



The Leaving Violence Program

Frequently Asked Questions

June 2025

The questions in this document have been submitted to the department from the Leaving Violence Program information sessions held in June 2025. These sessions were delivered by the Department of social Services and Telstra Health as the National Program, Service Provider.

This document will not be updated, for up-to-date information please visit leavingviolenceprogram.org.au

Table of Contents

Data and Evaluation	2
Diversity/Accessibility	2
Eligibility	3
Evidence	4
Persons Using Violence (PUV)	5
Policy	5
Regional Trials	6
Role of Third – Party Agencies	7
Service Offering/Process	8
Staffing	11
Timeliness	12
Provider	13
Other	13

Data and Evaluation

1. What steps have been taken to collect comprehensive data and what plans are there to regularly publish data on the Leaving Violence Program?

We will be collecting comprehensive data on the Program, and we plan to publicly publish data on a quarterly basis.

2. Will there be an evaluation for the program?

Yes, we are planning an evaluation of the Program, including both the National Program and Regional Trials.

Diversity/Accessibility

3. Are the online forms available in other languages? We work with women from the Pacifica, some with low literacy.

The online application form will not be available in other languages. For help to complete the application form in other languages a victim-survivor can call the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** to help speak with the Leaving Violence Program support worker.

The Program Fact Sheets will be available to download on the Leaving Violence Program website in the following languages:

- Arabic
- Chinese (simplified)
- Hindu
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Thai
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

Program information is also available in Easy Read for people with low literacy or cognitive disability.

4. If a CALD client doesn't have a support worker, is best option for them is by phone with TIS support?

Victim-survivors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are not confident in speaking or reading English can access the Program via phone with a translator. Victim-survivors are able to complete the application form over the phone with a support worker, and they may nominate a trusted support person to help them.

There are fact sheets on the website that have been translated into languages other than English, to provide information about eligibility and how the Leaving Violence Program can support leaving an intimate partner who uses violence.

5. Will the Program support Trans and gender diverse people? and if so, how are you ensuring sensitive support for LGBTIQ+ people?

The Program supports people of all genders and sexualities including transgender and gender diverse people.

10 per cent of the Telstra Health Leaving Violence Program workforce is part of the LGBTIQ+ community. Support workers will support all victim-survivors including those in the LGBTIQ+ community to ensure they are engaged in respectful and supportive ways.

6. What about clients with an intellectual delay/cognitive delay/literacy issue. How will the Leaving Violence Program work with them?

Accessibility of the Leaving Violence Program is one of the Program Principles and is a priority for the Department and Telstra Health.

The application process has been designed with accessibility principles in mind and this will continue through the life of the Program. Easy read resources have been developed including fact sheets and are available on the Program website. Victim-survivors will be able to complete the application form over the phone with a support worker, and they may nominate a trusted support person to help them.

Eligibility

7. Are clients still eligible if experiencing homelessness?

Yes, victim-survivors can apply with no fixed address, and this will not impact their eligibility, if they also meet the other eligibility criteria.

8. For those who have received the Red Cross FDV payment, will they also be eligible for this one?

The Red Cross FDV payment is the payment provided under the Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot (TVP).

If a victim-survivor has received a Red Cross FDV payment in the last 12 months they will not be eligible for the Leaving Violence Program within that 12-month period.

If a victim-survivor on a temporary visa meets all of the eligibility criteria, they are eligible for support through the Leaving Violence Program.

9. What about people with uncertain visa status?

Eligible victim-survivors must be residing in Australia regardless of visa status.

10. Does the leaving Violence Program support only women?

The Leaving Violence Program supports eligible victim-survivors regardless of gender or sexualities.

11. Is a client still eligible if they have left the relationship but not physically left the home - e.g. the PUV is ousted from the property and the client remains?

Yes, if the person using violence has physically left the property, a victim-survivor could be eligible for support, if they meet all of the other eligibility criteria.

