

# Family Violence/Abuse Support (Students) Procedure

**DOCUMENT REFERENCE:** PPP261

**RESPONSIBLE MANAGER:** Student Engagement & Support

**CATEGORY:** Student Experience

**APPROVED DATE:** 23/07/2025

**DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:** July 2027

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

<b>Legislation</b>	Equality & Fairness Act 2013 Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 Child Safe Standards 2022 Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)
<b>Documents</b>	<a href="#">PPP012 Child Safety &amp; Wellbeing Guidelines</a> <a href="#">PPP036 Child Safety &amp; Wellbeing Policy</a> PPP083a Code of Conduct – Child safety PPP052 Duty of Care <a href="#">PPP046 Information Privacy Policy</a> PPP047 Privacy Statement PPP112 Security Duress Alarm Installation and Testing PPP170 SWDS Abuse and Neglect Reporting PPP263 Family Violence/Abuse Support Policy (Team members & Students) PPP264a Appendix – Family Violence /Abuse Support Services Resources PPP272 Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines TL152 Reasonable Adjustment Checklist (draft) PPP265 Student Injury, Incident or Illness Management and Return to Study Guidelines (draft) TL153 Fit to Study Review (draft) PPP284 Reportable Conduct Scheme Guidelines  <a href="#">Victoria Police Family Violence Resources</a> <a href="#">Victoria Police Family Violence Easy English</a> <a href="#">About family violence and how to get help Easy English</a> <a href="#">Family Violence Victoria State Government</a>

## 1. Introduction:

South West TAFE (SWTAFE or the 'Organisation') is committed to providing a responsive and supportive environment for students experiencing Family Violence. This guideline documents the agreed process to be followed where Family Violence in relation to a student is suspected or confirmed. Additionally, support will be provided on a case by case basis where a student is providing support to a family member or friend.

## 2. Scope:

These guidelines apply to all South West TAFE students whether studying on campus or remotely.

## 3. Definitions:

### Family Violence/Abuse

For the purposes of SWTAFE's Family Violence/Abuse Support (Students) Procedure, the Organisation will use the term 'Family Violence'. This can include domestic violence, coercive control, financial abuse, elder abuse, protective orders, restricted access situations, ex-partner issues. When one

	<p>person in a relationship uses violence and abuse to maintain power and control over the other person. This can include behaviour that is physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically or economically abusive, threatening, coercive or aimed at controlling or dominating the other person through fear</p> <p>Family violence also includes any behavior by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, the behavior described above.</p>
<b>FVIO</b>	Family Violence Intervention Order -A court order to protect a person, their children and their property from a family member, partner or ex-partner.
<b>AVO</b>	Apprehended Violence Order - AVOs protect people by ordering a person known as the 'defendant' not to assault, molest, harass, intimidate or stalk the protected person for a specific period of time.
<b>Reasonable Adjustment</b>	The purpose of reasonable adjustment is to make it possible for all students to participate fully. It's not to give one student an advantage over others, to change course standards or outcomes, or to guarantee success. It is also not about making unreasonable adjustment; every reasonable adjustment needs to be justifiable and must uphold the integrity of the qualification.
<b>Mandatory Reporting</b>	Mandatory reporting refers to the legal requirement of certain groups of people to report a reasonable belief of child physical or sexual abuse to child protection authorities. There is a high co-occurrence of family violence and other types of direct serious abuse of children. There may be instances where team members are mandated to report disclosures to Child Protection Authorities. <a href="#">Mandatory Reporting Child Protection</a>
<b>Failure to disclose child sexual abuse</b>	is a criminal offence. The offence requires that any adult who holds a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child (aged under 16) disclose that information to police. The offence applies to all adults in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children, unless they have a reasonable excuse.
<b>Failing to protect a child under the age of 16 from the risk of sexual abuse</b>	is a criminal offence. The offence requires a person in a position of authority to reduce or remove the risk of sexual abuse of a child by an adult associated with their organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so.
<b>Child</b>	For the purposes of implementing a child safe culture and environment, a child is inclusive of anyone under the age of 18 years of age.

#### 4. Roles & Responsibilities:

- **Team Leader, Student Wellbeing** is the primary contact for student Family Violence concerns.
- **SWTAFE Staff - Duty of Care Commitment.**

As part of SWTAFE's Duty of Care to Students, employees who suspect or have had disclosure of Family Violence from a SWTAFE student should contact the Team Leader, Student Wellbeing for guidance.

