

Centacare Evolve Housing Fact Sheet

Staying Safe



If you are in an emergency situation, please contact **000** immediately or call the Family Violence Response and Referral Line on **1800 633 937**.

They are open 24 hours, seven days a week.

Everyone has the right to be safe in their home. Unfortunately, some people suffer family violence and are not safe. If you are not safe, finding a secure and affordable home for you and your family is a priority.

This fact sheet explains what to do if you need social housing, or if you are already in social housing. For most people, it's better if you can speak to someone earlier, rather than later. Please know that you can seek support and that services are available to help you at any time.

What is family violence?

Family violence is a form of abuse. It might include physical abuse, assault, sexual abuse, threatening behaviours, bullying or verbal abuse. For some people, the abuse is emotional. Or, it may be about money, religion or culture.

Family violence is against the law. It is not acceptable in our community. Breaking a Family Violence Order (FVO or PFVO) is against the law.

Family violence is not the fault of the person experiencing it.

What is Safe at Home?

Safe at Home is a program run by the Tasmanian Government. It was created under the *Family Violence Act 2004*. This is a law that says people in Tasmania must be safe and be protected from abuse. Safe at Home brings together a range of services to help people who are suffering from family violence.

If you are experiencing or at risk of family violence you should contact Safe at Home.

You can call the Family Violence Response and Referral Line on 1800 633 937.

They are open 24 hours, seven days a week.

And you can visit the website at www.safeathome.tas.gov.au

What if you become homeless because of family violence?

There are emergency housing services for people who are homeless because of family violence. You should contact Safe at Home, as above, or you can contact Housing Connect on 1800 800 588.

How do you find somewhere to live?

If you are in need of a safe, secure and affordable home, you should contact Housing Connect. If you are a tenant, your Tenancy Officer can assist you to contact them.

Housing Connect can provide information on crisis accommodation, work out what kind of housing you need and can link you to other support services.

The people at Housing Connect know that escaping family violence is not easy. They can help you.

Housing Connect will:

- give you information
- help you to make decisions
- explain what they can and can't do
- understand that the person is not responsible for what is happening
- offer you an interpreter if you need one
- allow you to bring a support person if that helps you
- talk to you in a private room
- allow you to talk to a man or a woman, depending on who you want to talk to.

How long do you need to wait?

There is a waiting list for social housing. Some people have more urgent needs than others. This might be because of disability, homelessness or a problem like family violence. The highest level of need is called Priority. We aim to make sure that people in Priority can move into a home as quickly as possible. If you are experiencing family violence, you will be in a high category. But Housing Connect may need some evidence – such as documents, or a letter from a doctor or lawyer – to confirm your urgent need for housing.

What information will be collected about you?

Housing Connect will need to know some things about you. They may need to know things like:

- whether you or your children are in immediate danger
- where you need to live
- what supports you have in place
- if there is a current Family Violence Order (FVO).

How do I know my information will be kept private?

Housing Connect cannot share your personal information with other people or other organisation without your permission. Housing Connect will talk to you about this when completing this assessment.

The *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* insures that your personal details are kept confidential.

People escaping family violence need to be sure their information is secure. Please note that by law,

Housing Connect and social housing organisation staff must report situations where they know, believe

or suspect that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect.

What if I already live in a Centacare Evolve Housing home?

If you already live in a Centacare Evolve Housing home but you have to leave because of family violence, please tell us. It's important that you and your family are safe.

We need to know that you haven't abandoned your home. So it's a good idea to tell us that you've left.

We can also help you access other types of support.

If the perpetrator lives nearby or you don't feel safe returning home, we can provide information about how long you can be away from your property. We can also talk to you about your transfer options if this is something you want to consider.

Can I ask for more security?

Sometimes, we upgrade the security at certain homes to protect victims of family violence. This may make it safe for you to return to your home. Please talk to Safe At Home about what they can do to help you stay in your home.