MWA Guide: Mens Support

Before Reaching Out:

1. What services are available for men experiencing domestic or family violence?

MWA provides a range of support services for men experiencing domestic or family violence, including case management, assistance with Centrelink and housing applications, support letters for ongoing clients, and referrals to external support services such as legal assistance, counselling, and other specialist services.

2. Who can access this support (e.g. husbands, fathers, young men)?

MWA's men's support services are available to men of all ages who require assistance, including husbands, fathers, young men, and other male family members affected by domestic or family violence.

3. What forms of abuse do you support (physical, emotional, financial, coercive control)?

MWA supports men experiencing a wide range of abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, financial, verbal, social, spiritual, and cultural abuse, as well as coercive control and technology-facilitated abuse such as stalking through social media, monitoring communications, or tracking through GPS and other devices.

4. How can someone safely reach out for help?

Men can safely access support by contacting MWA's men's services through secure and confidential channels, such as phone or email, at a time and place where they feel safe to do so.

5. Is the service confidential and discreet?

Yes. MWA's men's support services are confidential and discreet. Client information is managed in accordance with privacy and confidentiality requirements, ensuring individuals can seek support in a safe and respectful environment.

During the First Consultation:

1. What happens during the initial consultation?

During the initial consultation, the MWA case worker focuses on the client's immediate safety and wellbeing. This may include completing a Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT) assessment. If the client is identified as being at serious risk, the case worker may represent and advocate for them at a Safety Action Meeting (SAM). The case worker will also assess the client's support needs, including housing, financial assistance, counselling, legal support, and other relevant services. Following the assessment, the client may be provided with contact details for MWA and other support services via phone, text message, or email.

2. What kind of questions will be asked about the person's situation?

The case worker will ask open-ended, respectful, and non-judgmental questions to better understand the client's circumstances, concerns, strengths, and support needs.

3. Will the focus be on safety, wellbeing, or legal concerns?

The initial focus is on the client's immediate safety and wellbeing. Once urgent needs have been addressed, the discussion may expand to include financial, legal, housing, and other issues affecting the client's situation.

4. How long does the conversation usually take?

The length of the conversation varies depending on the client's circumstances and support needs. Some consultations may be brief if the client requires only information or referrals, while others may take longer if a more detailed assessment and support plan are needed.

5. Can someone remain anonymous at first?

No. For safety, confidentiality, and service delivery purposes, case workers need to confirm the identity of the person they are speaking with to ensure appropriate support is provided.

6. How does the service create a safe, non-judgmental space for men?

MWA creates a safe and supportive environment by providing confidential, respectful, and culturally responsive services. Case workers use active listening, open-ended questioning, and a non-judgmental approach to understand each client's unique experiences, background, culture, and circumstances. Staff practice cultural humility through ongoing self-reflection and a commitment to understanding different perspectives, values, beliefs, and lived experiences. This approach helps build trust and ensures clients feel heard, respected, and supported throughout their engagement with the service.

Safety & Support

1. How do you assess someone's immediate safety risk?

MWA assesses a client's immediate safety risk using structured, evidence-based tools and processes, such as the Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT). This helps identify the level of risk, safety concerns, and the most appropriate support and interventions required.

2. What happens if the person is in danger?

If a client is at immediate risk of harm, MWA prioritises their safety and may support them to contact emergency services, including the Police or Triple Zero (000), where appropriate.

3. Can the service help create a safety plan?

Yes. Case workers work collaboratively with clients to develop a personalised safety plan that focuses on their immediate and short-term safety needs. Safety plans are tailored to each client's unique circumstances, risks, and support requirements.

4. Are emergency accommodation or safe housing options available?

MWA does not provide crisis accommodation for men. However, case workers can refer clients to Link2Home and other organisations that offer crisis accommodation and housing support for men experiencing homelessness or family violence.

5. How do you handle situations involving children?

Where children are involved, MWA obtains consent from a parent or guardian where required and prioritises the safety and wellbeing of the child. Case workers assess any risks, support parents or guardians, and make referrals to appropriate child and family support services when needed.

6. Do you offer counselling or emotional support?

Yes, within the scope of case management services. Case workers provide emotional support through active listening, validation, reassurance, and supportive conversations. Clients are encouraged to share their experiences at their own pace and are informed that they may choose not to discuss topics they are uncomfortable about sharing. Where specialised counseling is needed, referrals can be provided.

7. Are there legal referrals (e.g. protection orders, custody advice)?

MWA Men's support does not provide legal advice directly. However, case workers can provide referrals and contact information for Legal Aid and other legal services that can assist with protection of orders, family law matters, and other legal concerns.

8. Is there help with housing or financial assistance?

While MWA Men's support does not provide crisis or temporary accommodation for men, eligible clients may receive assistance with housing and Centrelink applications, as well as support to access relevant financial assistance and community services.

10. Are group programs or peer support available for men?

Currently, MWA does not offer men's peer support groups. However, case workers can refer clients to external organisations that provide peer support programs and men's support groups.

11. Do you provide referrals to other specialised services?

MWA case workers regularly provide referrals to a range of specialised services, including counselling, Legal Aid, housing services, financial counselling, health services, and other supports relevant to the client's individual needs and circumstances.

What Happens Next:

1. What are the next steps after the first contact?

Following the initial contact, the case worker will assess the client's immediate needs, safety concerns, and level of risk. This assessment helps determine the most appropriate support, referrals, and intervention required.

2. Will the person be assigned a case worker?

Yes. Clients who require ongoing support will be assigned a case worker to assist them throughout their engagement with the service.

3. How often will follow-ups occur?

The frequency of follow-up contact depends on the client's circumstances, level of risk, and support needs. Clients experiencing significant safety concerns or receiving assistance with housing, financial matters, or other complex issues may receive more frequent follow-up and ongoing case management.

4. Can support be ongoing, or is it short-term?

Support can be either short-term or ongoing, depending on the client's needs and circumstances. Ongoing support may be provided where issues related to domestic and family violence continue to impact the client's wellbeing, safety, or stability.

5. If the person returns to or remains in the relationship, can they still get help?

Yes. Clients can continue to access support regardless of whether they leave, return to, or remain in the relationship. MWA's focus is on supporting the client's safety, wellbeing, and informed decision-making.

6. Are there other services better suited for them?

Case workers work collaboratively with clients to assess their needs and develop a case plan. Where another service is better placed to meet the client's specific needs, the case worker will provide information, referrals, and support to connect the client with the most appropriate service.