12. Are New Zealand citizens living in Australia eligible

Yes, if they are New Zealand citizens residing in Australia and meet the other eligibility criteria they can be supported through the Program.

13. Will Telstra Health be requesting documentation for the eligibility criteria or will professional judgement be used?

Victim-survivors will be asked to provide documentation to support their application, however the absence of having documentation won't prevent a victim-survivor from accessing support.

We know that the process of obtaining and providing documentation can be complex and the Program will work with victim-survivors to help them through the process.

14. Why not have the age from 16yo? We have clients that are 16yo having to leave unsafe home. We have clients who are tenants at 16yo - why can't they get money?

The Leaving Violence Program builds on the recommendations of the evaluation of the Escaping Violence Payment trial. The evaluation found that the eligibility criteria requiring victim-survivors to be 18 years old or over to access the program is appropriate. The evaluation noted that allowing victim-survivors under the age of 18 years to access the trial would be complex because of mandatory reporting and the differing child protection systems across the states and territories.

The policy settings of the Program have been specifically designed to respond to adult victim survivors of intimate partner violence. These settings have not been tested for other cohorts and therefore may not be appropriate for children victim-survivors.

Evidence

15. What happens for clients that have never made a report against the person using violence?

Many types of documents can be used to support a victim-survivor's application. While victim-survivors may have access to documents such as court orders or apprehended violence orders which can be used to support their application for the Program, it is not a requirement, and the support worker will work with victim-survivors to obtain the necessary supporting documents.

16. Previously Uniting EVP implemented a process to 'validate' a victim survivors disclosed experience. Would Telstra Health be seeking this?

In the process of receiving supporting documentation and confirming eligibility, the Leaving Violence Program may work with relevant professionals, such as specialist FDSV practitioners, social workers, counsellors, psychologists, and doctors to determine a victim-survivor's circumstances.

Persons Using Violence (PUV)

17. What actions are you taking as an organisation to ensure you aren't perpetuating intimate partner violence through collusion with PUV's?

A full risk assessment is undertaken with each victim-survivor who accesses the Program, which will screen out any PUVs who are seeking to obtain funds from Leaving Violence Program under the guise of being a victim-survivor.

All information provided to the Program will be confidential and cannot be released to third parties without consent unless there is a serious risk of harm to the victim-survivor and/or any children in their care, in which case relevant information would be shared with appropriate authorities/services to keep the victim-survivor safe.

18. What steps will be taken for victim survivors who have been misidentified as a perpetrator?

The Leaving Violence Program team undertakes a range of checks to confirm an applicant's situation and eligibility for the program. The team examines every application with a trauma-informed approach, based on the information that is provided and can be verified.

The Program also offers risk and needs assessment for all applicants to understand their individual circumstances and provide bespoke support or referrals based on need. In acknowledgement of the complexity in this space, training for Program staff is holistic and designed to support responses to nuanced situations.

19. Curious about developments put in place to reduce risk of fraud? or coercion from perpetrators for victim survivors to access money?

A range of measures have been implemented to minimise the risk of fraud and ensure program integrity. These include robust eligibility verification processes, secure payment systems, regular auditing, and ongoing monitoring of service delivery. Continuous quality improvement processes are also in place to strengthen safeguards, respond to emerging risks, and protect both victim-survivors and program resources.

20. It is quite common that the PUV will remove the victim's-survivors ability to access technology, particularly mobile phones. Has this been considered?

The Leaving Violence Program has taken measures protect victim-survivors from technological abuse by perpetrators. For example, information on device safety is available on the Leaving Violence Program website and in the webform, and Program materials that can be downloaded to devices have been named so that they are not identifiable as related to this Program.

Policy

21. Will this Program combine both EVP and Red Cross FV payments?

The Leaving Violence Program brings together the learnings from both financial support payments from the Escaping Violence Payment (EVP) trial and Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot (TVP) into one permanent Program.

