

NT Minimum Standards and Application Process for Declared DFV Rehabilitation Programs

April 2024

Document title	NT Minimum Standards and Application Process for Declared DFV Rehabilitation Programs
Contact details	Domestic, Family, and Sexual Violence Reduction Division (DFSVR), Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities
Approved by	Chief Executive Officers - Territory Families Housing and Communities and Department of Attorney General and Justice
Date approved	January 2024
Document review	Biennially
TRM number	<NA if not required>

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1.0	December 2023	DFSVR	Informed by Co-design Workshop and on feedback from the Co-design Advisory Group, DFSV Cross Agency Working Group and ANROWS. Two rounds of consultation occurred on the draft working document.
1.1	January 2024	Gabrielle Brown	Minor amendments arising from consultation round relating to Declaration process.
1.2	March 2024	Anna Davis	Minor amendments to fix formatting and typographical errors

Terminology

We acknowledge that no single set of terms suits all situations and people. No exclusion or harm is intended in the terms used in these Minimum Standards and Application Process for Declared DFV Rehabilitation Programs (Minimum Standards). Language used in this document aligns with the terminology used in the Northern Territory's (NT) [Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework \(RAMF\)](#). Where language has been revised, changed, or added, this has been done to reflect current practice and/or stakeholder feedback.

Terminology	Explanation
Aboriginal	The term Aboriginal is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Case management	<p>Case management is a collaborative process that assesses, plans, implements, coordinates, monitors and evaluates the options and services required to meet the client's needs.</p> <p>It can involve intake, needs assessment, service coordination, evaluation, and advocacy. Case management involves building a positive relationship with the client to collaboratively develop client centred plans that address their needs, strengths, and goals.</p> <p>With men who have committed DFV, case management considers addressing the client's needs in the context of reducing harm and risk to women and children experiencing his violence.</p>
Children and young people	Includes infants, children, and young people under the age of 18 years.
Cultural security	<p>Aboriginal Cultural Security¹ commits an organisation to design and deliver services that honour the legitimate cultural rights, values and expectations of Aboriginal people.</p> <p>It provides a safe environment where Aboriginal people are empowered to make decisions that affect their lives without fear of judgement or discrimination.</p> <p>Aboriginal Cultural Security is achieved by integrating the cultural rights, values and expectations of Aboriginal people at critical points in an organisation's service design, systems, policies, and practices.</p> <p>Aboriginal Cultural Security goes beyond attitude and behaviour changes by individuals and encapsulates organisational change through addressing structural inequalities. Aboriginal Cultural Security embeds Aboriginal cultural values and rights at critical points of intervention in service design, policy and practice.</p>
Domestic violence, family violence, domestic and family violence (DFV)	<p>The terms domestic violence, family violence, and domestic and family violence can be used interchangeably by services and people.</p> <p>While domestic violence is typically used to refer to acts of violence (including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual) that occur between people who have or once had an intimate relationship, the term family violence describes violence targeted at spouses and partners as well as people in broader family relationships, including relatives according to Aboriginal family structures.</p> <p>The Minimum Standards uses the term domestic and family violence (DFV).</p> <p>The Minimum Standards uses the definition of DFV in the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007</i>, section 5.</p>

¹ [Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework, Northern Territory Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities, 2018.](#)

Terminology	Explanation
DFV Rehabilitation Program/s	<p>The Minimum Standards use the definition of a DFV Rehabilitation Program from section 85A in the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007</i>. A DFV Rehabilitation Program is a program whose primary objective is to change the behaviour of a person who commits domestic violence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) reduce and prevent the person committing domestic violence; and (b) increase the safety and protection of persons with whom the person is or may be in a domestic relationship; and (c) ensure the person accepts responsibility for the person's behaviour. <p>Outside of the Minimum Standards, DFV Rehabilitation Programs may be referred to in a variety of ways, including DFV perpetrator programs, DFV offender programs, or men's behaviour change programs.</p>
Declared DFV Rehabilitation Program/s	<p>Declared DFV Rehabilitation Programs are those that have been declared by the Minister under s85A of the <i>Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007</i>.</p>
Evidence-based practice	<p>Evidence-based practice is practice that is guided by the best available research.</p>
LGBTQ	<p>The acronym LGBTQ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer. To align with research from ANROWS, when talking about sexuality and gender diverse communities, the Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs uses the acronym LGBTQ to discuss the broad range of people and experiences in these communities.</p> <p>However, when referencing research, findings or observations that apply only to subsections of this population, the Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs uses an acronym which appropriately captures those groups of people (for example, LBQ women would be used for lesbian, bisexual and queer women), or we name the specific populations we refer to.²</p>
Men's Behaviour Change Program (MBCP)	<p>Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs) are designed for men who have used violence, coercion or control in their relationships with their partner, children or other family members. These programs aim to encourage men to take responsibility for their behaviour and provide them with the skills and tools necessary to change their behaviour and maintain respectful relationships. MBCPs are typically delivered by trained facilitators, usually in a group setting, and usually between 17 – 20 weeks. The program uses a range of approaches including group discussions, activities and psychoeducation to support participants to develop an understanding of the impact of their behaviour on victim survivors, family members, and their community. The programs include a partner contact worker component.</p>
Partner contact (worker)	<p>Partner contact is a specific form of victim survivor safety work, where support for victim survivors is provided in the context of their current or former partner participating in a DFV Rehabilitation Program.</p> <p>This work consists of continuous risk assessment, safety planning and risk management, support, information and referrals.</p> <p>Partner contact worker refers to the person providing this service.³</p>

² [Developing LGBTQ programs for perpetrators and victims/survivors of domestic and family violence](#), ANROWS, 2020.

³ [Prioritising victim/survivor safety in Australian perpetrator interventions: A Practice Guide](#), ANROWS, 2020.

