

# The Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework

**Implementation Plan for the  
Essential Services Commission and  
essential service providers**

**May 2022**

## **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

Safe and Equal acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional and ongoing custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded and recognise First Nations peoples' rights to self-determination and continuing connections to land, waters, community and culture.

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## **About Safe and Equal**

Safe and Equal is the peak body for specialist family violence services that provide support to victim survivors in Victoria. The interests of people experiencing, recovering from, or at risk of, family violence is at the heart of everything we do. Our vision is a world beyond family and gender-based violence, where women, children and people from marginalised communities are safe, thriving, and respected. We recognise the gendered nature of violence in our society, and the multiple intersecting forms of power and oppression which can compound the impacts of violence and limit people's access to services, support, and safety. We work closely and collaboratively with other organisations and support the leadership of victim survivors to amplify their voices and create change.

We provide specialist expertise across primary prevention, early intervention, response and recovery approaches and the inter-connections between them. Our work is focused on developing and advancing specialist practice for responding to victim survivors, building the capability of specialist family violence services and allied workforces, organisations and sectors that come into contact with victim-survivors; building the capabilities of workforces focused on primary prevention; and leading and contributing to the translation of evidence and research, practice expertise, and lived experience into safe and effective policy, system design and law reform.

**We develop family violence practice and support workforces** to ensure that victim survivors are safe, their rights are upheld, and their needs are met. The prevalence and impact of family and gender-based violence will be reduced because we are building a strong and effective workforce responding to victim survivors that can meet the needs of the community we serve, while also having a growing and impactful workforce working to prevent violence.

**We work to strengthen and connect organisations, sectors, and systems** to achieve safe and just outcomes for victim survivors irrespective of entry point, jurisdiction and individual circumstances. Joining efforts across prevention, response, and recovery we work to ensure the family violence system is informed and supported by a well-resourced and sustainable specialist sector. Our contributions to primary prevention workforces, initiatives and alliances contribute to social change for a safer and more respectful community.

**We are building momentum for social change** that drives meaningful action across institutions, settings, and systems for a safer and more equal society. Our workforce and practice development efforts are coupled with a partnership approach that builds community awareness and commitment to change. Our expertise and efforts enable citizens across the community to recognise and respond to family and gendered violence, hold perpetrators to account and support the ongoing recovery and empowerment of victim survivors.

**We are a strong peak organisation** providing sustainable and influential leadership to achieve our vision. The work we do and the way we work are integrated and align with our values. This is achieved through inclusive culture, and a safe and accessible workplace supported by robust systems and processes.

## Project Aim

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This project aims to provide evidence-based guidance about how the Essential Services Commission and essential providers engage with victim survivors of family violence. This includes guidance on better practice responses to victim survivors of family violence, and guidance on engaging victim survivors in the design, delivery and evaluation of the family violence reforms work and customer vulnerability work the commission is leading. This guidance is also relevant and applicable to essential service providers and other businesses who engage with victim survivors.

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## Project Background

Safe and Equal, the peak body for specialist family violence services responding to victim survivors in Victoria, has partnered with the University of Melbourne's Safer Families Centre and the University's WEAVERS (Women and children who have Experienced Abuse and Violence: Advisors and Researchers) lived experience group, to deliver this project, commissioned by the Essential Services Commission (the commission). The guidance brings together the principles in the commission's [Better Practice in Responding to Family Violence Guide](#) with the principles for working with survivor advocates from the [Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework](#), delivered by the University of Melbourne and the WEAVERS, and the principles for best practice responses to victim survivors outlined in the [Code of Practice for Specialist Family Violence Services for Victim Survivors](#).