22. Will the victim survivor be told if Leaving Violence Program intend on making a mandatory report? is there a risk of child protection taking action before the victim/survivor leaves?

Any mandatory reporting will be done in a trauma and violence informed manner and will also be culturally responsive to First Nations people. Frameworks including Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM), and Safe and Together will inform mandatory reporting responses.

If it is assessed that a child or young person is at significant risk of harm, a report to the relevant child protection authority will be made as per mandatory reporting legislation. In the interests of transparency and trauma informed practice, the victim-survivor will be informed if this is considered to be in the best interests of the child/ren.

Frontline workers will be encouraged to have secondary consultations with a Support Line Specialist if they have any concerns about the need to report or if they require additional support regarding thresholds for reporting. Secondary consultations will also be available with a Clinical Practice Lead if any further direction is required.

23. Will you be collaborating with police in anyway?

The Leaving Violence Program can work with other relevant agencies with the consent and knowledge of the victim-survivor as needed.

24. Will this service have access to police and corrections records in each state?

The Leaving Violence Program does not have access to police or corrections records.

Regional Trials

25. Will the Leaving Violence Program Regional Trial providers accept agency applications?

The Regional Trials service providers will determine program delivery in their region including whether or not they accept agency referrals. The Regional Trials service providers will work with relevant agencies to enable solutions that are suitable for their communities.

26. Will the Leaving Violence Program regional trials be accessible through the same webform and phone line?

Victim-survivors who wish to access the Leaving Violence Program Regional Trials will apply directly through the Regional Trials service providers. Contact information for these organisations is available on the Leaving Violence Program website.

27. What are the differences between the Regional Trials and National Program delivery models to best support client awareness?

The National Program is delivered to victim-survivors via phone and website, whereas victim-survivors can also access face-to-face support at the offices of Regional Trial service providers and through outreach efforts in community. While any eligible victim-survivors in the Regional Trials service areas are able to apply through a Regional Trial service provider, they are designed to be culturally supportive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors.

Role of Third-Party Agencies

28. What is the process for specialist FDSV agencies to make an application on behalf of a victim-survivor?

There is no referral process for third party agencies in place as yet. The Department and Telstra Health will be engaging with the frontline and community sector to see what the referral process and approach could be. We will be coming out with more information on this soon.

Until then, agencies can support a victim-survivor throughout the application process.

29. If a victim-survivor has already completed a Risk Assessment and Safety Plan with another Service, do they have to repeat their story to the Leaving Violence Program Support Worker?

If a victim-survivor has received a risk assessment or safety plan from another organisation they will not be required to complete new ones. Risk assessments and safety plans are updated throughout the victim-survivor's time with the Program as necessary, ensuring they reflect the victim-survivor's situation. Ensuring a trauma-informed services, the Program works with the victim-survivor and third-party support services to minimise the victim-survivor retelling their story.

30. Can a client request the Leaving Violence Program speak directly to their existing specialist DV worker to prevent them having to retell their story?

If a victim-survivor has an existing support worker at another service, they can choose to have the worker as a support person throughout the application process. This can be for phone calls and for the application form.

Third party agencies can also call the Leaving Violence Program and use the menu to select that they are from an agency with a client present, to speak to someone at the Program.

31. Will the case workers from Telstra Health be in contact with existing case worker/have capacity to work collaboratively with the existing case worker?

The Leaving Violence Program is open for applications from 1 July 2025, with applications submitted to the Program assessed by Telstra Health support workers. Telstra Health support workers will work collaboratively across the sector and can engage with people that the victim-survivors request, including existing case workers.

32. Will there be a way for workers to send a risk assessment to minimise clients retelling their story?

Victim-survivors can inform the Program support worker that they are working with another agency and provide consent for the Program support worker to speak with the other agency. Third party agencies can also call the Leaving Violence Program and use the menu to select that they are from an agency with a client present, to speak to someone at the Program.