Terminology	Explanation
Person who has committed DFV	<p>A person who has committed DFV refers to the person who uses violence, abuse or coercive control against a current or former intimate partner, and/or a member(s) of their family or household, regardless of whether they have been convicted of a crime. Other terms, such as perpetrators or offenders, may create barriers to engagement with people who use violence. The term offender may be used in this document in relation to courts and corrections processes.</p> <p>The Minimum Standards often uses “men who have committed DFV” in recognition that Men’s Behaviour Change Programs are provided for men. While the evidence clearly shows that the majority of people who have committed DFV are men, and the majority of people who are victim survivors of DFV are women, this terminology does not negate the fact that women can also commit DFV and men can also be victim survivors.</p> <p>The language in this document will not apply to everyone and some people or professionals may identify with or use different terms.</p>
Risk Assessment Management Framework (RAMF)	<p>The RAMF is the Northern Territory’s DFV practice management framework which outlines common expectations in assessing, responding to and managing DFV risk, so that they are recognised as shared responsibilities across the service system.</p>
Service	<p>Refers to all government agencies and non-government organisations that provide, or may provide, a service to DFV victim survivors and/or people who have committed DFV, whether it is their core business or not.</p>
Victim survivor	<p>A victim survivor is a person against whom DFV has been perpetrated including a child or young person. The term is often used to recognise a victim survivor’s agency and individual capacity.</p>
Web of accountability	<p>A ‘web of accountability’ refers to the integration of the service system and how this keeps a man’s use of DFV, including coercive and controlling behaviours, within view across services and over time. This integration enables different parts of the system to work together to identify and manage risk, and to centralise victim survivor experiences and needs in the accountability process for the man causing harm.⁴</p>

⁴ Australia’s National Research Organisation on Women’s Safety (2021) Interventions for perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia (ANROWS Insights, 02/2021). ANROWS.

Acronyms

Acronyms	Full form
ACCO	Aboriginal community-controlled organisation
AGD	Department of the Attorney General and Justice
ANROWS	Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety
AOD	Alcohol and other drugs
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CCO	Community corrections order
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence
DFV Act	<i>Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007</i> (Northern Territory)
DFSV	Domestic Family and Sexual Violence
DFSV Reduction Framework	<i>Northern Territory Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework: 2018 - 2028</i>
DFSVR	Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Division
ICCO	Intensive Community Corrections Order
ISE	<i>Information Sharing Entity</i>
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer
MBCP	Men's Behaviour Change Program
NTCS	Northern Territory Correctional Services
NTG	Northern Territory Government
RAMF	<i>Northern Territory Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework</i>
TFHC	Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities

Acknowledgements

Aboriginal acknowledgement

The NT Government respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this country and recognises their continuing connection to land, water, and community on which we work, live, and meet.

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their cultures; their Ancestors and Elders past and present, and all the leaders of today and future generations.

While we use the term 'Aboriginal' we respectfully acknowledge that it is inclusive of Torres Strait Islander people.

Victim survivor acknowledgement

We acknowledge the women and children who have suffered and died in the NT as a result of domestic, family and sexual violence.

We are committed to honouring the lives of those killed, learning from these tragedies, and translating those learnings into action to prevent future harm.

We acknowledge the disproportionate impact of violence on women in the NT, particularly Aboriginal women.

We acknowledge the courage and dignity of all those who stand against domestic, family, and sexual violence, who take action to challenge the violence, and who hold people who use violence accountable.

Service provider acknowledgement

We acknowledge all the people and organisations in the NT who work tirelessly to prevent and respond to domestic, family, and sexual violence in challenging contexts. Their significant commitment, skill, experience, and wisdom underpins work that is of core value to our communities.

It is an aspiration of this document that it facilitates collaboration and partnership by setting out good practice in a principled and practical way to support good service delivery.

Contributor acknowledgement

We acknowledge and appreciate the time and effort taken by all who provided input to this document.

We acknowledge and thank Tangentyere Council as author of the Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs. These standards have been used as the foundation for this work.

We acknowledge the work of ANROWS in assisting with the drafting of this document.

If you, or someone you know is in immediate danger call 000 for emergency assistance.

If you have experienced violence or sexual assault and require immediate or ongoing assistance, contact 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) to talk to a counsellor from the National Sexual Assault and Domestic and Family Violence hotline.

13YARN is the national crisis support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping. If you, or someone you know, are feeling worried or no good, connect with 13YARN on 13 92 76 (24 hours/7 days) and talk with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter.

Mandatory reporting of domestic and family violence applies to all persons over 18 years of age in the NT.

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1. Background

Introduction

Significant numbers of people are injured by domestic and family violence (DFV) each year in the Northern Territory (NT), and some are killed. DFV has a high level of repeat offending, and is often an ongoing pattern of abusive behaviour that is difficult to shift.

It is important that there is a diverse range of interventions available for people who have committed DFV to promote behaviour change and stop violence from occurring again. These interventions include DFV Rehabilitation programs such as men's behaviour change programs (MBCPs), Aboriginal healing programs, early intervention services, police interventions, and court mandated interventions and responses.

It is critical that DFV Rehabilitation Programs are carefully designed and facilitated, as poorly managed programs may result in collusion with the person who has committed DFV, victim-blaming, an escalation of violence, and significant harm or death.

Purpose

Due to the significant risks involved with DFV Rehabilitation Programs, they need to have clear mechanisms in place to manage the ongoing risk of DFV, and to prioritise victim survivor safety. They need to be run by skilled facilitators in accordance with DFV-informed practice.

The purpose of the NT Minimum Standards and Application Process for Declared DFV Rehabilitation Programs (Minimum Standards) is to enhance the safety of women and children by providing a consistent model for DFV Rehabilitation Programs. The Minimum Standards establish requirements for program priorities and key components of program design, delivery, evaluation and staffing.

This document defines the minimum practice standards required to be declared as a DFV Rehabilitation Program under the *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007* (NT) (the DFV Act). It also includes guidance on the application process for declaration of a Rehabilitation Program under the DFV Act.

Only DFV programs seeking declaration under the DFV Act need to demonstrate that they meet the Minimum Standards, however it is the intention of this document to have usefulness beyond this. The Minimum Standards represent important considerations in practice for all programs that have a primary objective of changing the behaviour of people who have committed DFV.

How have the Minimum Standards been developed?

The development of the Minimum Standards is a commitment under Action Plan 2 of the NT DFSV Reduction Framework.

The Minimum Standards were informed by consultations with and input from the DFV sector, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs), Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and other stakeholders. This occurred initially through a sector workshop, then through two feedback loops with the DFV sector, government agencies and members of the Cross Agency Working Group and through an iterative review, feedback and development process with ANROWS.

Which DFV Rehabilitation Programs are subject to the Minimum Standards?

The definition of DFV Rehabilitation Programs comes from section 85A of the DFV Act. A program may be declared to be a DFV Rehabilitation program if the primary objective of the program is to change the behaviour of a person who commits domestic violence to:

- a) reduce and prevent the person committing domestic violence; and
- b) increase the safety and protection of persons with whom the person is or may be in a domestic relationship; and
- c) ensure the person accepts responsibility for the person's behaviour.

Further information on how DFV programs are declared is provided at section 3.

Only programs that are declared, or are seeking to be declared, under the DFV Act, are subject to the minimum standards defined in this document.

