



# No to Violence

Leading the change to end male family violence in Australia

## QUICK GUIDE

# Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework



# What is the Multi-Agency Risk and Management (MARAM) Framework?

In 2015 the Royal Commission into Family Violence was established after several family violence-related deaths in the State of Victoria. It made 227 recommendations in response to gaps and issues within the Victorian family violence service system. Recommendation 1 was to revise the Family Violence Risk Assessment Framework - known as the Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF). It was replaced by the current Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework.

In 2017 Family Safety Victoria (FSV) was established to drive Victoria's family violence strategy across the Victorian service system. FSV funded sixteen leading organisations to support the development and implementation within the family violence sector and across sectors to drive this change.

## Definition and Purpose of MARAM

The MARAM framework was developed to enhance the safety and well-being of individuals and families experiencing family violence across the Victorian service system. MARAM provides evidence-based information designed to support practitioners, organisations, and whole sectors in responding to family violence in a consistent and collaborative way. It guides professionals in screening, identifying, assessing, and managing family violence risk across multiple agencies, to encourage a coordinated response to family violence.

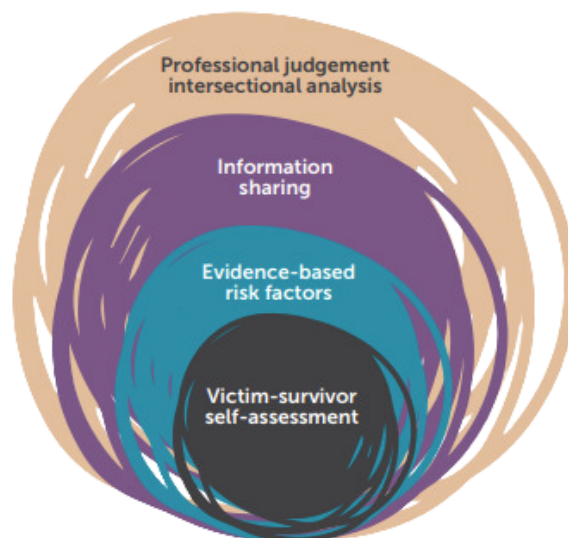
The framework aims to increase the safety and wellbeing of those affected by family violence, and promotes a consistent understanding of family violence and its impact on individuals, including young people and children. It emphasises person-centered practice by considering the specific needs of individuals and recognising barriers or structural inequalities that may influence their safety. By improving coordination and

collaboration among agencies, MARAM seeks to enhance risk assessment and management practices to prevent and mitigate harm caused by family violence and to encourage accountability of the adult using family violence.

## Key Principles of MARAM

- **Unacceptability of Family Violence:** Acknowledges that family violence is never acceptable, regardless of the severity, context, or cultural background.
- **Integrated Service Response:** Provides infrastructure for a collaborative approach among agencies to support a coordinated response to family violence.
- **Awareness of Drivers of Family Violence:** Recognises gender inequality, which also intersects with other forms of structural inequality and discrimination.
- **Agency, Dignity, and Empowerment of Victim-Survivors:** Focuses on partnering with victim-survivors, including young people and children, to increase safety and empowerment.
- **Impacts on Children and Young People:** Recognises children and young people as victim-survivors in their own right.
- **Impacts of Trauma and Harm:** Acknowledges the unique experiences and needs arising from trauma and cumulative harm.
- **Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Self-Determination:** Recognises Aboriginal understandings of family violence and takes into account experiences of colonisation, systemic violence, discrimination, and the ongoing impacts of the Stolen Generations.
- **Cultural Safety:** Recognises that services and responses to diverse communities and older people should be accessible, culturally responsive, and safe.
- **Accountability:** Keeps people who use family violence in view through a system-wide approach, systematically creating opportunities for individual and systemic accountability.
- **Use of Violence by Adolescents as Distinct:** Recognises that violence used by adolescents requires a different response due to their age and the possibility that they are also victim-survivors of family violence.

Family safety Advocacy Practice Guidance,  
No To Violence, 2021



## Important updates and reforms

- **Risk assessments** and **safety plans** for individual victim-survivors, children and young people, and adults using family violence: MARAM includes standardised tools used to assess, document and help identify levels of family violence risk. This guides decision-making for appropriate interventions and provides a framework to enhance family safety for everyone within a family.
- **Family Violence** and **Child Information Sharing Schemes**: Enable authorised professionals to gather and share relevant risk information about family violence to inform risk assessment and management.
- **Support** and **Safety Hubs**: Physical centers where agencies collaborate to provide integrated services to victim-survivors, their children and adults using family violence including risk assessment, safety planning, and referrals to support services. These are known as Orange Doors.
- **Secondary Consultation**: A mechanism for professionals to seek advice and guidance from specialist family violence services or other experts to enhance their understanding and to examine complex cases.
- **Training** and **capacity building**: Ongoing training and professional development to equip professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively respond to family violence.
- **Prescribed services** and **workforces**: This includes legislative and regulation requirements within the MARAM Framework and the Information Sharing Schemes for specific organisations and sectors. For a full list of the key agencies, please see [here](#).