## Project Purpose and Audience

Since 2016, Essential Services Commission has played a leading role in the implementation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations linked to improving private sector responses to family violence and will have an ongoing role in this work. The commission identified the need for a guidance document to support staff across the commission to provide better practice responses to victim survivors of family violence, as well as better practice approaches to engaging with victim survivors in the design, delivery and evaluation of its family violence reforms and customer vulnerability work. This project provides practical guidance for the commission to inform the way it engages with survivor advocates and customers experiencing family violence, as well as provide practical guidance to organisations the commission works with. This guidance is divided into three sections:

- Part A Project report
- Part B Better Practice Responses to Victim Survivors of Family Violence
- Part C The Experts by Experience Implementation Plan for the commission

This guidance can be applied and adapted by essential service providers and other businesses to enable safe and appropriate responses to consumer's experiencing family violence and to support better practice engagement with survivor advocates.

## Project Approach

The development of this guidance was informed by:

- A literature review
- Consultation with key stakeholders

The project team thanks those representatives from the Essential Services Commission, the water and energy providers, allied sector representatives and community sector representatives who contributed to the project and guidance development. The project team would like to extend special thanks to the survivor advocates who contributed to the project research and guidance development, including Lisa McAdams, Sapphire Sol and Rebeca Carro, members from the WEAVERS, Amanda, Fiona and Georgina.

## Key Terms

Aboriginal definition of family violence	The Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Task Force defined family violence in the context of Aboriginal communities as ‘an issue focused around a wide range of physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses that occur within families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities. It extends to one-on-one fighting, abuse of Indigenous community workers as well as self-harm, injury and suicide.’ The definition also acknowledges the spiritual and cultural perpetration of violence by non-Aboriginal people against Aboriginal partners which manifests as exclusion or isolation from Aboriginal culture and/or community. [DHHS, 2018]
Consumer participation	The process of ensuring that people with a lived experience are meaningfully involved in the planning, design and evaluation of programs, services, policies, and systems.
Diverse communities and at risk age groups	This includes the following groups: diverse cultural, linguistic and faith communities; people with a disability; people experiencing mental health issues; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex, queer/questioning, and asexual (LGBTIQ+A) people; women in or exiting prison or forensic institutions; people who work in the sex industry; people living in regional, remote and rural communities; male victims; older people, infants, children and young people (12–25 years of age). [FSV, 2021]
Elder abuse	Is any harm or mistreatment of an older person that is committed by someone with whom the older person has a relationship of trust. In the context of family violence, this may be elder abuse by any person who is a family member (such as their partner or adult children) or carer. Elder abuse may take any of the forms defined under ‘family violence’. [FSV, 2021]
Essential services	The electricity and gas, water, local government, and transport sectors.
Family Violence	Any behaviour that occurs in family, domestic or intimate relationships that is physically or sexually abusive; emotionally or psychologically abusive; economically abusive; threatening or coercive; or is in any other way controlling that causes a person to live in fear for their safety or wellbeing or that of another person. It includes any person that causes a child to hear or witness or otherwise be exposed to the effects of family violence. [FVPA, 2008]
FVPA	<i>Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)</i>
LGBTIQ+A people	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, and Asexual people.
Perpetrator	The person who uses family violence. In some cases, there may be multiple perpetrators (and multiple victim-survivors) in the family. This term signifies the importance of placing responsibility with the person(s) who chooses to use violent, abusive and controlling behaviours to intimidate, harm and cause fear in another person. It is important to acknowledge that this term may not be preferred by some people and communities. Other expressions such as ‘person using (or choosing to use) family violence’ might be preferred instead, depending on context. Additionally, some victim-survivors may not relate to this term or find it alienating, and it is not a term that should be used in cases where an adolescent or young person is using violence against parents/carers or other family members. [Domestic Violence Victoria, 2020]
Perpetrator accountability	The process by which the perpetrator themselves acknowledges and takes responsibility for their choices to use family violence and works to change