Which programs are not required to demonstrate adherence to the Minimum Standards?

Programs that work with men who have committed DFV that are not declared, or seeking to be declared, under the DFV Act, are not obliged to align with the minimum standards defined in this document.

However, the adoption of minimum standards of practice contribute towards a whole-of-community approach to reduce DFV harm. This document can be used to support good practice in all services working with men who have committed DFV, whether or not they are seeking declaration under the DFV Act.

Northern Territory Correctional Services Programs

Programs provided by NT Correctional Services (NTCS) are not required to demonstrate adherence to the Minimum Standards. NTCS recognises and supports the principles and standards; however, not all standards are able to be implemented, or fully implemented, in a Correctional setting where programs operating according to generic criminogenic theories of offender rehabilitation and management.

DFV Offence-Specific Programs, such as those designed to address DFV, by their very nature prioritise an offender's accountability for their actions and the harm they caused to others and the community. However, there are complexities in fully connecting prison-based programs into integrated DFV service system responses.

NTCS is developing an Offender Programs Accreditation Panel which will function as a quality assurance review and monitoring body for all NTCS Offender Programs. The Offender Programs Accreditation Panel will use the NT Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs as a primary source document to enable, where possible in a Correctional context, program alignment. NTCS is committed to developing Offender Programs that are culturally appropriate and are designed and/or guided by Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal Healing Programs

Aboriginal Healing Programs address the impacts of intergenerational, collective and individual trauma related to attempted genocide, colonisation, and ongoing structural racism. Aboriginal men and their families face compounding experiences of loss, and of being stripped of their connections to land, culture, role and identity.

Aboriginal Healing Programs engage men in activities and dialogues that aim to restore and renew these connections to Aboriginal culture, kinship ties, and roles. Many of these programs offer culturally tailored

peer support and formal counselling processes and help to identify and address trauma. Activities occur in a culturally safe setting, such as traditional lands or at Aboriginal community-controlled locations.⁵

Aboriginal Healing Programs are a foundational part of the behaviour change and healing journey for many Aboriginal men who have committed DFV. Both healing and behaviour change work is required to address DFV by Aboriginal men.⁶

Aboriginal men can be supported through healing programs to address the impacts of intergenerational trauma and loss on their lives, and to help them find their ways back to being safe, non-violent and strong men for their community.

Healing and behaviour change, however, can take some time. DFV programs are required to assist Aboriginal men make safe, non-violent and non-controlling choices about their behaviour, at whatever point they are in a healing journey.

Aboriginal Healing Programs can be integrated into, sit alongside, or occur around behaviour change work for men who have committed DFV. Behaviour change work can also be integrated into healing work.

DFV Programs and Aboriginal Healing Programs can sit within the same organisation or be provided by different organisations in coordinated ways. In some circumstances, a single service might integrate DFV program and Aboriginal healing program work.

Aboriginal Healing Programs that are not seeking to be declared under the DFV Act are not required to adhere to the Minimum Standards.

Programs for children and young people who are using DFV

The Minimum Standards do not apply to programs designed to engage with children and young people who have used violence in a DFV context. The NT Government acknowledges the early work underway to support early intervention projects with young people, such as the Early Intervention Grants Program established in 2023.

Programs for people who have committed DFV which focus on addressing contributing factors

People who use violence often experience intersecting needs and may benefit from accessing a range of programs, services and supports.

These services engage with people who have committed DFV, and can assist in meeting complex needs and enhancing participation in DFV Rehabilitation Programs.

These programs address factors that contribute significantly to, but do not cause, DFV behaviour.

Examples include alcohol and other drug use services, mental health services, disability services, housing services or legal services.

While these supports play an important role, they should be delivered in addition to, not instead of, DFV Rehabilitation Programs. This is because some of these supports, when offered in the absence of a DFV

⁵ [Victorian Aboriginal Men's Program Literature Review](#). No to Violence, 2018.

⁶ [What works? Exploring the literature on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing programs that respond to family violence](#). Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety.

Rehabilitation Program may not effectively address DFV, and in some cases, may create further risk for victim survivors and others.

Many of these services have capabilities to engage in safe and useful conversations with people who have committed DFV in ways that contribute to the service system's holistic efforts to identify, assess and manage risk. These services support the person to take steps towards beginning a genuine journey of change by addressing broader, but often intersecting needs. These services can engage in initial safety planning to protect victim survivors. They can assist with short-term reductions in risk.

These interventions, while important parts of the system, are not required to adhere to the Minimum Standards.

It is acknowledged that there are also other 'informal' responders to people who have committed DFV that form a *web of accountability*. These responders, who are outside of the formal service system may include respected community elders, extended family members, and peer and friendship networks. Webs of accountability that support men who have committed DFV to undergo a genuine process of change are likely to be strongest when both formal service system and informal community responses are DFV-informed.⁷

What support will there be for program providers?

The Minimum Standards will be supported by implementation guidance for declared programs, as well as ongoing contract management. These will support program providers to meet the Minimum Standards, and to continuously improve.

When do the standards come into force?

The NT Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs come into force on **4 March 2024**.

⁷ Some of the strongest examples of how formal services and informal community responses can synergise to support accountability occur through Aboriginal Healing Programs. While these programs are often run by practitioners employed by ACCOs, adherence to community Lore and the support of Elders and role models can be essential.

2. NT Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs

The Minimum Standards are organised according to 7 key principles. Underpinning each principle is a rationale for why the principle is important, and a series of program standards that relate to the principle. In some cases, additional guidance is included (in the boxes). This guidance does not constitute a standard but is provided as extra support for best practice program implementation.

Principle 1: Women and children's safety and wellbeing is the core priority⁸

Why is this important?

Due to the entrenched nature of the attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate DFV, men who have committed DFV may continue to pose a risk to women and children while engaging in, or following engagement in, a DFV program.

Understanding and responding to these risks is a core responsibility of program providers and is essential to promoting victim survivor safety. This includes recognising and responding to children as victim survivors in their own right,⁹ with needs, fears, and loyalties independent of parents or family members who are experiencing DFV. Being victim survivor focussed means that DFV programs need to assess and respond to the existing and long term impacts of, and harms associated with, the behaviours of the man who has committed DFV.

While the effects are not the same for all victim survivors, DFV can have immediate and lifelong effects on physical and mental health and wellbeing, as well as having social and economic impacts. DFV can interrupt and damage a person's sense of self, confidence, capability and in turn affecting their housing, employment, education, parenting, financial security, participation in their community.

