

How it works

A restorative conversation is a safe, facilitated meeting. Restorative conversations help people who have experienced family violence to feel heard and have their experiences validated. The aim is that people involved will come to a shared understanding about what has happened, how you have been affected, and how to make the situation better.

Our staff

Everyone who works at the FVRJ Service is experienced and trained in family violence and restorative practice.

Someone will work with you throughout your time with us to:

- understand your story
- help you get ready for the restorative conversation
- support you during the restorative conversation
- check in with you afterwards
- help you with any follow up.

Who can use our services?

While women are most often the victim, family violence can affect anybody. We are committed to helping people of all genders, gender identities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, religions and abilities. This includes transgender and gender diverse people of all presentations, as well as cisgender men and women.

You can get support from the FVRJ Service as long as you are:

- not the person using violence
- over 18 years of age.

Contact us

Email: FVRJService@justice.vic.gov.au
Website: justice.vic.gov.au/FVRJService
Phone: (03) 9194 2994

Further support

**If you are in danger,
please call 000.**

Safe steps

1800 015 188
(24 hours a day, seven days a week)
for women and children who are
victims of family violence

Victims of Crime Helpline

1800 819 817 or text **0427 767 891**
(8am to 11pm every day)
for adult male victims of
family violence and victims
of violent crime

Family Violence Restorative Justice Service

Information for
victim survivors of
family violence

VICTORIA
State
Government

VICTORIA
State
Government

What we do

At the Family Violence Restorative Justice Service (FVRJ Service) we can work with you to address the harm you have experienced as a result of family violence.

We can support you to have a 'restorative conversation' with whoever you choose. Your restorative conversation can be about:

- what has happened
- how you have been affected.

We can work with you to plan what you would like to talk about, and who would be the right people to take part in this conversation. This might be people who:

- have been affected by the family violence
- can help make things better.

Other people who take part might include:

- family members
- friends or other loved ones you trust
- people who give you professional support, such as social workers or psychologists
- representatives from an organisation, institution or community
- the person who has used family violence against you.

We might hold one restorative conversation, or a series of conversations. This will depend on your needs and what you prefer.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is family violence?

Family violence is any behaviour that makes you feel scared and fear for your safety or wellbeing. It can be physical or non-physical. Family violence can happen in many different personal or family relationships, such as:

- in a de-facto relationship, civil union or marriage
- between boyfriends, girlfriends or partners
- between family members - parents, children, siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents
- between a person with a disability, their relatives or carer
- between an older person, their relatives or carer
- between people in a 'family-like' relationship (e.g. family of choice) according to traditions or social practices.

There are lots of ways a family member, partner or ex-partner can be abusive, violent or controlling towards you, not just physical.

Is a restorative conversation about me talking to the person who has harmed me?

Not necessarily. We work with you to plan what you want to say and who you need to say it to. For some people, this might involve talking to the person who has harmed them. For others, it might involve talking to other family members, close friends, or people who work for an organisation or institution.

If you do want to speak to the person who has harmed you, there are two important things to think about:

1. Will it be safe?
2. Will they agree to take part?

Our practitioners will help you with this.

Will it be safe?

Your safety is our main focus. We will work closely with you so that you feel prepared for your restorative conversation. This includes working out if there are any risks of further family violence and managing safety.

When it comes to getting the person who has used family violence ready for a restorative conversation,

our practitioners will need to assess any risks. The person who has used family violence against you will need to show that they take responsibility for the harm they have caused. If we are worried about their ability to safely take part in a restorative conversation, we will talk to you about our concerns and think about the best way forward with you.

How much will it cost?

Our service is free.

Do people have to take part?

No. Taking part is voluntary for everyone, including you. If you want a particular person to be involved in your restorative conversation and they say no, we will talk to you about it and see if there are other ways we can meet your needs. If you want to stop working with us at any time, that is okay too.

How long will the restorative conversation take?

A restorative conversation will take between 90 minutes to two hours.

What happens after a restorative conversation?

We will spend time with you reflecting on what was said and how you are feeling. We will check in with you during the weeks after your restorative conversation to see how you are going and find out if you have any questions or things that feel unresolved.

If your restorative conversation includes outcomes or action plans, we will check in with the person responsible for these plans to make sure they are being completed.

How long will I receive support?

The time it takes to get you and others ready for a restorative conversation, have your restorative conversation, and follow up afterwards will vary depending on your needs and circumstances. There is no time limit to how long we can work with you.