- **SWTAFE Students**

Students can self-refer to the Team Leader, Student Wellbeing. Students and employees who suspect or have had a disclosure of Family Violence from a student should also contact the Team Leader, Student Wellbeing.

## 5. Confidentiality and Non-Victimisation:

Any disclosure or request for support made by team members or students concerning issues of family violence will be managed confidentially.

Personal information provided by students concerning issues of family violence will be used solely for the purpose of assessing that individual's needs, determining and applying the appropriate support mechanisms. These will be agreed with the student, except as otherwise required or permitted by law (where it is believed there is an immediate risk of harm e.g. Police or WorkSafe).

There may be times, when there is a risk to a student (for example, if there is a risk of violence on campus). In these instances, disclosure of the situation will be kept to a minimum, and 'need-to-know' basis for the purpose of maintaining safety in the work or learning environment.

A person must not victimise or otherwise subject another person to detrimental action as a consequence of that person raising, providing information about, or otherwise being involved in the support for an individual experiencing family violence.

No personal information will be kept on a student's file without their express written permission.

## 6. Procedure for Victim-Survivor Disclosures by Students

- a. If a student is experiencing family violence, or caring for someone who is, it is recommended that in the first instance, they approach the Team Leader, Student Wellbeing for assistance.
- b. If this is not possible, it is recommended that the student contact another Student Wellbeing Officer or the Manager of Student Engagement & Support.
- c. Please use these links for the relevant contact details.

[Team Leader, Student Wellbeing Deb Brevis](#) | M 0466 944 969

[Manager Student Engagement & Support](#)

[Wellbeing Team](#)

[Koorie Support](#)

[Disability Support](#)

[Chaplain Service](#)

Or Contact SW Central on [1300 648 911](#)

- d. The student will be offered the opportunity to have a support person accompany them to discussions, matters or issues arising out of family violence. This may be a friend, classmate or teacher. Students under 18 must have support from a parent or guardian. Where this is not appropriate they must be accompanied by an adult of their choosing. Where appropriate and requested/approved by the student this may also include the [Manager, First Nations Community and Student Support](#), the Manager Accessibility Services and/or an Interpreter/translator where English is a second language.
- e. Where the student is under 16 and a disclosure of sexual assault or harassment (including grooming) is made, team members must report disclosures to Victoria Police (see definition above for Failure to Disclose Child Sexual Abuse).

## 7. Procedure where both FVIO or AVO Respondent (Perpetrator) and Victim/Survivor are Students

- A student who is a FVIO/AVO Respondent (Family Violence/Apprehended Violence Perpetrator) should be encouraged to disclose the FVIO/AVO to SWTAFE (Team Leader, Student Wellbeing) so we can support the student to not inadvertently breach the order and assist the student to have a positive education experience and outcome at SWTAFE.
- Once SWTAFE becomes aware of the FVIO/AVO, a risk assessment will be conducted by Student Wellbeing & Audit & Risk. Depending on the nature of FVIO, the student's access to campus and facilities like ICT resources may need to be modified.
- Breaches of these orders constitute a Breach of the Student Code of Conduct and as an illegal activity will be referred to Police.

## 8. The Team Leader – Student Wellbeing (or other nominated team member)

Will provide the person making the disclosure to with a copy of PPP263 Family Violence Support Policy (Team Members and Students) and this Procedure document;

- a) The Team Leader – Student Wellbeing will consult with the student about their specific support needs, including the requirements and location of their course.
- b) The Team Leader – Student Wellbeing will then support the student to liaise with their teacher/s and relevant Heads of Division (teaching) or Teaching Education Managers.
- c) Academic support will be provided on an individual basis depending on needs at the time. Some options that may be considered include but are not limited to those listed below under Academic Support.
- d) Personal Support will be provided as detailed below under [Personal Support](#)
- e) Emergency contact details retained by the SWTAFE on the SWTAFE's systems should be updated by the student accordingly.
- f) Where a security risk on campus arises e.g. where a family violence safety notice or intervention order exists for the student, the Team Leader – Student Wellbeing will consult with the Facilities Manager to assess the need for additional security measures such as issuing the student's teacher with a portable duress alarm, and/or informing relevant frontline staff.