Service Offering/Process

33. How are we ensuring a trauma informed approach as clients seem to have to speak to different people along their journey?

Leaving Violence Program frontline staff are highly trained in trauma-informed practice, which includes meeting victim-survivors where they are to minimise the need to repeat their story to confirm eligibility, needs and best support for the victim-survivor.

A victim-survivor will engage with two primary staff members: an intake worker and a support worker. The process from intake to support worker can be completed within one phone call through a warm transfer. Once the victim-survivor engages with the support worker this will be their primary contact for the duration of their experience with the Leaving Violence Program.

34. Will practitioners complete comprehensive risk assessment and safety planning under the MARAM framework?

The Leaving Violence Program team conducts risk and needs assessments and safety planning that are based on the MARAM framework.

35. How do states outside of Victoria work under MARAM without the info sharing legislation that underpins MARAM?

The Leaving Violence Program is using the MARAM as an evidenced based risk assessment framework for the Program's risk and needs assessments and safety planning.

36. How will the Leaving Violence Program ensure there is no overlap with other FV intake services (ie. The Orange Door)?

A victim-survivor engaging with the Leaving Violence Program is able to engage with other services and receive other payments they may be eligible for, including intake services such as The Orange Door.

37. Do clients have a choice to decline the 12 weeks of support if they already have a specialist FV case manager?

Every eligible victim-survivor can access support based on their own needs and preferences for up to 12 weeks. For example, a victim-survivor may opt for a shorter period of support, or access Leaving Violence Program services occasionally over a 12-week period.

38. Will clients need to produce quotes or invoices or will vouchers be used to support clients to make individual choices of goods? If a client requests vouchers, will they still be prezzee vouchers?

The Leaving Violence Program supports victim-survivor choice on how and what they spend their financial support on.

The Leaving Violence Program will not be operating with vouchers and will instead be using a pre-paid card method for the victim-survivor to access the financial support. This pre-paid card can be electronic or physical, this is determined by the victim-survivor when discussing their needs assessment with the Program support workers.

39. Are all webforms considered an application, or is this now an enquiry step followed by an application step?

The webform is part of the application process for victim-survivors to access the Leaving Violence Program, alongside supporting documentation. A victim-survivor can also start an application with a phone call to the Program.

40. Will intake workers use professional judgement?

Intake and support workers use their professional judgement to ensure the Leaving Violence Program prioritises victim-survivors' safety.

41. Previously TVP applicants received \$5000 direct debit, with new Leaving Violence Program process, does this mean they only access the suggested amount in direct debit and vouchers?

In the Leaving Violence Program, eligible victim-survivors, including those on temporary visas, will be able to receive up to \$1,500 in cash (through a bank deposit) and the remaining funding through a pre-paid card.

42. Can we confirm that the 12 weeks of individual support is provided by Telstra Health directly, or is that supported by Telstra Health with a referral pathway?

All eligible victim-survivors can access up to 12 weeks of support from Telstra Health Leaving Violence Program staff.

43. Does the client have to apply for the whole amount in one go or can they first request the bank transfer and then later request the money for goods and services?

Victim-survivors can choose how they wish to receive their financial support package including timing of payments within the 12-week support period.

44. Does the new webform ask for information on the victim-survivor's visa status?

Yes, the victim-survivor will be asked to confirm that they reside in Australia and hold Australian Citizenship, Permanent Residency, or a Bridging or Temporary Visa.

45. Can the person use the money for legal fees and will referrals to free legal supports occur?

The Leaving Violence Program works with victim-survivors on how they wish to spend their financial package on goods and services that best support and empower them, including legal fees. The Program also refers victim-survivors to appropriate legal services, if they need this service.

46. Are the assessments and referrals only done for Program referrals? As assuming professionals referring would have done that work already.

Victim-survivors can submit applications on their own or they can be supported by other support services. Every applicant is offered the support and risk assessment regardless of how they come to the program.