	<p>their behaviour. It sits with all practitioners, organisations and systems through their collective, consistent response to promote perpetrators' capacity to take responsibility for their actions and impacts, through formal or informal services response mechanisms. [FSV, 2021]</p>
Risk factors	<p>Evidence-based factors that are associated with the likelihood of family violence occurring or the severity of the risk of family violence. [FSV, 2021]</p>
Safety planning	<p>A plan developed by the victim-survivor, typically with the support of a specialist family violence practitioner (or other professional), to help manage their own safety in the short to medium term, while other risk management actions and interventions are being organised. Safety plans should use a strengths-based approach and identify protective factors that build on what the victim-survivor is already doing and what works for their circumstances. [FSV, 2021]</p>
Survivor Advocate	<p>Victim survivors of family violence who are engaged in formal co-production activities and mechanisms to influence policy development, service planning and practice.</p>
Victim-survivor	<p>The person, including adults, infants, children and young people, who has experienced family violence. This term acknowledges that the person subjected to family violence is both a victim of a crime and a human rights violation, and they are also a survivor with respect to their autonomy, strength and resilience. The term must not be used to wholly define a person. Experiencing family violence is a part of someone's life amongst many other experiences. Some people may prefer the term 'person experiencing (or has experienced) family violence'. Some people may prefer other terms or may not prefer any label or term at all. [Domestic Violence Victoria, 2020]</p>

## **Part C: The Experts by Experience Implementation Plan for the Essential Services Commission**

### **Family Violence, Customer Vulnerability, and the Essential Services Commission**

The Royal Commission into Family Violence [2016] recognised the role utilities providers can play in improving the safety and wellbeing of customers experiencing family violence and made a series of recommendation to improve responses to family violence within the private sector.

The Essential Services Commission has made significant headway on acquitting these recommendations, including the recommended changes to the Energy Retail Code (2019) and Customer Service Code—Urban Water Businesses (2017). The commission has worked closely with both sectors to support reforms, delivering capability building activities which have included facilitating workshops with providers and developing guidance for water and energy businesses to support compliance with the new regulations and establishment of better practice responses to customers experiencing family violence [Bond and Ulbrick, 2019; Essential Services Commission, 2019]. This guidance takes the form of the better practice guide [Essential Services Commission, 2019].

Recent evaluation commissioned by the commission regarding changes in consumer experiences following energy and water market reforms indicate there have been overall improvements in responses to customers experiencing family violence, but there continue to be inconsistencies in frontline responses and across different companies [Consumer Policy Research Centre, 2020; Essential Services Commission, 2019].

### **Domains of the commission's work intersecting with family violence responses**

There are several areas of the commission's work identified that intersect with family violence, these include:

- Regulatory reform (i.e., what new rules the commission should consider for its regulated sectors).

In recent years there has been growing recognition of the need for inclusive and effective responses to consumers experiencing vulnerability and hardship [Consumer Policy Research Centre, 2017; Hudson et al, 2020; Solomon & Martin-Hobbs, 2018; Thriving Communities Partnership, 2019]. There is also growing recognition that 'vulnerability' is dynamic and can impact all consumers at different times, and it is essential for engagement with consumers to understand their experience in order to ensure fair and equitable outcomes [Hudson et al, 2020].

The capacity for private companies to consistently demonstrate fair responses to customers experiencing vulnerability and hardship is viewed as critical for establishing and maintaining trust with consumers, a key element of profitable and sustainable business practice [Consumer Policy Research Centre, 2017; Solomon & Martin-Hobbs, 2018; Thriving Communities Partnership, 2019]. Family violence is recognised as one of the contexts for consumer vulnerability [Consumer Policy Research Centre, 2017; Solomon & Martin-Hobbs, 2018; Thriving Communities Partnership, 2019].

- Pricing (i.e., how the commission makes pricing decisions that consider the needs of all consumers).
- Monitoring, auditing and compliance (i.e., what areas the commission could focus on in the next few years to make sure businesses are fulfilling their obligations).
- Enforcement (i.e., identifying priority areas in the years ahead)
- Consumer engagement (i.e., how the commission works directly with consumers to inform the commission’s work including in reform, monitoring and enforcement)
- Communications (i.e., how the commission informs consumers about their rights and protections – including through partnerships with community organisations)
- Broader engagement (i.e., how the commission works with community organisations, services, government agencies and regulated businesses to make sure all consumers are heard and considered in its regulatory work)
- Cultural competency and accessibility (i.e., how the commission ensures its work is grounded in good practice for all consumers)
- Operations (i.e., governance, human resources/people and culture, organisational strategy etc.)