Programs are accountable to women and children. This means, for example, that women and children's wellbeing and right to safety is prioritised over men's right to confidentiality. It also means that the experiences and needs of adult and child victim survivors are central to how the program operates and to what the program aims to achieve.

Program standards under Principle 1

1.1 Programs clearly enact a comprehensive initial and ongoing assessment process with potential participants using DFV risk assessment tools that are aligned with the RAMF.¹⁰

1.2 Programs articulate and implement evidence-based strategies to identify and manage risk in line with the RAMF.

⁸ Acknowledging that some victim survivors are men or do not identify by gender binary, for example male intimate partners of a gay or bisexual man committing DFV.

⁹ The Minimum Standards acknowledges that children's witnessing of or exposure to DFV is equivalent to experiencing DFV and makes them a victim survivor of DFV.

¹⁰ Note that TFHC is developing a Common Risk Assessment Tool for People who have Committed DFV that is aligned with the existing Common Risk Assessment Tool for Victim Survivors under the RAMF. The Minimum Standards will require that program providers funded by TFHC align their processes with the RAMF and forthcoming tool.

1.3 Programs recognise and consider children and young people as victim survivors in their own right.

1.4 Programs comply with information sharing legislation, policies, and procedures.¹¹

1.5 Programs utilise or engage suitably trained and skilled¹² Partner Contact Workers.¹³

1.6 Programs utilise information obtained about risk to, and impacts on, adult and child victim survivors to carefully shape responses to each man who has committed DFV.

Guidance on Partner Contact Workers

Partner Contact Workers are vital to promoting women and children's actual and felt autonomy and safety. Partner Contact Workers may be employed by local specialist DFV service providers through a formal partnership, or directly by the program provider. The role of Partner Contact Workers¹ is to:

- *Offer risk assessment, safety planning and support to the victim/survivor and their children.*
- *Support Aboriginal women, children and families to be connected to services that help with their own journeys to heal from intergenerational, individual and collective trauma, and from the impacts of DFV and lateral violence they might have experienced.*
- *Provide case management or short intervention emotional and psychological support to victim survivors and their children. This includes assessing and responding to the diverse needs of victim survivors and their children, providing warm referrals to and coordination with specialised services (including statutory bodies).*
- *Undertake ongoing DFV risk assessment and management activities, including safety planning, in partnership with program facilitators. In undertaking DFV risk assessment and management, Partner Contact Workers should seek to amplify the voices of victim survivors, ensuring that women and children's self-perception of risk, feelings of fear and experiences of violence and coercive control are validated and taken seriously. This includes identifying and validating successful strategies that the victim survivor has used keep herself and others safe.*
- *Maintain contact with victim survivor and her children in a manner agreed to by the woman, noting that women are not obliged to engage, and that free, informed, and ongoing consent must be obtained. This may include continuing contact when the man using violence is no longer engaged in the program. In this way the Family Safety Worker can ensure that the provider is well-placed to hear about and respond to threats to safety or wellbeing arising from a man involved in the program (such as using his participation in the program as a tactic of control).*
- *Assess the impact of the man's use of violence on victim survivors' parenting capacity, mother-child relationships, and family functioning.*
- *Privilege the voices of women and children by providing opportunities for victim survivors to inform program content, delivery, and evaluation. This may include providing information about the participant's behaviour to inform ways of working with him (while maintaining confidentiality).*

¹¹ See Principle 2 for further details.

¹² See Principle 6 for further details.

¹³ Note that Partner Contact Workers are to be guided by the victim survivor about support provided to the family as a whole

Guidance on Partner Contact Workers continued

- *Provide information about program content and delivery to victim survivors, including an explanation that although the program is designed to increase men's ability to change, there is no guarantee that this will occur.*
- *Discuss dynamics, patterns, and statistics of DFV with victim survivors. This includes drawing out victim survivors' own knowledge and awareness of DFV.*
- *Promote and celebrate victim survivors' autonomy and freedom, expressing and affirming victim survivor's worthiness of help and support.*
- *Work collaboratively with program facilitators to ensure that the safety of women and children is at the forefront of all work conducted by the program.*

Principle 2: DFV programs contribute to risk management as part of an integrated service response

Why is this important?

Women's safety and men's accountability are best achieved through a holistic response where integrated programs and services complement, and mutually reinforce each other. It is vital that all parts of the service system actively collaborate to identify, assess, manage, and respond to the risk of DFV. This approach, variously called an 'ecosystem of services', an 'integrated response to DFV', a 'web of accountability', or 'keeping the offender in view', is reflected in the Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs¹⁴ and is supported by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety and DFV MBCP peak body, No to Violence.¹⁵

DFV programs have a central role in assisting the DFV service system to identify and understand the violent and controlling behavioural patterns of the person using violence. Keeping these behaviours in view helps to guard against victim-blaming, and to scaffold opportunities across services and time for the person using violence to step into genuine accountability for his behaviour.

Program standards under Principle 2

- 2.1 Programs have clear eligibility criteria, and work with referrers to ensure that adults who are eligible but not currently suitable to participate in the program receive an appropriate alternative risk-focused response.
- 2.2 Programs clearly articulate and implement policies and procedures to report, assess, manage, and monitor risk in collaboration with other agencies and in line with the RAMF.
- 2.3 Programs formalise, review and renew relationships with key partner agencies with whom they work with to address risk and to keep an adult person using DFV in view.

¹⁴https://genderinstitute.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/docs/2020_docs/Central_Australian_Minimum_Standards_methodology_2020.pdf

¹⁵ Interventions for perpetrators of domestic, family, and sexual violence in Australia. Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, 2021.

- 2.4 Programs comply with mandatory reporting obligations under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* and the DFV Act.
- 2.5 Programs are registered as, or are working towards being registered as an Information Sharing Entity (ISE) under Chapter 5A of the DFV Act. Programs that are not yet registered must provide details of work undertaken (or intended to be undertaken) towards registration (e.g. progress against the [Domestic and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme Organisation Readiness Checklist](#)).
- 2.6 Programs registered as ISEs comply with the [NT Domestic and Family Violence Information Sharing Guidelines](#).
- 2.7 Programs participate in interagency risk assessment and management mechanisms, including Family Safety Framework meetings and the Child and Family Partnerships (where established) and share all relevant information in line with the RAMF. This may also include regional case conferencing with NTCS, TFHC, Family Support and Child Protection services and non-government community services.
- 2.8 Programs support the development of strong and equitable working relationships between Partner Contact Workers and men's practitioners as central to monitoring and managing risk.
- 2.9 Programs recognise that responders to DFV include those who are not part of the formal service system. Extended family members, community leaders and others have a role in an integrated approach to managing risk and supporting accountability for those who do harm.

