Supporting employees experiencing domestic and family violence

**Support for employees who are experiencing domestic and family violence**

Catholic schooling authorities are committed to sensitively, urgently and compassionately supporting staff members who are experiencing domestic and family violence (DFV). Where domestic and family violence and abuse is made known to a principal or manager immediate measures will be taken to offer practical workplace support and access to counselling. A range of supports are available for affected staff.

**External services for staff requiring immediate support and assistance**

Staff members who believe their immediate physical safety or the safety of others within their household is at risk, should contact the Queensland Police on **telephone 000** (triple zero).

Information on how Queensland Police respond to reports of domestic and family violence can be found on the Queensland Police website at the following link: <https://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/cscp/dv/response.htm>

Domestic Violence Orders (DVO)

Those experiencing domestic and family violence can apply for either temporary or longer standing domestic violence protection orders. In some instances police and magistrates will also apply for domestic violence on behalf of those who have been abused. These Orders require that the person using violence or abuse cease their behaviour. DVOs can also impose conditions relating to proximity and contact. Those conditions can include restricting access to the offending individual, within or outside the person’s place of work.

Staff who have been required to apply for a DVO, which has within it conditions that restrict access to the workplace by the offending individual, must bring the DVO to the attention of their principal or manager, so that they can take measures to increase the safety of that person and others, in line with DET security provisions.

**Supports for staff affected by domestic and family violence**

DFV Workplace Safety Checklists and DFV Workplace Safety Plans

Where a staff member advises that they are experiencing domestic and/or family violence, their principal or manager should determine in consultation with the staff member whether there are any risks to the safety of that person or others in the workplace. The [*DFV Workplace Safety Checklis*](http://www.qcec.catholic.edu.au/Upload/publicsite/Education/Studentwellbeing/AttDDFVChecklist.docx)*t* and [*DFV Workplace Safety Plan*](http://www.qcec.catholic.edu.au/Upload/publicsite/Education/Studentwellbeing/AttEDFVSafetyplan.docx) can assist with identifying possible risks to the affected staff member and others.

Where risks are identified within the *Checklist*, the principal or manager should develop, in conjunction with the affected staff member, [a DFV *Workplace Safety Plan*](http://www.qcec.catholic.edu.au/Upload/publicsite/Education/Studentwellbeing/AttEDFVSafetyplan.docx)*.* A copy of the DET resources [*DFV Workplace Safety Plan*](http://www.qcec.catholic.edu.au/Upload/publicsite/Education/Studentwellbeing/AttEDFVSafetyplan.docx) can be found in [Attachment E](http://www.qcec.catholic.edu.au/Upload/publicsite/Education/Studentwellbeing/AttEDFVSafetyplan.docx).

Access to Domestic violence leave for Catholic schooling authorities (in accordance with the QCEC EB Agreement)

* 1. **Domestic violence leave**
     1. Leave

An employee, who is experiencing domestic violence, will have access to five (5) days per year non-cumulative of paid special leave in order to address related matters including, but not limited to:

1. Attending medical and / or counselling appointments;
2. Sourcing alternative accommodation;
3. Accessing legal advice;
4. Attending legal proceedings;
5. Organising alternative care for members of their immediate family or household;
6. Organising alternative education arrangements for their children;
7. Rebuilding support networks; and
8. Other issues related to the domestic violence.

This leave will be in addition to existing leave entitlements and may be taken as consecutive or single days or as a fraction of a day and all reasonable requests will be approved.

Employees can also access existing leave entitlements for the abovementioned purposes, without the usual notice requirements.

It is not mandatory for the employee to have exhausted other forms of paid leave prior to accessing this special leave.

* + 1. Supporting another person experiencing domestic violence

An employee who supports a person experiencing domestic violence may use their existing carer’s leave to accompany the person on activities related to that personal crisis, or to mind the children of the person to enable them to undertake activities related to such significant matter.

This sub-clause applies only where an employee supports a person who is a member of their immediate family (as defined in clause 1.3.9 of this Agreement) or household.

Violence or abuse at home may result in absences, lateness or reduced work performance. Employees experiencing domestic or family violence are encouraged to speak with their principal or manager about their circumstances to enable their principal or manager to gain an understanding of the issues and their workplace impact. Principals and managers are encouraged to identify strategies for support at work, in collaboration with affected staff members. These strategies should help the employee to continue working as effectively as possible.

Counselling support available for staff affected by Domestic and Family Violence

Free, confidential, short-term counselling is available 24/7 to all departmental staff and their immediate family members through the individual Catholic schooling authority’s external Employee Assistance provider (EAP).

Provision of information on specialist external services

**In an emergency call 000.**

**For specialist help and advice call:**

**DVConnect womensline** **1800RESPECT** (national telephone service)  
Ph: 1800 811 811 Ph:1800 737 732  
24 hours, 7 days a week 24 hours, 7 days a week

**DVConnect mensline** **DVConnect Sexual Assault line**   
Ph: 1800 600 636 Ph: 1800 010 120  
9 am to midnight, 7 days a week 7.30am to 11.30pm (7 days)

For general counselling call the individual Catholic schooling authority’s external Employee Assistance Provider (EAP).

More information about state-wide and regional domestic and family violence services can be found on the [Counselling Support and Advice for Domestic and Family Violence](http://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/counselling-support-advice/index.html) Queensland Government website.