The Leaving Violence Program does not assume work has been completed with other agencies but rather checks to ensure that the victim-survivor is being supported, and offers risk and needs



assessments, and safety planning.

47. Will applicants be asked if they have children in their care?

The intake risk and needs assessment is designed to understand individual circumstances and bespoke needs. This includes consideration of dependants.

48. How will the goods and service funding be delivered noting a lot of services and shops are not available in rural areas?

Support workers work closely with eligible victim-survivors to determine the most appropriate method for receiving goods and services funding. The main method is through a pre-paid card but more flexible options are available depending on needs and circumstances.

49. Will clients receive a support worker for 12 weeks even if they are with a specialist FV service?

Every eligible victim-survivor has access to support based on their own needs and preferences for up to 12 weeks. The victim-survivor can choose if they prefer to work with their existing service or also engage with the Leaving Violence Program.

50. Can clients decline safety planning/a support worker if they already have support from another agency?

Yes, eligible victim-survivors can choose their preferred support based on their own needs and preferences.

51. How will temporary visa holders be linked up to legal/migration support services who were part of the TVP?

The Leaving Violence Program support workers help victim-survivors with referrals to appropriate services based on their safety plan and needs assessment, this can include legal and migration support. The Program will work with the sector to support relationships and linkages between the Leaving Violence Program and support services in the sector.

52. Will the Leaving Violence Program still require personal bank accounts. Some of my clients are linked into business account with the PUV?

A victim-survivor will need their own bank account to receive their financial support. The Leaving Violence Program can help victim-survivors who have a shared bank account with the person using violence, or whose bank account is controlled by the person using violence, to open a secure bank account in their name to which Program funds can be deposited.

53. Will clients be allocated to a specific support worker's case load for the duration of their supports, or speak to whoever is available on the day

The Program has been designed so that each victim-survivor will be allocated a support worker after the application phase and that this worker will provide support to the victim-survivor during the course of their engagement with the Leaving Violence Program. Occasionally, circumstances may require a victim-survivor to engage with another worker if their worker is away on unplanned or planned leave, for example.

Staffing

54. What are the professional qualifications of your team?

Leaving Violence Program front line staff are required to have:

- A minimum of three years degree qualification in a relevant field (such as social work, counselling, psychology, or community services);
- Three years of full-time experience in a relevant field for specified roles (two years for triage and screening roles); and
- Be eligible for registration with at least one of the following professional peak bodies: PACFA, ACA, AASW, or APHRA or Registered with AHPRA for the Specialist Support Worker (Specialist Wrap Around Support) role

55. What's the workforce number that will be servicing the National Program and what is the expected number of client applications in a quarter/year?

The Leaving Violence Program is anticipated to support over 36,000 victim-survivors each year.

Telstra Health have recruited a large experienced and diverse team to deliver the National Program. Currently there are approximately 150 frontline staff ready to support the Program.

56. How many more Support Workers will be recruited to the Leaving Violence Program?

Telstra Health has recruited more than 150 frontline staff to provide support for victim-survivors accessing the Leaving Violence Program.

57. Will staff be trained to assess if a person using violence is trying to access the Program as a victim-survivor?

The workforce is experienced and qualified, and able to undertake complex assessments. The eligibility assessment process includes screening for persons using violence who are attempting to gain access to the Leaving Violence Program. The process will ensure that any fraudulent or inappropriate applications are screened out as ineligible.

58. Are there any work from home positions available for case workers?

Telstra Health as the National Program Service Provider, has a commitment to flexible working arrangements. All positions in the Leaving Violence Program encourage and allow staff to work from home.

59. Will the Leaving Violence Program know we nominate our safe/trusted/professional service provider for things such as Duress Alarms and Home Security. How can that work now?

The Leaving Violence Program support workers will work with victim-survivors on how they spend their financial support package, this could include spending their package on home security.