Principle 3: DFV programs are culturally secure, accessible, and responsive

Why is this important?

To improve the likelihood of achieving behaviour change, programs must be adaptive and responsive to the diverse identities of participants and of victim survivors. This may include (but is not limited to) tailoring program content and delivery methods to better engage men who are culturally or linguistically diverse, and/or who identify as LGBTQ¹⁶.

It may also include the Partner Contact Worker tailoring their contact and support for victim survivors and their children. Much as no two experiences of DFV are the same, no two people who use or who experience DFV are the same. Programs should work to understand the individualised circumstances of each man and family.

Program standards under Principle 3

- 3.1 Programs clearly articulate and implement policies, procedures and staff training to develop, enhance and maintain cultural security for men who have committed DFV, and for women and children who experience violence, from a range of backgrounds.

¹⁶ The appropriateness of men's DFV programs for men who identify as queer and or non-binary who have committed DFV against other men (including within same-sex relationships) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. External referrals should be made when DFV programs are deemed inappropriate; alternatively, DFV programs can seek secondary consultations with DFV LGBTIQ specialists to support engaging these men through individual sessions.

- 3.2 Programs clearly articulate and implement policies and procedures to achieve inclusivity and do not tolerate peer-to-peer abuse in any form. For group programs this includes establishing clear group rules which manage the potential for conflict or discrimination.
- 3.3 Programs develop strategies to improve responsiveness to men who have committed DFV, and victim survivors, from *CALD, refugee or newly arrived backgrounds*. These strategies focus on developing cultural proficiency and cultural humility at the organisational and worker levels, and respectful collaboration with migrant and refugee centres, settlement services providers, and ethno cultural organisations and associations.
- 3.4 Programs develop strategies to improve its responsiveness to gay, bisexual, Trans, queer and non-binary people who use or experience DFSV. This includes staff professional development and linking with specialist LGBTQ services to enable secondary consultations.
- 3.5 Programs are tailored for users of violence who identify as Aboriginal, and their families. This can include exploring local and regional processes of colonisation, including intergenerational trauma and loss, and how these impacts are a driver of violence against Aboriginal women.

Guidance on culturally secure practice for working with Aboriginal people, families, and communities

DFV Programs for men who have committed DFV that are not relevant to, engaging with or culturally secure for Aboriginal men are unlikely to change participants' behaviour and thus reduce levels of DFV in Aboriginal communities.

Family safety work (delivered in the context of DFV programs for men who have committed DFV) that is not culturally secure for Aboriginal women and their children is unlikely to be used, nor trusted.

Programs designed for, or that are likely to be attended by Aboriginal men should be culturally secure, accessible, and appropriate for Aboriginal people, and should embed Aboriginal perspectives in program design, delivery, and evaluation. This means:

- *Program providers engage with Aboriginal people (including Brotherboys, Sistergirls and other Aboriginal LGBTQ people) when establishing and designing programs to, where possible, establish a cultural advisory group of Aboriginal men and women.*
- *Program providers recognise that suitably skilled Aboriginal workers are often best placed to provide programs to Aboriginal people.*
- *Where possible, programs are delivered by, or in partnership with, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and employ suitably skilled Aboriginal facilitators and Partner Contact Workers. Program providers also recognise that some Aboriginal people may choose not to engage with members of their community in relation to their experiences of DFV, and may prefer non-Aboriginal practitioners or those from a different Aboriginal clan or language group.*
- *Programs are informed by, respect, celebrate and include Aboriginal cultural knowledge, maternal and paternal lore, and healing practices. They acknowledge the importance of Country to Aboriginal identity and healing. Programs support Aboriginal men who have committed DFV to walk in both worlds, learning about the inherent respect for women and non-violence that exists in Aboriginal cultures and recognising culture as a source of strength and resilience.*

Guidance on culturally secure practice for working with Aboriginal people, families, and communities continued

- *Programs recognise the diversity of Aboriginal cultures and do not treat Aboriginal people as a homogenous group.*
- *Programs acknowledge local and regional history and processes of colonisation and resulting intergenerational trauma on Aboriginal people. Program content and facilitation techniques reflect trauma and violence informed practice¹, including an understanding of the impact of childhood trauma and exposure to violence, and of lateral violence.*
- *Program providers build relationships with local communities and are responsive to local contexts.*
- *Programs explore and apply creative techniques to ensure that content is understandable and contextually appropriate. This may include delivery of programs in language, use of interpreter services or employing visual aids to help communicate program content.*
- *Programs operate in physical spaces that are culturally safe and appropriate, employing room layout arrangements and settings that facilitate engagement.*

Adapted from the Central Australian Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs. Tangentyere Council, 2020.

Principle 4: DFV programs challenge the use of violence and men who have committed DFV are held to account

Why is this important?

The use of violence is a choice that men can control and stop.¹⁷ When commencing a DFV program, it is expected that participants may have limited internal motivation to genuinely participate or pursue behaviour change.

It is important that men are engaged in a scaffolded and supported process to foster internal accountability for their behaviour. This includes assisting men to articulate individual and collectively held values that are inconsistent with the use of DFV. This means recognising men's innate strengths and empowering them to own and understand their role in correcting gender inequality and ending cycles of trauma and violence in their families and communities.

Program standards under Principle 4

4.1 Programs acknowledge and address all forms of DFV, including sexual violence, coercive control, and non-physical forms of violence.

4.2 Sessions are co-facilitated by male and female facilitators to model respectful gender relationships, and to help safeguard against collusion that can arise through a men's only space.

¹⁷ [Minimum Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs](#). Family Safety Victoria, 2018

- 4.3 Programs clearly articulate and implement policies and procedures to avoid collusion. Program content and facilitators do not, explicitly, or implicitly, act or communicate in a way that minimises, condones, excuses, or blames victim survivors for men's use of violence. This includes apportioning blame or falsely equating male and female uses of violence.
- 4.4 Programs assist men to identify and utilise values, beliefs and behaviours consistent with non-violent, non-controlling and respectful ways of relating.
- 4.5 Programs understand their legislative responsibilities and reporting requirements to police, child protection and justice system authorities, and work with these and other agencies to identify and manage any associated risks to victim survivors of doing so.

Principle 5: DFV programs facilitate access to a range of services that address the complex needs of men who have committed DFV

Why is this important?

