way. You are free to **stop** the survey at any time, to not answer any questions, and to delete your answers prior to submitting your responses.

Data collected in this research will be kept indefinitely and **held securely** in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), and the information you provide will not be used in any way that may identify you. You may access our privacy policy [here](#). The survey will **not collect any information identifying you**. Survey data collected via the sector survey will be **securely stored** on AIFS cloud services, with access only permitted for authorised researchers and required AIFS staff.

Contacts

The research is being conducted by the Institute's Family Law, Family Violence and Elder Abuse Research Team. If you would like to speak to a member of the team, please call **1800 720 142** or email us at futureproofingsafety@aifs.gov.au. If you have a concern relating to the project ethics, please contact the AIFS Ethics Committee Secretariat via ethics-secretariat@aifs.gov.au or **03 9214 7888**.

Publication

The final research report and any accompanying publications will be available on the **AIFS website**, as well as the websites of our research partners, Drummond Street Services' [Centre for Family Research and Evaluation](#) and RMIT University's [Centre for Innovative Justice](#).

About the Australian Institute of Family Studies

The Australian Institute of Family Studies is based in Melbourne. It is an independent statutory agency, established by the Commonwealth Government in 1980. The Institute aims to help in the development of better policies for the future of Australian families. More detailed information about the Institute can be obtained from our [website](#).

Getting help

We are unable to provide advice or to assist with specific concerns about individual matters.

Please contact the **National Sexual Assault Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service** for 24/7 information or support about domestic and family violence. Phone 1800 737 732 (1800 Respect) or [1800respect.org.au](https://www.1800respect.org.au).

Call **000** if you are worried about your safety, or the safety of another person.