### Purpose and value of survivor advocacy

To ensure that the services and supports being offered by energy and water providers are meeting the needs of victim survivors, their views should be sought on how best to provide services that achieve this outcome. The lived experiences of consumers and customers provide the richest information about the efficacy of services and demonstrate accountability from services to the people they serve [Department of Health & Human Services, 2019; Domestic Violence Victoria, 2020; Hudson et al, 2020].

It is commonly understood that there is a continuum of engagement with consumers in the design, delivery and evaluation of services, sometimes described as the “ladder of participation” which can vary in intensity from informing, to coordinating, consulting, co-design and co-production [Loeffler and Bovaird, 2016; Werner-Seidler & Shaw, 2019; DHHS, 2019; Lamb et al, 2020]. In basic terms, the engagement with lived experience can vary from more passive “inform”, “consult” and “involve” activities, to more deeply engaged activities such as “collaborate”, “co-design” and “empower” that reflect more active and equal decision making between services and consumer participants [Lamb et al, 2020].



*Diagram 1: Continuum of engagement*

Source: Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework [Lamb et al, 2020]

## The Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework

In 2019 -2020, the University of Melbourne's Safer Families Centre and the University's WEAVERS (Women and children who have Experienced Abuse and Violence: Advisors and Researchers) lived experience group, WEAVERS University of Melbourne developed the [Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework](#). The project was supported by Domestic Violence Victoria.

The Framework aims to enhance the ability of services to provide opportunities for survivor advocates to influence policy development, service planning and practice by:

- Encouraging sharing knowledge and experience gained from services and survivor advocates who have been engaged in collaborative work.
- Providing guidelines around better practice for engaging survivor advocates of family violence in collaborative work.
- Providing resources to support survivor advocates and organisations become ready to engage in collaborative work.

While the Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework was designed for use by the Specialist Family Violence Sector in Victoria, it provides principles for best practice engagement with survivor advocates that can apply across a broader range of settings.

## The Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework Best Practice Principles

The following principles were developed to guide collaborative processes for engaging survivor advocates.

<b>RECOGNISE</b>	Victim survivors are acknowledged as holding valuable knowledge and expertise about family violence which is reflected in organisational policies and governance structures.
<b>SAFETY</b>	Issues relating to legal, physical, emotional and cultural safety of survivor advocates are carefully considered but not used as a mechanism for exclusion.
<b>VALUE</b>	In addition to being provided with recognition for their expertise, survivor advocates will be financially remunerated for their time, contributions and expenses when they provide significant input into policy and practice.
<b>TRANSPARENCY</b>	There is clarity of purpose and information to support survivor advocates make participation decisions, including the degree of influence, nature of engagement and time commitments. Feedback will be given to survivor advocates about how their contribution influenced change.
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	Engagement with survivor advocates is subject to regular review, evaluation and accompanied by clear complaints and feedback mechanisms.
<b>SUPPORT</b>	Options for trauma-informed support and appropriate supervision are made available to enable survivor advocates to participate in collaboration.

<b>TRUST</b>	Relationships between services and survivor advocates will be collaborative and built on trust. Power imbalances are addressed by reducing traditional barriers and by genuinely involving survivor advocates in decision-making.
<b>RECIPROCITY</b>	Engagement with survivor advocates will promote mutuality and will be governed by shared information exchange and learning.
<b>INCLUSION</b>	To gain insight into family violence from a broad range of perspectives, efforts will be made to look for and engage diverse victim survivor voices that might not usually be heard.
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	Formal engagement with survivor advocates is adequately resourced to allow longer term work, for partnerships to be built and key learnings to be shared across the family violence sector.

### **The Essential Services Commission engagement with survivor advocates**

The Essential Services Commission has engaged survivor advocates at various points in the family violence reforms work it has led. Feedback from survivor advocates who had experience working with the commission indicated that the overall engagement experiences were positive, and they felt valued and respected.

