



Staff Protocol for Responding to an Allegation of Domestic Violence

The Australian National University is opposed to the use of violence in any aspect of community life, including violence in intimate relationships ('domestic violence'). The University is committed to the provision of a safe, supportive and caring environment for students.

This document guides ANU staff through the process they are required to follow when they become aware that an ANU student could be in a violent relationship.

The term **domestic violence** is used in this document to refer to acts of violence occurring between people who are, or were formerly, in an intimate relationship. It is characterised by a pattern of coercive tactics which aim to control the victim. Domestic violence may include any of the following forms of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, economic, spiritual or social. It can also include using isolation, intimidation and threats. Living with domestic violence has a profound effect upon children and young people and may constitute a form of child abuse.

The University respects the rights of all those who have experienced, or are experiencing, domestic violence to be in control of the decisions affecting them, especially a student's right to decide whether to seek police, legal, medical or counselling support. This may be affected if there are duty of care issues.

Step 1: If a student tells you they are in a violent relationship

Remain calm and provide an empathic response. If you are in a public space where privacy may be compromised, secure a private area to discuss the matter further.

Most people turn first to someone with whom they feel safe and can trust. **What you say or do therefore can be vitally important.** Your support and encouragement can assist them to feel stronger and more able to make decisions.

Step 2: Establish immediate safety

If you believe that there is an immediate danger from the alleged perpetrator or an immediate medical or physical emergency:

- Call 000 and report the incident to emergency services,
- then call ANU Security 6125-2249,
- if you have any concerns for the safety or wellbeing of any children call Care and Protection Services on 1300 556 729 (24 hours)

Step 3: Provide Information about options

Encourage the student to obtain immediate assistance from Domestic Violence Crisis Service and assist them to make contact on 6280 0900. Direct referral to Domestic Violence Crisis Service is possible 24 hours, seven days per week.

Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) tel: 6280 0900 has expertise in working with people who are victims of domestic violence. This support includes:

- Crisis intervention and telephone support 24 hours/ 7days a week.
- Information about keeping safe and developing safety plans.
- Referral for women, men and young people.
- Facilitation of access to safe accommodation i.e. refuges, motels.
- Information about legal options and protection orders.
- Court support for those who have been subjected to violence.
- Support for supervisors, friends and family of those affected by domestic violence.

The student or the support person can use the Service anonymously and without reporting the domestic violence to the police. The service is free and confidential.

If the student does not want immediate contact with Domestic Violence Crisis Service, provide printed information and contact details of the service: www.dvcs.org.au

Counselling

The ANU Counselling Centre also provides counselling and referral for students who have experienced domestic violence. Contact: 6125 2442

Legal Support

The decision to proceed with making a complaint to the police or applying to the courts for a protection order is the decision of the student who has experienced the domestic violence. The exception to this is if there is an immediate safety risk to the student or someone else. In this case call 000. Encourage the student to contact DVS (6280 0900) if they wish to apply for a protection order.

To contact the Australian Federal Police for non-urgent matters call 131 444

If the domestic violence has occurred in NSW call NSW Police - 1800 725 631 (for interstate callers)

Medical Support:

In case of immediate medical emergency call 000

Communicate the importance of medical attention to the student if they present with an injury or report a medical or physical concern.

The ANU Health Centre can assist with medical care and referral between 9am – 4.45pm, Monday to Friday. Tel: 6125 3598

Alternatively, support the student to attend the Canberra Hospital Emergency Department, or contact their Medical General Practitioner.

Step 4: Provide printed information containing referral numbers for assistance

Even if the student does not want assistance at this time, provide printed referral information whenever possible.

Step 5: Proceed to ANU Critical Incident Protocol

If the nature of the disclosure is also considered a “critical incident” such as a traumatic event, or the threat of such which causes extreme stress, fear or injury inform the student that you are required to report the incident to ANU Security and the Registrar Student Life. Request permission from the student to release their name and contact details to ANU Security and the Registrar. The Registrar will ensure the University follows up with the student regarding their support needs. If the student does not give their permission you must not release their name and contact details unless there is a threat to the safety of the individual or others.

If there are no immediate safety issues and you do not have permission to release their personal contact and identifying details, then inform the student that you will report the incident to ANU Security and the Registrar, Student Life with no contact or personal identification details. The report will be used for statistical purposes and contains only the nature of the incident and the location and date of occurrence. If there is a threat to safety of the individual or others dial 000, call ANU Security and then proceed as outlined in the Critical Incident Policy.

https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_002607

Step 6: Debriefing

Debriefing for any staff member or student responding to an allegation of sexual assault is available through the ANU Counselling Centre, Advisor to Staff and the Employee Assistance Program. See contact details below.

What to do if the student has *not* told you they are in a violent relationship, but you are aware of the violence.

If you approach the student it is helpful if:

- they are alone and it is safe for them to speak.
- you approach them in a sensitive way. For example say something like: “I am worried about you because I have noticed...” to start the conversation.
- respect their decision if they do not want to talk about the violence. They may not be ready to talk, they may be fearful of talking or feel ashamed. It may take some time for them to feel comfortable and safe to talk about domestic violence.
- contact Domestic Violence Crisis Service on 6280 0900 for advice on how to approach the conversation.

Support at the University

ANU Security: 6125-2249

Registrar, Student Life: 0434 689 904

ANU Health Centre: 6125-3598

ANU Counselling Centre: 6125-2442

Heads of Residential Halls and Colleges: for students who live on campus

Dean of Students: 6125-4184 E: dean.students@anu.edu.au

PARSA: 6125-4187; ANUSA 6125-2444

Legal Officer: 6125-2442 E: sa.legal@anu.edu.au

Legal support for students

Staff Employee Assistance Program

Adviser to Staff: 6125-3616 E: Staff.Adviser@anu.edu.au

http://counselling.anu.edu.au/adviser_to_staff/index.php

Counselling, support, information and referral.

Supporting Students in Distress: reference guide for staff

http://counselling.anu.edu.au/sites/counselling.anu.edu.au/files/Students_in_Distress_Staff_ref_guide.pdf

Assure: 1800 808 374

External providers for staff and their immediate family members.

9am-5pm and 24hr after hours service W: www.assureprograms.com.au

Relationships Australia: 6122-7100

External provider for relationship counselling.

9am to 5pm Mon-Fri. W: www.relationships.com.au

Other Useful Numbers

1800RESPECT

National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service for people living in Australia

www.1800respect.org.au **1800 737 732**

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre: 6247-2525

7am-11pm, 7 days a week for support, information or advocacy.

Mental Health Crisis Assessment Team (24 hours) 6205 1065

Lifeline 131 114 (24 hours)

www.lifeline.org.au

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800 (24 hours)

www.kidshelp.com.au

Mensline Australia

Telephone and online support, information and referral service, helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way.

www.menslineaus.org.au **1300 789 978**

Legal Aid Office (ACT)

Appointments for Advice 6243 3411

Personal Protection Section 6207 1874

Women's Legal Centre 6257 4499 or 1800 634 669 9.30am – 12noon

Aboriginal Legal Service 6249 8488

You can contact the Domestic Violence Crisis Service on 6280 0900, or the ANU Counselling Centre for advice on 6125-2449.