## Intended outcomes

The MARAM Framework aims to improve safety outcomes for individuals experiencing family violence, including children and young people, by supporting professionals in screening, identifying, and assessing family violence risk. It enhances collaboration and information sharing among agencies to provide a coordinated response, ensuring consistent and evidence-informed risk assessment and management practices across multiple sectors. This is supported by the infrastructure of the Family Violence and Children's Information Sharing Schemes.

The framework also aims to promote increased system-wide accountability, encouraging adults using family violence to address their behaviour. It fosters greater awareness and understanding of family violence among professionals, highlighting its visibility in diverse communities and emphasising the importance of naming family violence for victim-survivors to be seen and heard. Additionally, the MARAM Framework advocates for an intersectional approach, which acknowledges the diverse experiences within family violence and recognising that multiple layers of structural discrimination and oppression can exist within family groups. It also acknowledges that systems interventions can sometimes create barriers, stigma, and increase the risk of family violence for individuals from diverse communities seeking support, whether they are experiencing or using family violence.

## Challenges and concerns

One of the most frequently noted concerns of the MARAM framework is its complexity, which can make implementation challenging. It has been noted that the framework can be resource intensive due to its detailed guidelines and procedural requirements, particularly for smaller or less resourced organisations and organisations in regional, rural or remote areas. MARAM training has so far focused primarily on risk assessment, however, further investment in training that goes beyond assessment to practice applications would likely be useful (Safe and Equal, 2023). Additionally, information sharing and collaboration face challenges as they sometimes conflict with existing privacy regulations and data-sharing protocols. It is evident that providing increased support for practitioners and organisations to navigate legal and procedural barriers is needed to ensure critical information is shared in a timely and effective manner.

It has also been noted that MARAM requires further development with regards to intersectional approaches and cultural competency. While the framework acknowledges the importance of considering diverse experiences and the specific needs of marginalised communities, MARAM does not address structural discrimination and systemic barriers in a comprehensive way (Safe and Equal, 2023). The MARAM framework 5-year evidence review identified the need to build on existing work to ensure that MARAM is appropriate and inclusive for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse and refugee communities, older people, LGBTIQ+ people, people experiencing mental ill health, and people who have drug or alcohol dependence (State Government of Victoria, 2023) Furthermore, while MARAM places a strong focus on keeping adults using family violence in view and accountable, there is a lack of clear strategies within the framework for providing interventions with those enacting harm.

Long-term investment in the MARAM framework, its evaluation, and continued development, particularly to address gaps in practice and an improved intersectional approach is important. Additionally, adequate resourcing for training and professional development, support in recruitment and retention of staff is essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of the framework and its effectiveness in addressing and mitigating family violence (State Government of Victoria, 2023). Victoria's family violence peak bodies continue to gather feedback from members and sector representatives to keep Family Safety Victoria informed about practice challenges, implementation concerns, and the needs of the sector.



## Further resources

### [MARAM practice guides and resources](#)

A range of resources to support practitioners and organisations in using the MARAM framework in practice.

### [MARAM animation video series](#)

11 animation videos, each covering key MARAM topics and concepts to support people working in family violence and associated workforces.

### [Information sharing guides, templates and tools](#)

Resources to help you implement the Family Violence Information and Child Information Sharing schemes.

### [Training for the information sharing and MARAM reforms](#)

Access a range of training options, including online webinars and eLearning courses.

## References

No To Violence and Family Safety Victoria (2021). *Family Safety Advocate Practice Guidance*. <https://ntv.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/FSA-Practice-Guidance-Final.pdf>

*Safe and Equal* (2023). *Submission to the 5-year review*. [https://safeandequal.org.au/wp-content/uploads/SUB\\_Safe-and-Equal-Submission-to-the-5-year-review-FINAL-V1.0.pdf](https://safeandequal.org.au/wp-content/uploads/SUB_Safe-and-Equal-Submission-to-the-5-year-review-FINAL-V1.0.pdf)

State Government of Victoria (2021). *MARAM Practice Guides: Foundation Knowledge Guide*. <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-foundation-knowledge-guide>

Victorian Government (2023). *MARAM 5-year evidence review summary report*. <https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-04/MARAM-5-Year-Evidence-Review-Summary-Report-December-2023.pdf>

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