In recent years, the commission has been developing frameworks that provide a foundation for guiding engagement with survivor advocates in the family violence work the commission leads into the future. This guidance is specific to engagement with survivor advocates as consumers who can inform the commission's responses to family violence, in recognition of the fact that family violence is a particularly complex form of dynamic consumer vulnerability. This implementation plan should be read and understood in conjunction to the guidance outlined in the Essential Services Commission better practice guide and the Essential Services Commission Customer Vulnerability Framework.

### **This implementation plan can also be adapted by essential service providers and other businesses to support better practice engagement with survivor advocates.**

The Essential Services Commission Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (2019) lists the following principles for better practice engagement:

1. Transparent and accountable.
2. Clarity on what, when and how consultation is undertaken, and publishing information about outcomes.
3. Engagement is considered, planned and genuine.
4. Engagement is inclusive.
5. Information is clear, accessible and simple to understand.
6. Continuous improvement processes built into consultation and engagement.

More recently the University of Melbourne was commissioned by the Essential Services Commission to develop guidance and principles for engagement with consumers experiencing vulnerability [Hudson et al, 2020], to inform a broader vulnerability strategy in

development at the commission. This guidance identifies 10 key principles for regulators' development, design and conduct of universal consumer engagement:

1. Be inclusive.
2. Collaborate and co-design with consumers.
3. Treat engagement as an ongoing process based on relationships.
4. Have a clear purpose.
5. Reflect community diversity.
6. Invest in engagement.
7. Be transparent and offer genuine involvement.
8. Show respect for individuals, their knowledge and expertise.
9. Use methods that are universal and flexible.
10. Reflect, adapt, improve.

The guidance identifies that all strategies for engaging with different consumer groups within the commission should align with these principles. Strategies for achieving this include:

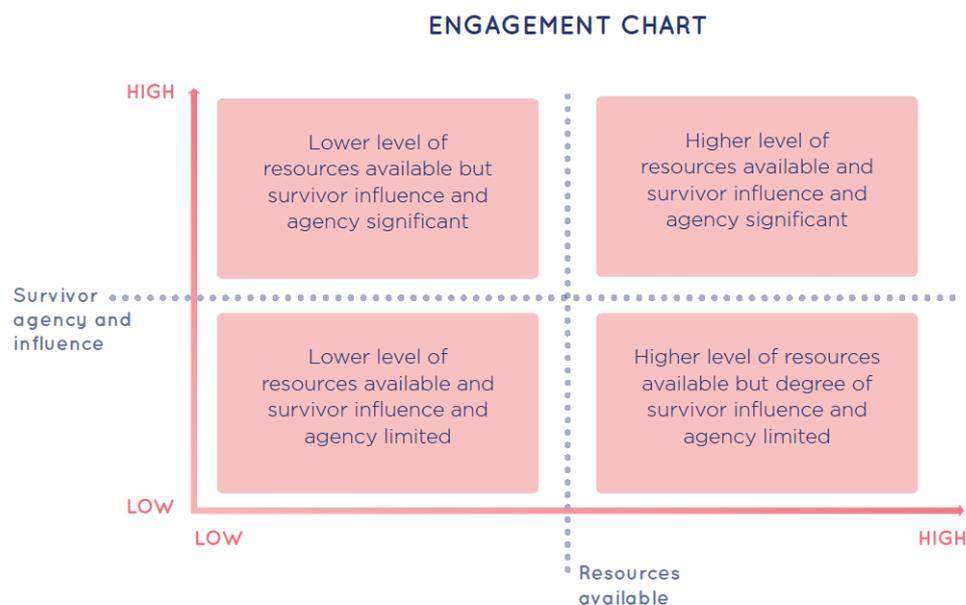
1. Establishing an all of organisation culture and approach to engagement.
2. Establishing a shared understanding of value of consumer experience.
3. Engagement approaches that reach full breadth and diversity of consumer experiences.
4. Engagement designed to be accessible and inclusive.

