

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Monday, 17 August 2020

## KEEPING FAMILY VIOLENCE IN SIGHT DURING CORONAVIRUS

Right now, the stability and security of “home” is more important than ever for Victorians. But unfortunately, home is not a safe place for everyone – particularly those who may be at risk of experiencing family violence.

That’s why the Victorian Government is directing more than \$20 million to keep more family violence victim survivors safe in their own homes – and keep perpetrators in full sight.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams today announced more initiatives to combat family violence and address a jump in demand for perpetrator services during the pandemic.

With more Victorians at home to slow the spread of coronavirus, we know there’s an increased risk for women and children experiencing family violence or abuse. In the past month, the Men’s Referral Service has reported an 11 per cent increase in calls compared to last year.

Funding these programs will enable 1,500 perpetrators of family violence, or people who believe they are at risk of using violence, to leave their homes and move into short or long-term accommodation options. It will also provide intervention and behaviour change programs for those who are using violence in the home – including a dedicated support for adolescents using violence and their families.

There’ll also be increased funding for family violence service providers so they can continue to adapt their services under Stay at Home restrictions, ensuring they can deliver support when and where it’s needed.

While we are reminding all Victorians that staying at home is the safest thing we can do to fight the virus, we know that for some people, being at home is anything but safe.

If you are experiencing family violence, leaving for your safety is perfectly okay and support services remain available for help through safe steps 24/7 on 1800 015 188 or webchat [safesteps.org.au/chat](https://safesteps.org.au/chat) Monday through Friday, 9am to 9pm.

Anyone concerned about their own behaviour can contact the Men's Referral Service on 1300 766 491.

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*“Home has never been more important. With this package, we're helping more victim survivors stay in their own homes, while perpetrators are kept in full sight.”*

*“If you are using violence or hurting someone in your family – or if you’re worried that you might – then the very best thing you can do is ask for help. Take the first step and contact the Men’s Referral Service.”*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams

*“We know there’s an increased risk of family violence during the pandemic, which is why we want to ensure every single Victorian can access the services and support they need.”*

*“I also want to be clear: even with Stay at Home restrictions in place, if you need to leave a violent situation, you can – and you will not be fined.”*

**For information about coronavirus visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) or call 1800 675 398.**