



Social work services

If you are going through a difficult time our social workers can help you.

How we help

Our social workers can help you by:

- providing short term counselling
- giving you information and support
- connecting you with services which can help you.

Who we help

Our social workers can help when you need someone for support. They give priority to people with complex needs who don't have the support of family or other services in the community.

You can talk to them about:

- family and domestic violence
- thoughts of suicide or hurting yourself
- being a young person without support
- a personal or family crisis
- mental health concerns
- feeling worried, sad, stressed or lonely
- being affected by a natural disaster and how it's affected you.

Experiencing violence

Family and domestic violence is any behaviour that is violent, threatening, coercive, or controlling. It may make you or your family feel scared and unsafe.

People can experience family and domestic violence at any time. It may even continue after you have left a violent relationship. It can affect anyone in all types of relationships, including:

- past or current intimate relationships, including relationships where you are dating or living together, regardless of gender or sexual orientation
- relationships involving people who provide care to a person with a disability or a medical condition, or elders
- relationships with family or guardians
- cultural family groups.

Family and domestic violence can affect anyone, no matter their age, gender or sexual orientation.

Types of family and domestic violence may include:

- physical violence (hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, threats of violence)
- sexual violence (being forced or manipulated into sexual activity, inappropriate touching)
- emotional abuse (words or actions that make you feel worthless or sad)
- stalking (unwanted and frequent contact, a person following you)

- abuse by technology (checking your phone, using spyware, sharing photos or messages of you without your permission)
- financial abuse (not having access to finances, not being allowed to work, spending money without your permission).

If you are experiencing family and domestic violence our social workers can offer you counselling and support.

They can connect you to services in the community including:

- family and domestic violence support services
- emergency accommodation and housing support
- financial help
- counselling
- health services
- legal services.

Mental health

Mental health is about the way we think, feel and behave. It can affect your everyday life including your job, relationships or study.

Our social workers can help you access mental health support services if you:

- feel depressed
- feel anxious
- are experiencing thoughts of suicide or hurting yourself
- have a mental illness or disorder.

Trained and qualified

All our social workers hold a social work degree and provide their service at no cost to you.

We consult with the Australian Association of Social Workers to maintain the highest professional standards.

Your privacy

We are bound by strict confidentiality and privacy provisions in social security, families, health, child support, redress and disability services law. These provisions limit how we use your information and when and to whom it can be released.

We also have obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988*. Your personal information won't be disclosed to any other person, body or agency unless:

- you give us permission
- it's authorised or required by law
- it meets one of the other exceptions in the Australian Privacy Principles.

The circumstances surrounding why, who and when your information may be disclosed are outlined in our privacy policy. Go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/privacy

How to contact a social worker

You can:

- call our Multilingual Phone Service on **131 202** (weekdays from 8 am to 5 pm) and ask to speak to a social worker.
- call the same phone number you use to talk to us and ask to speak to a social worker.
- visit a service centre and ask to speak to a social worker.

You can bring a family member or friend to your appointment with the social worker.

Interpreters

If you need an interpreter, let us know and we can arrange one for you. Our interpreters follow a code of ethics. This means they won't tell anyone else what you've talked about.

For more information

- go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/socialwork for more information in English
- go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/yourlanguage where you can read, listen to or watch videos with information in your language
- call **131 202** to speak with us in your language about Centrelink payments and services
- call **132 011** for Medicare and **131 272** for Child Support. Let us know if you need an interpreter, and we will arrange one for free
- visit a service centre.

Note: calls from your home phone to '13' numbers from anywhere in Australia are charged at a fixed rate. That rate may vary from the price of a local call and may also vary between telephone service providers. Calls to '1800' numbers from your home phone are free. Calls from public and mobile phones may be timed and charged at a higher rate.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is intended only as a guide to payments and services. It's your responsibility to decide if you wish to apply for a payment and to make an application with regard to your particular circumstances.