## The Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework Implementation Plan for the Essential Services Commission and Essential Services Providers

*This implementation plan was developed within the context of the commission's work and organisational structure. However, the plan includes approaches and guidance that has applicability across essential services and other businesses who have a role in working with victim survivors within the context of essential service provision.*

### Models of Engagement: levels of participation and areas of commission's family violence work

There are a variety of engagement activities or strategies that can be used to involve survivor advocates, and each will have different levels of influence and level of resourcing required. In planning engagement with advocates, it is important to consider how much information or level of impact you are hoping to achieve. An engagement chart (like the one pictured below from the Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework) can assist you to identify and plot the influence and resources of engagement activities.



Source: Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework [Lamb et al, 2020]

### Engagement activities

While codesign or co-production is considered the most advantageous engagement activities due to the high level of influence, it is not always realistic due to resourcing and timeframes. There are many other engagement activities that might be utilised by an organisation, including:

- survey of customers with experiences of family violence
- focus group of victim survivors
- survivor advocate facilitating a focus group
- survivor advocates represented on an advisory or working group
- survivor advocate speaker at better practice workshop
- survivor advocate consultant to design and assist with evaluation
- survivor advocate on a governance group or board

### **Whole of organisational approach**

The consultations revealed the need for some form of internal stewardship for engagement with survivor advocates across an organisation, to provide coordination and oversight to engagement with survivor advocates in the design, delivery, and evaluation of an organisation's family violence related activities.

What form this takes will need to align with the guidance provided in an organisation's other related frameworks, ensuring the specific skills and risk considerations for engagement with survivor advocates is reflected in the policy, process, and staff capability to support this.

Some key tools and approaches to support this could include:

- A skills register, showing which staff across an organisation have experience in engaging with survivor advocates
- An engagement register, collating the following information:
  - Date
  - Event/Opportunity details (time and date, location, opportunity type, level of influence)
  - Key contact
  - Level of engagement
  - Accessibility considerations
  - Remuneration
  - Survivor Advocate/community program
  - Pre-support or briefing
  - Safety and risk mitigation agreed on
  - Debrief / feedback
  - Additional comments

See Appendix A for Organisational Readiness Checklist

### **Remuneration rates**

Valuing the contributions of survivor advocates and being transparent when discussing participation and remuneration are key elements of the Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework Best Practice Principles.

See Appendix B for a draft remuneration policy, that steps out a possible approach. Organisations will need to make their own determination as to the suitability of the information provided to their organisational context and adapt accordingly.

Before you set your payment rates, it might be useful to look at the consumer participation rates set by other organisations. Industry standard examples are available in the Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework.

### **Reviewing, learning, and improving approaches to engagement**

*The Essential Services Commission Consumer Engagement Framework and the Essential Services Commission Sensitive and appropriate engagement with consumers experiencing vulnerability: Guidance and principles for action* set out an approach to monitoring and evaluation engagement.

Where possible it is important to proactively provide survivor advocates with opportunities to provide feedback about their engagement experience, and the Family Violence Experts by Experience best practice principles provide the basis for survivor advocates to provide feedback against.

## Guidance for engagement planning with survivor advocates

Introduce yourself, your role, and your organisation – including the role you and your organisation play in family violence related work.

### Discuss the engagement opportunity

- Outline the purpose of engagement and focus areas
- Discuss the intended role of the advocate – facilitator, participant, speaker, will there be other survivor advocates
- Indicate anticipated number of hours (including preparation and planning)
- Provide rates and form of remuneration – explain what you can offer and explore with the advocate which form of payment will suit them best (invoicing with advocate's ABN at the end of engagement, providing payment in E-Voucher form if this better suits their circumstances)
- If the survivor advocate is required to travel for the engagement, or requires childcare to support engagement, will this be covered by your organisation and at what rate?
- Describe the intended audience – internal stakeholder, external stakeholders, role in family violence work, family violence literacy/awareness
- Discuss the topics that will be covered and the kind of input/information you are looking for the survivor advocate to contribute
- Discuss how their input will influence outcomes, and what the next steps might look like for the work
- If the outcomes of the engagement will be shared, discuss who will it be shared with and how the survivor will be acknowledged
- If there will be video or photographic recording of the session, who will see the record/how publicly will this be shared, and seek permission from the survivor advocate

