

Information sharing, privacy and risk assessment at The Orange Door

Workers at The Orange Door are supported to do their work by changes to information sharing legislation, an improved risk assessment and management framework and the Central Information Point as recommended by the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

How does The Orange Door manage privacy and information sharing?

Information sharing is a key enabler for The Orange Door. To do its job, The Orange Door needs to collect, use and disclose relevant confidential personal and health information about clients and other people. At the same time, The Orange Door is committed to safeguarding the privacy of confidential information, and so must be satisfied that there is an appropriate legal basis for sharing information before doing so.

The Orange Door operates under an established suite of laws and principles which relate to information sharing and privacy, including:

- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (including the Information Privacy Principles) (PDPA)
- *Health Records Act 2001* (including Health Privacy Principles) (HRA)
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (including Child Information Sharing Scheme (CIS Scheme))
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (CYFA), and
- *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (FVPA) (including Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVIS Scheme) and Part 5B (information sharing within The Orange Door)).

The Orange Door will only collect, use and disclose confidential information (including personal and health information) in line with relevant laws, and if the information is relevant to the services The Orange Door provides.

Reforms that support appropriate information sharing in The Orange Door include Part 5B of the FVPA, the FVIS Scheme, the CIS Scheme and the Central Information Point.

Part 5B of the FVPA facilitates information sharing in the context of The Orange Door, particularly the internal use and disclosure of information by workers in The Orange Door to support services. This includes using the Client Relationship Management (CRM) System to keep records, and discussions between workers as part of delivering services. Additional guidance regarding Part 5B of the FVPA for staff in The Orange Door is provided in the *Support and Safety Hubs: Interim Operational Procedural Guidelines*.

The broader legislative framework for information sharing and privacy will usually apply to The Orange Door's external collection and disclosure of information. For example, The Orange Door may disclose confidential information to an external service with consent, or to prevent or lessen a serious threat to an individual's safety, or under the FVIS or CIS Schemes.

In addition to legislative requirements, privacy requirements for organisations and workers in The Orange Door are set down in service agreements and the CRM Use and Access Agreement.

The Orange Door's Privacy Policy is available from www.orange-door.vic.gov.au/privacy-policy.

What is the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVIS Scheme)?

The FVIS Scheme is enabled by Part 5A of the FVPA and commenced on 26 February 2018, with prescribed organisations and services permitted to share information to assess and manage family violence risk. Organisations within The Orange Door are prescribed under the FVIS Scheme. Additional organisations and services were prescribed under the FVIS Scheme from 27 September 2018.

The FVIS Scheme authorises a select group of services and organisations, including those located in The Orange Door, to share information with each other to assess and manage family violence risk to adults and children with lived experience of family violence from persons using violence. The consent of alleged perpetrators of family violence is not required to share their information if relevant to family violence risk.

The FVIS Scheme aims to remove legislative, regulatory and cultural barriers to information sharing in order to help women and children experiencing family violence and hold perpetrators to account.

For more information see the Ministerial Guidelines, fact sheets and other tools developed by Family Safety Victoria on the information sharing and risk management webpage at www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/family-safety-victoria/information-sharing-and-risk-management.html.

What is the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CIS Scheme)?

The CIS Scheme commenced on 27 September 2018. It allows prescribed organisations and services who work with children, young people and their families to share information with each other to promote children's wellbeing and safety. Organisations within The Orange Door are prescribed under the CIS Scheme.

The CIS Scheme complements the FVIS Scheme by enabling agencies and professionals to share information and collaborate to respond to the range of needs and risks facing children and families. Together, these Schemes remove barriers that previously prevented information from being shared as effectively as it could be. They strengthen the ability of authorised and trained professionals to work together to identify vulnerability and risk early to make sure children, young people and families get the help they need as early as possible, to prevent harm occurring.

These information sharing schemes also aim to reduce reliance on tertiary services, including Child Protection, by empowering other services to collaborate and support children, families and people with lived experience of family violence earlier. Both the CIS Scheme and FVIS Scheme share a similar model, and will assist the successful operation of The Orange Door.

For more information about the CIS Scheme visit www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme.

What is the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework?

The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework is a legislative instrument under Part 11 of the FVPA. A range of organisations are prescribed through regulations under Part 11 of the FVPA to align their policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools to the MARAM Framework. The four pillars of the MARAM Framework are:

- shared understanding of family violence
- consistent and collaborative practice
- responsibilities for risk assessment and management
- systems, outcomes and continuous improvement.

The MARAM Framework commenced on 27 September 2018 and is used across a range of different services and sectors. It aims to establish a system-wide shared understanding of family violence for all services coming into contact with individuals and families experiencing family violence. The MARAM Framework also provides responsibilities for different sectors and organisations in the service system.

The MARAM Framework and practice guidance assists workers to:

- understand if family violence is occurring
- assess the level or seriousness of risk
- talk about family violence risk with a client
- respond appropriately.

The rollout of the MARAM Framework, together with the FVIS Scheme and CIS Scheme strengthen system-wide family violence risk assessment and management, and support information sharing helping to keep people with lived experience of family violence and children safe and to hold perpetrators to account.

Workers in The Orange Door are testing the Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) which have been developed as part of the MARAM Framework.

How are the MARAM Framework and information sharing schemes being implemented?

Training in the Family Violence Information Sharing (FVIS) Scheme, the Child Information Sharing (CIS) Scheme and an introduction to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) has been provided to professionals within The Orange Door. In-depth MARAM training will be available in the coming months. Further information about the FVIS Scheme, CIS Scheme and MARAM training and access to e-learning modules is available from: <https://www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/family-safety-victoria/information-sharing-and-risk-management/training.html>

FSV and the Department of Education and Training (DET) have developed guidance and support materials to assist organisations to understand their obligations under the information sharing schemes and the MARAM Framework. These resources can be accessed via the information sharing and MARAM Framework website: <https://www.vic.gov.au/infosharing/resources.html>

What is the Central Information Point?

The Central Information Point (CIP) is a new service operated by FSV that consolidates critical information about a perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of family violence into a single report for frontline workers to assist with family violence risk assessment and management.

The consolidated information available in a CIP report is provided by a co-located team of data custodians from Victoria Police, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria, Corrections Victoria, and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (Child Protection).

The Orange Door makes CIP requests through the Client Relationship Management system (CRM). Workers in The Orange Door can share information from CIP reports with broader services in line with appropriate legislation, including the FVIS Scheme. Generally, a report is delivered within 24 hours of the request being made. Workers in The Orange Door have been trained in requesting and utilising CIP reports, including accurate completion of the CIP request form and understanding the nature and content of CIP reports provided.

Who has access to the Central Information Point?

Initially, CIP is available to practitioners in The Orange Door to assist them with risk assessment and risk management.