DFV programs help to identify and assess complex needs and contributing factors that might require addressing by AOD, mental health and other community services. DFV programs need to have a say in how these needs are case managed, in a way that centralises the underlying causes of the men's violent and controlling behaviours.

Guidance on supporting accountability

In practice, supporting accountability may include:

- *Applying motivational interviewing and enhancement strategies to strengthen men's willingness and commitment to work towards change.*
- *Acknowledging the damaging and traumatic impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal men, while maintaining that these are never an excuse for violence.¹*
- *Supporting men to learn about lateral violence and cyclical violence.*
- *Supporting men to learn about gender inequality and empathise with the perspectives, experiences, and needs of women and children.*
- *Tailoring program content and delivery to specifically address the experiences of those impacted by participants' use of DFV (ensuring that partner confidentiality is maintained).*
- *Respectfully challenging gendered attitudes and beliefs about jealousy and supporting men to understand the destructive effects of jealousy on relationships.*
- *Assisting men to develop their own ongoing safety and accountability plan, focusing on what it means for that person to change his ways towards upholding his values and strivings as a man, partner, father and role model in his community.*
- *Organisations develop clear processes to assist workers to minimise collusion, and provide them with the tools to do so. Workers engage in self-reflection to identify attitudes and circumstances through which they might drift towards either collusive or persecutory/oppositional practice.*

Program standards under Principle 5

- 5.1 Programs make decisions about services required to address the complex needs of participants and contributing factors based on a risk and needs assessment, and in collaboration with referrers and other key providers supporting victim survivor safety.
- 5.2 Programs cultivate and maintain two-way referral and information sharing pathways (including warm referral procedures) with local organisations. They receive and make referrals to a wide range of services as available¹⁸, including but not limited to healing programs, health and AOD services, legal services, financial, housing and employment services and prison step-down services.
- 5.3 Programs embed transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement, making program content available and enabling program observations (with consent of participants) to appropriate external service providers and statutory bodies.
- 5.4 Programs work collaboratively with program providers (i.e. providers that are likely to interact with men who have committed DFV) to pursue greater alignment in key messages and approaches. This may include providing guidance on non-collusive practice, and integrating or adjusting DFV program content to support related program objectives (e.g. supporting men to confront problematic relationships with alcohol in line with local AOD program content).

Guidance on referrals from outside of the justice system

While most men who attend DFV programs in the NT are referred by the courts and NTCS, programs should accept referrals from child protection services, other non-government services, community members as well as self-referrals. To facilitate self-referrals, program providers should create presence and awareness in the community, while maintaining the safety and confidentiality of participants and program staff.

Principle 6: DFV program staff are suitably trained and skilled in responding to men who have committed DFV

Why is this important?

DFV is characterised by complex relational dynamics in which men who have committed DFV may engage in discursive, manipulative, or deceptive behaviours. It is vital program staff are skilled in responding to men's use of DFV and are equipped with relevant qualifications and/or experience. This includes specialist training in DFV, and a practical understanding of the NT context and challenges faced by Aboriginal Territorians. The Minimum Standards recognises that a practical understanding of the NT context will be built over time for practitioners relocating from interstate and they will need support to achieve that understanding.

Delivery of programs by facilitators who lack adequate training and experience can reinforce men's use of DFV, causing direct harm to women and children.

Working with men who have committed DFV is a dynamic and highly specialised field that relies on continually emerging evidence which continues to contribute to our understanding of good practice. It is

¹⁸ The Minimum Standards acknowledges that in many areas of the NT service coverage is limited and referral pathways may be underdeveloped.

vital that staff are supported to improve their skills by undertaking ongoing training and engaging regularly with emerging evidence to ensure programs are delivered in line with best practice.

Program standards under Principle 6

- 6.1 The program is understood and supported by senior management who promote a whole-of-organisation culture that supports the safe, sustainable practice and worker wellbeing.
- 6.2 Program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers are suitably trained and skilled.
- 6.3 Program providers articulate and apply policies and procedures to ensure that staff credentials are verified and maintained.
- 6.4 Program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers receive regular practice supervision through a sound multi-faceted supervision system (individual and group).
- 6.5 Program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers are appropriately trained to identify, assess and manage risk in line with the RAMF.
- 6.6 Program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers are trained in and demonstrate understanding of information sharing procedures and obligations¹⁹ including but not limited to mandatory reporting obligations under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* and the DFV Act.
- 6.7 Professional development plans for each program facilitator and Partner Contact Workers include an analysis of the practitioner's capability building needs with respect to culturally safe work with Aboriginal people and communities, LGBTQ people and communities, and culturally and linguistically diverse people and communities.
- 6.8 Program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers are committed to gender equality and living without violence. Programs articulate and apply recruitment processes to identify workers whose values and beliefs align with the Minimum Standards.

Guidance on suitable training and skills for program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers

Good practice means ensuring that program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers have appropriate qualifications and experience in DFV-informed practice and working with people who have used DFV. This means that:

- *Program facilitators hold relevant qualifications and/or have received adequate training in intersectional feminist theory and frameworks, specialist men's behaviour change program principles, trauma-informed practice, cultural safety, DFV risk assessment and management, and child protection¹.*
- *Partner Contact Workers are experienced in case management and appropriate frameworks to engage and support women and children.*
- *Providers undertake capability gap analysis for each worker to inform further professional development needs.*

¹⁹ As articulated at Principle 2.

Guidance on suitable training and skills for program facilitators and Partner Contact Workers continued

- *Principal program facilitators have at least 100 hours of experience in facilitation of a comparable DFV program.*
- *Emerging program facilitators receive suitable induction to program content and observe and critically reflect on at least 10 program sessions before commencing in a co-facilitation role.*
- *Programs articulate and scaffold processes for male staff to understand their own use of gendered power, privilege, and entitlement.*
- *Program facilitators demonstrate an ability to be supportive and non-judgmental of men that have committed DFV, while not colluding with the men's violence-supporting narratives and beliefs. They must be able to sit with the truth of the men's violent and controlling behaviours, and of the harm they have caused, while not seeing the man solely through the lens of his worst behaviour.*

Principle 7: DFV programs engage in ongoing program review and evaluation, and are committed to continuous improvement

Why is this important?

Monitoring reporting, and evaluation are key to maintaining accountability and understanding of what works in achieving program objectives. In addition, these reflective practices generate evidence that is vital to improving practice in the NT and nationally.