### Discuss the survivor advocates engagement needs and expectations

- What kind of advocacy experience and professional development has the survivor advocate had prior to this engagement?
- Are they providing survivor advocacy as an independent advocate, or are they part of a coordinated program?
- Are they linked in with their own professional supports?
- Do they have specific access or support requirements?
- How would they like their privacy and confidentiality managed (use of first or full name, use of pseudonym, visibility of email address in email chains)?
- How would they like to be introduced (e.g., as a survivor advocate, as a speaker with lived experience of family violence)? Would they like an opportunity at the beginning to introduce themselves and their role as an advocate?
- Are there any pending legal matters or risk factors the survivor advocate needs to consider ahead of the engagement? If so, is this engagement safe for them and/or what supports/protections can be put in place to support engagement?

- If something occurs in the engagement activity that makes the survivor uncomfortable or triggered, or if the engagement activity does not run as expected, how will the survivor advocate and the facilitator communicate about this?
- What opportunities will there be for the survivor advocate to provide feedback about their engagement experience, and what processes are in place to support this?
- Depending on the nature and scope of the engagement explore the option of meeting beforehand to collaborate on planning and meet other contributors.

### **Provide a run sheet or terms of reference ahead of the session**

*Aim to provide 7 days beforehand*

- Purpose of engagement and what will happen with the outcomes
- Participants – who they are, where they are from, their role in FV work, their FV literacy
- Agenda
- Role of survivor advocate – as a facilitator, contributor, keynote speaker
- Agreed hours and rates for remuneration, including how the payment will be processed
- How the advocate's access and support needs will be met (e.g. will there be all abilities access, will there be an opportunity for debriefing after the session).
- Agreed process for complaints and feedback
- When the facilitator will be in touch after the event

### **Session planning and facilitation considerations**

- How might power and hierarchy play out in the way you order the event, and the physical set up of the space
- Where possible, minimise jargon and unnecessary displays of hierarchy
- Be mindful of not providing survivor advocates sticker name tags if the other participants are not wearing
- In group discussions, be intentional in asking survivor advocates to contribute to the discussion
- Prioritise checking in with the survivor during and immediately after the engagement. If there are more than one of you facilitating/coordinating the event, consider having this as a dedicated focus for one of you.
- Prompts for checking in with the survivor advocate – be intentional in thanking them for their contributions and the value they brought to the engagement, check in how they felt it went, ask if they have feedback about the session – could anything have been done differently or better?

A [template for engagement planning](#) can be found on the Safe and Equal website, as well as other relevant [survivor advocate engagement templates and resources](#).

## Appendix A: Organisational Readiness Checklist

The following checklist is adapted from the [Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework](#), developed by the University of Melbourne and the WEAVERS [Lamb et al, 2020].

The checklist provides guidance in considering engaging people with lived experience of family violence (survivor advocates) to contribute to the design, delivery and evaluation of family violence related work. The checklist is designed to be appropriate for a broad range of activities and contexts relevant to the work of an organisation.

	Yes	No	Working towards
<b>Governance and Leadership</b>			
Does this work align with broader stakeholder engagement policy and processes within your organisation?			
Does your organisation have a clear commitment to engaging survivor advocates in the strategic planning of your organisation's family violence related work?			
Does your organisation have clarity on the value and role of lived experience within the remit of the organisation's core business, and is this in line with the principles of the Experts by Experience Framework?			
Does your organisation have a commitment to making changes to policy, processes and practices based on input from survivor advocates?			
Does your organisation have clarity on internal stewardship and coordination of engagement with survivor advocates?			
Has your organisation explored a range of models to ensure you can maximise the degree of influence and engagement of survivor advocates in family violence related work?			
<b>Resources and training</b>			
Is there a role within your organisation responsible for overseeing policy and process linked to engagement with survivor advocates?			
Is your organisation able and willing to value the contribution of experts by experience and provide them with remuneration and/ or cover out of pocket expenses?			
Will paid training or induction be provided to experts by experience to develop the necessary skills to carry out the work?			
<b>Workplace Safety &amp; Inclusion</b>			
Do organisational strategies to ensure a healthy and safe workplace extend to and protect survivor advocates?			
Does the organisation demonstrate diversity and inclusive practice, including ensuring the engagement of experts by experience is resourced for and accessible to			