## 9. Procedure for Third Party Victim-Survivor Disclosures

- a) SWTAFE Team Members or fellow students who have reasonable grounds to suspect a student is experiencing Family Violence (including receiving a disclosure of Family Violence from a student) are to contact the Team Leader – Student Wellbeing.
- b) Third party disclosures will be managed on a case-by-case basis and outcomes may involve supported reporting, debriefing or information provision
- c) Supported reporting will be provided if the student is under 18 years or where there are concerns over physical welfare and the need of a Police welfare check.
- d) Information provision by a third party may be appropriate if victim survivor is afraid or shamed to come forward
- e) Students involved in supporting their classmate experiencing family violence will be provided with an opportunity to debrief with the Team Leader, Student Wellbeing. Debrief or referral is intended to protect the third party from vicarious trauma.
- f) Team members involved in supporting students experiencing family violence are encouraged to contact the [Employee Assistance Program](#).

## 10. Academic Support:

Academic support will be provided on an individual basis depending on needs at the time. Evidence of need is through self-disclosure.

Some options that may be considered include but are not limited to:

- Reasonable adjustment as required
- Extensions of time on tasks, assignments and assessments.
- Flexible assessment modes
- Learning Support Facilitator interaction
- Self-paced learning options
- Reduced study load
- Online delivery

## 11. Personal Support:

Support provided by the Team Leader, Student Wellbeing will be in line with their professional competence and may be in the form of referral to external agencies depending on individual needs.

*(Staff members are also cautioned against giving advice on matters that they are not professionally competent to give (negligent advice). Advice is to be limited to areas within a staff member's own professional competence and given in situations arising from a role specified for them. The limitations and boundaries of your role should be discussed with your Manager before engaging in personal support of this nature.)*

## 12. Record Keeping

Academic support provided such as 'Reasonable Adjustment', Learning Support Plan or Disability Support Plan must be documented in a student's Academic File or 'Supportability' as appropriate. Changes to study modes or order of delivery of units must be authorised by Teaching Education Managers/Course Coordinators and also recorded on the student's Academic File.

Data on complaints, investigations or incidents relating to Child Safety is collected in a Central Register and managed in-line with legislative and privacy requirements. Actions taken to investigate and resolve the issue are recorded. Any reporting to third parties will only use de-identified data unless disclosure is required by law. Where data indicates systemic issues, items will be added to the Continuous Improvement Register for further action.

## 13. Reportable Conduct Scheme (Child Safety) Obligations

The Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisations' responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The scheme is established by the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (the Act). The Reportable Conduct Scheme is focused on worker and volunteer conduct, and how organisations investigate and respond to **allegations of child abuse**.

From 1 July 2024, organisations will need to notify the Commission about reportable allegations for labour hire workers, secondees, directors of companies and individual business owners and investigate under the Scheme.

Additional references: [CCYP Reportable Conduct Information Sheets](#) & PPP284 Reportable Conduct Scheme Guidelines

The Reportable Conduct Scheme does not replace the need to report allegations of child abuse, including criminal conduct and family violence to Victoria Police.

## 14. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

SWTAFE is committed to making diversity, equity and inclusion part of everything we do, including in the implementation of this policy/procedure/guideline. For more information, please visit the 'Our Values' page on our [website](#) [external] or the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Homepage on ECHO [internal]. [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion \(DEI\)](#)

## 15. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

South West TAFE is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a Child Safe Program designed to keep children safe within our organisation. For Child Safe key documents, resources, contact officer details please go to: [Child Safe Commitment](#)

## Resources and Contacts (also see PPP264a)

### [Victoria Police Family Violence Resources](#)

Includes fact sheets on:

- Children & family violence
- Elder abuse
- Family violence and Aboriginal communities
- Family violence safety notices & intervention orders
- Languages other and English (LOTE, 13 languages)
- Technical terms – multi-lingual
- National Domestic Violence Order Scheme


1800RESPECT


Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week


1800 737 732


### [Victoria's 24/7 family violence response centre](#)

**We are here for you – Contact us now**

 **1800 015 188**  
Available 24/7

 **Email Us**  
Available 24/7

 **Web Chat**  
Available Mon-Fri, 9am – midnight

 **Emergency? Dial 000**  
Available 24/7

### [Family Violence Victoria State Government](#)

Includes links to:

- Crisis Care and Assistance
- Report Abuse
- Resources and Support
- Legal Help
- Resources (English and other languages)

### [Safe + Equal Feminist + Inclusive](#)

Domestic Violence Victoria **and** Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria **have united to form** Safe and Equal.