Program standards under Principle 7

- 7.1 The program's approach to facilitating changes in men's violent and controlling behaviours is underpinned by an evidence-based model used in the Australian men's behaviour change program field. The application of the providers' chosen model within the relevant delivery context is clearly articulated in a program logic supported by appropriate guiding documents (e.g. practice manual, training guide).
- 7.2 Programs embed transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement, making program content available and enabling program observations (with consent of participants) to appropriate external service providers and statutory bodies.
- 7.3 Program logic models are used to guide monitoring, reporting, and evaluation in line with the [NTG Program Evaluation Framework](#).²⁰
- 7.4 Programs conduct regular data collection and monitoring activities in a manner and frequency agreed to with the contract manager²¹, and this data is reported as required. This may include collecting:

²⁰ [NT Program Evaluation Framework](#). Department of Treasury and Finance, 2022.

²¹ The Minimum Standards assumes that program providers are contracted by NTG.

NT Minimum Standards and Application Process for Declared DFV Rehabilitation Programs

- Qualitative data on service delivery and integration with the broader service system (including worker perspectives and learnings, and feedback provided by service users).
- Quantitative data on participation rates (of both men and victim survivors) referral trends, program discontinuation and completion, information sharing and risk management actions.

7.5 Programs conduct evaluation activities in the manner and frequency agreed to with their contract manager.

7.6 Programs articulate and implement policies and procedures for continuous improvement guided by lessons learned through monitoring and evaluation, emerging evidence, and key policy developments.

3. Application process to be considered for declaration

This section presents the process and requirements for programs to be declared under Section 85A of the DFV Act.

The application and assessment process prioritises the delivery of safe and appropriate DFV programs.

Programs seeking to be declared under the DFV Act are only able to do so through the processes outlined in this document.

DFV programs may be declared by the Minister for Justice (by *Gazette* notice) under s85A (1) of the DFV Act. A program may only be declared if it meets the definition of a DFV rehabilitation program under the DFV Act, which is that its primary objective is to change the behaviour of a person who commits domestic violence to:

- a) reduce and prevent the person committing domestic violence;
- b) increase the safety and protection of persons with whom the person is or may be in a domestic relationship; and
- c) ensure the person accepts responsibility for the person's behaviour.

In practice, the Minister will consider to what extent a program complies with the Minimum Standards, before declaring a program under Section 85A (1).

Step 1: Initial application and informal feedback

This first step aims to assist program providers to identify whether they are ready to formally apply for declaration, and to identify areas for improvement.

Program providers are required to outline the specifics of their program's practice against each of the NT Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs to:

- Consider program design and delivery, and assess existing practices against each program standard;
- Identify areas of strength in program design and delivery; and
- Identify areas in program design and delivery that need to be built or improved, and to develop a plan for how this will occur.

The application must be submitted in writing to the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice (AGD) by a program's Responsible Person who has legal responsibility for the organisation. This can be facilitated through the provider's contract manager or the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction (DFSVR) Division.

Eligible applications will be reviewed by the NT Minimum Standards for Declared DFV Programs Cross-agency Governance Committee ('the Committee') (see Section 5).

The Committee will first action a supportive review of the provider's application and provide clear and concise feedback to enable the provider to address any shortfalls in their proposed program relating to the Minimum Standards. The Committee will set a reasonable period for the applicant provider to address shortfalls.

Step 2: Formal application and assessment

DFV programs that wish to be considered for declaration will need a minimum operating period of six months before step 2 of the declaration application process can commence. It is not possible to formally assess a DFV program's practice in relation to the Minimum Standards if the program has not delivered services for this minimum period. (Step one of the assessment process, however, can commence before a DFV program completes this six month operational period.

Following step one, the provider will submit their revised application with supporting evidence to demonstrate alignment with the Minimum Standards. This full application will be reviewed by the Committee for consideration for declaration.

Should the Committee identify shortfalls or complexities, the provider may be requested to submit a plan concerning how to overcome these barriers.

Program providers are required to present information on their program's context, and identify how aspects of this context may affect how the Minimum Standards are implemented and what additional considerations or mitigations are included in their program. An example of this may be the location of where the program will be run.

Program providers who intend to operate programs in multiple and significantly different locations²² will be required to submit an application for each location to ensure the context of each location is suitably considered.

Providers wishing to expand to new locations following one of their programs already being declared must submit an application to vary their declaration that accounts for the new program and its new context.

Step 3: Assessment outcome and recommendations

The Committee will make an assessment on the extent to which the DFV program is compliant with the Minimum Standards based on the written information and supporting evidence provided. The Committee may request further documentation and, on occasion, call upon subject matter experts from outside the Committee membership, including outside the NT, to assist in its assessment.

The Committee may recommend that the program is declared, recommend that the program is declared with conditions, or recommend that the program is not declared.

The outcome of the application will be communicated to the program provider via written report. The report may:

- Provide feedback and identify specific standards that the program (after both steps of the assessment process) still does not adhere to; and/or
- Impose conditions on the declaration of a DFV program in relation to improvements in practice that must be demonstrated over a specified period of time.

When conditions are placed on a DFV program's declaration, the program's contract manager, with the DFSVR Division will be responsible for monitoring the program's improvement over the specified period.

²² For example, if a program expands to another urban location in the same town, a new declaration would not be required. Alternatively, if a program expands from an urban location in one town, to an urban location in another, or expands from an urban to remote context or vice versa, a new declaration application would be required.

When an application is successful, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Minister for Justice to declare the program under the DFV Act through AGD.

If a DFV program is assessed by the Committee as not compliant with the Minimum Standards, the Committee will provide a detailed explanation to assist the provider in any future attempts to re-apply for declaration.

Responding to urgent community need for declared DFV programs

The NT Government recognises that in some situations, new DFV programs for men who have committed DFV may need to address urgent community need.

Any DFV program needs to be safe and adhere to minimum standards of practice. New programs designed to respond to urgent and escalating community need still require a sufficient and considered period of planning and development.

It is preferable to not run a DFV program for men who have committed DFV at all, than to run one that is unsafe and that does not meet minimum standards of practice.

There may be some situations, however, where a new program needs to accept referrals from Local Courts, NT Correctional Services or from other government and statutory authorities before the program has had an opportunity to apply for declaration.

In these situations, the Committee will accept an application for *interim declaration* so that the program can accept referrals from these sources, and the Committee will have an active role in supporting the provider to become ready for a formal assessment of declaration once the program has been operational for six months.

The Committee, through the DFSVR Division, will work with the program's contract manager to assist the program to be ready for assessment, and to identify and support the program to address shortfalls in a timely manner.

Statutory reporting requirements for Declared Programs

Declared program providers must meet statutory obligations under the DFV Act to report to Community Corrections information about men's attendance and engagement in their program if required to do so through an Intensive Community Corrections Order or Community Corrections Order.