If a victim-survivor is already engaged with a service and would like to use a service nominated by their existing case worker, this can be supported by the Leaving Violence Program.

Timeliness

60. Do you have a time frame from application to approval and payment?

The Leaving Violence Program has targets for assessing an application. Timeframes will vary based on a victim-survivors engagement with the program.

61. Given the expected application numbers in the year will be 36,000 - how many enquiries do you expect? Are wait times likely to be experienced again?

It is anticipated there will be approximately 36,000 applications per year. The Leaving Violence Program engages with victim-survivors applying for the Program either after they submit a web application form or when they call to commence an application. Timely service delivery and victim-survivor safety are key priorities for the Program.

62. How long will clients wait for a response after initial application online

When finalising an application form online, victim-survivors will book in a time and date for a Leaving Violence Program support worker to contact them to discuss their application. If the support worker cannot reach the victim-survivor at the nominated time, they will make additional attempts at contact in a way which is sensitive to victim-survivor safety.

63. How long does the assessment take via phone?

Victim-survivors will be informed at the beginning of a call that the call may take up to 40 minutes. This call includes the risk assessment and safety planning, as well as collecting information for the application. Alternatively, victim-survivors can apply via the webform.

64. Will applications be fast tracked where high-risk indicators are identified or where there is urgent need?

The Leaving Violence Program is not a crisis service. Our priority is to support victim-survivors, and if a victim-survivor is in crisis the priority is to warm refer them to the appropriate service. Our support workers will work with the victim-survivor when they are safe and engage with them to ensure they get timely and appropriate support.

65. How are you going to ensure that applications for high-risk clients who are engaged with FDV specialist services are prioritised?

The Leaving Violence Program is not a crisis service. The Program operates within a risk-oriented, tiered system designed to assess the needs and provide tailored support for the victim-survivor.

Where a victim-survivor is engaged with an alternative FDV specialist service, our team will follow a process designed to avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure victim-survivors are not subjected to repeated processes.

Provider

66. Can you share what was the reason DSS decided to go with Telstra Health to provide the Leaving Violence Program?

Telstra Health has been selected to deliver the National Program on behalf of the Australian Government, following a competitive, open procurement process conducted by the Department of Social Services.

Telstra Health was selected as the strongest service delivery partner with the national capability to provide a high quality, responsive, and trauma informed service to victim survivors, while also achieving best value for money.

Other

67. When will the website and webform become live to access?

The website is available at www.leavingviolenceprogram.org.au from 1 July 2025. The webform is available on the website.

68. What is the phone number to contact?

The toll-free phone number for the Leaving Violence Program is 1800 253 283 (1800 2 LEAVE).

69. Is there a plan to address confusion between the Leaving Violence Program and the Staying Home Leaving Violence program?

The Leaving Violence Program has a unique brand that will be used to support communications and will over time become identifiable for the community. If someone goes to the website, it clearly shows what the Program offers and who it can support.

70. Will Telstra Health carry out a direct marketing campaign to agencies currently referring to TVP and EVP? Are there any service brochures that organisations can order to provide to clients?

The Department and Telstra Health are working closely on how we engage with stakeholders moving forward. This will be an iterative process, Telstra Health are currently in the process of hiring a Relationship Manager to lead this work. There are fact sheets and other resources available on the website that can be downloaded and printed by organisations.

71. What has been the experience across Australia of those that unfortunately return to violent relationships after accessing EVP, but then leave again?

It is understood that leaving a violent relationship is complex, according to the 2021-22 Personal Safety Survey of the 1.5 million women who have experienced violence by a previous partner, 43 per cent temporarily separated. Of those that separated, 21 per cent returned due to a lack of financial resources.

The Leaving Violence Program can be accessed by an eligible victim-survivor once in a 12-month period. The Program will be collecting data on those receiving or applying to receive the support more than once. This longitudinal data will help to provide an evidence base on the outcomes of the Program and if it supports victim-survivors to establish violence free lives.