This includes:

- Attendance, engagement and assessment of progress
- Non-attendance with reasonable excuse
- Non-attendance without a reasonable excuse
- Information that suggests a man has breached his Order by use of DFV, or other suspected criminal conduct
- Any other information relevant to Community Corrections' role in monitoring the man's compliance with the Order, reporting back to the Court and/or regarding safety of the victim survivor (alongside reporting to NT Police in accordance with mandatory reporting of DFV in the NT).

This is a non-negotiable, statutory obligation on the provider. Reporting must occur as soon as practicable and in a format agreed with Community Corrections.

Referrals to Declared Programs

If a DFV program is declared, there are multiple avenues through which a person who has committed DFV may enter the program:

- **Domestic Violence Order (DVO)** - Under Section 24(1) of the DFV Act, the Court may order a defendant to attend a declared DFV program when making or varying a DVO. In making this decision, the Court must give paramount consideration to the safety and protection of the protected person (victim survivor). The order may only be made if the Court is satisfied that the defendant is a suitable person to take part in the program, and there is a place available for the defendant. Ordering a defendant to take part in a declared DFV program does not preclude the Court from ordering the defendant to take part in any other program(s) that the Court deems appropriate (such as an alcohol rehabilitation program). The order to attend a declared DFV program may only be made if the defendant consents to the order.
- **Community Corrections Order (CCO) or Intensive Community Corrections Order (ICCO):** The Court can order a convicted offender to attend a declared DFV program as part of a CCO or ICCO or a Suspended Sentence Order. Ordering an offender to take part in a declared DFV program does not preclude the Court from ordering the offender to take part in any other program(s) that the Court deems appropriate. This does not require consent from the offender.
- **Referral from other Government agencies or non-government organisations:** Other agencies can refer persons to declared DFV programs. Where possible, declared programs will be the preferred referral choice for government agencies when seeking a service for DFV behaviour change work.
- **Voluntary participation:** Any person can independently voluntarily participate in a declared DFV program through self-referral to a program provider.

4. Ongoing monitoring of standards adherence

Contract management

The Committee will not monitor the ongoing adherence of the program to the standards, nor support individual programs in their continuous improvement. This function is the responsibility of the provider's contract manager, with the DFSVR Division.

Contract managers, with the DFSVR Division, will be responsible for monitoring and supporting declared DFV program adherence to the Minimum Standards. Standard reporting mechanisms will be utilised, linked to the annual budget and operational plan requirements for NT Government contracted services. These mechanisms will be adapted to enable a specific focus on common implementation challenges relating to the standards.

Contract managers can consult with the DFSVR Division in the first instance and the Committee as required to inform their contract management oversight, and to address any challenges and complexities in the implementation of specific standards.

Program providers are accountable for a declared DFV program's continued alignment with the Minimum Standards. To maintain a status of declaration, program providers must demonstrate through contract reporting mechanisms that they continue to adhere to the Minimum Standards.

DFV programs for men who have committed DFV funded by TFHC will be required to become declared programs and to adhere to the Minimum Standards as part of their contractual obligations.

Irrespective of the source of funding for the DFV program, NT Government agencies and statutory authorities will generally prefer, when seeking a referral option for DFV behaviour change work, to refer to DFV programs that have been declared under the DFV Act.

DFV programs not funded by the NT Government

For DFV programs funded by sources outside of the NT Government, contract managers may choose to incorporate program standards into their contract requirements as a way to ensure ongoing alignment with the Minimum Standards.

Revoking declared status

In situations where a declared DFV program consistently fails to adhere to the Minimum Standards, despite sustained support by the contract manager with the DFSVR Division, to regain adherence, the contract manager, through the DFSVR Division, can request that the Committee recommend the program's declaration to be revoked. This does not replace normal breach of contract processes.

The Committee will review the information provided on the provider's performance, including seeking expertise external to the Committee if required. The Committee may support the provider to improve their program.

When program improvement is not possible, or not possible in a short period, the Committee, through AGD, will recommend to the Minister for Justice the declaration be revoked.

5. Governance

The Minimum Standards and the Application Process contained in this document will be administered and supported by a Cross-agency Governance Committee. This Committee will provide high-level oversight of declared DFV programs and will support the implementation of the Minimum Standards. The Committee will:

- Assess provider applications for DFV programs to be declared under the DFV Act.
- Recommend programs for declaration to the Minister for Justice, based on their adherence to the Minimum Standards.
- Review the Minimum Standards based on insights from implementation.
- Provide insights back to stakeholders to support program development and capacity building.

The Committee will meet quarterly, with a review of the Minimum Standards occurring every second year.

The Committee may meet more regularly to ensure the timely consideration of applications for Declaration by organisations. No application should be significantly delayed due to the quarterly meeting schedule.

The Committee will be comprised of a nominee from each of the following agencies:

- DFSVR Division, TFHC (Co-Chair and Secretariat)
- Department of the Attorney-General and Justice (Co-Chair)
- TFHC Elder in Residence
- Department of Health

- Department of Education
- NT Correctional Services
- NT Local Courts
- NT Police
- Non-government and/or Aboriginal Community Controlled peak bodies²³

On an as-needed basis, the Committee will engage with other NT stakeholders (including DFV sector members, ACCOs and other representative organisations) and may include subject matter experts from other jurisdictions. The Committee will seek expertise when required, including to assist with assessments of programs for declaration that focus on particular community cohorts (for example, in LGBTQ or CALD community contexts).

The Committee will seek views, feedback and practice experience to understand how DFV programs are operating on the ground. This will help to inform the ongoing implementation and review of the Minimum Standards, and to support the continuous improvement of programs for men who have committed DFV.

The Committee will report through the Children and Families Standing Committee to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, and to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

The Committee may undertake targeted work to address identified themes across declared DFV programs where practice falls short of the Standards. In this respect the Committee may, from time to time, develop recommendations that aim to:

- Support ongoing alignment with the standards where there have been significant reforms that may impact on the practice of program providers;
- Address systemic complexities and challenges to DFV programs' abilities to adhere to particular standards; and/or to
- Promote potential improvements in situations where new evidenced-based or evidence-informed practice is emerging.

Any such recommendations will be provided via regular reporting cycles through the Child and Family Standing Committee to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, and to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence. The DFSVR is responsible to ensure implementation of recommendations.

6. How do I find out more?

Contact the DFSVR Division at dfv@nt.gov.au

²³ As appropriate to the application being reviewed or the meeting agenda.