people who need interpreters, translators and/or who have a disability?			
Do the representatives of your organisation who will have contact with survivor advocates have the skills and knowledge to be trauma informed in their engagement?			
<b>Recruitment</b>			
Is your organisation equipped to support survivor advocates to prepare for engagement, including what type of induction process might be provided to survivor advocates to ensure they are clear about their rates of pay, conditions, tenure and legal liabilities? Read "Guidance for engagement planning with survivor advocates"			
Has the organisation thought about how survivor advocates will be recruited, to ensure a range of diverse perspectives will be included (including ensuring the process is resourced for and accessible to people who need interpreters, translators and/or those who have a disability)?			
<b>Procedures</b>			
Has the organisation put in place appropriate support for the safety and wellbeing of survivor advocates?			
Has your organisation put in place relevant protections around confidentiality, privacy and safety and how you will work with survivor advocates to regularly review arrangements put in place?			
Has the organisation put in place appropriate training, supervision, support and professional development for workers engaging with survivor advocates?			
Has advice been sought to determine whether survivor advocates are covered by your organisation's insurance policies and legal service?			
<b>Accountability</b>			
Has your organisation established formal feedback mechanisms so that survivor advocates are clear about how their engagement with the organisation has influenced change?			
Are there clear formal processes for survivor advocates to provide their perspective on how the engagement is working as well as express complaints or concerns?			
Has your organisation established a process for regularly evaluating the engagement with survivor advocates?			
<b>Other Considerations</b>			
Does your organisation have relationships established with relevant community organisations and independent survivor advocates in order to access a diverse range of survivor advocates for engagement? Where relevant, are these relationships formalised in any way, through partnership agreement or memorandums of understanding?			

## Appendix B: Survivor Advocate Remuneration Policy

*This policy template has been developed as a guide only. Organisations will need to make their own determination as to the suitability of the information provided to their organisational context and adapt accordingly.*

Date approved		Date of effect	
Date last amended		Date of next review	
Owner		Portfolio	

### Purpose

This policy sets out the organisation's commitment to supporting the important and expert contributions by people who have lived experience of family violence. In recognition of the value of the lived expertise of survivor advocates, as well as the time, input and costs incurred because of participation, the organisation is committed to providing financial compensation to survivor advocates, in line with the best practice principles.

### Scope

This policy applies to individuals with lived experience of family violence who are engaged as survivor advocates by the organisation for specialised subject matter expertise.

### Paid participation rates

The remuneration rates have been set based on industry standard consumer participation rates. These will be reviewed annually.

Level of engagement	Remuneration	Mechanism of engagement	Rate
Co-production	Sitting fee	Positions on boards and/or other governance structures including subcommittees	XX
Co-production	Salary	Paid Peer Support Workers	XX
Co-production	Hourly rate	Contribute to organisational strategic planning	XX
Collaborate	Hourly rate	Represent the experts by experience perspective on steering committees, advisory committees, working groups, program and project involvement, Invited speaker at an event	XX
Involving	Hourly rate	Reviewing or contributing to research or project work, promoting a service publicly, general advocacy work	XX
Consulting	Hourly rate	Participation in consultation activities such as focus groups, consultative workshops and interviews (in person or via phone)	XX
Informing	None	Attend an event as an audience member Formal client feedback (eg. complete survey) Informal client feedback	XX

Source: Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework [Lamb et al, 2020].

### **Reimbursement for additional costs incurred**

In the circumstance where a survivor advocate incurs additional costs related to their participation (e.g parking, transport, carer or childcare fees), reimbursement can be negotiated between the survivor advocate and the commission. Reimbursement seeks to ensure that costs incurred do not act as a barrier to participation or financially disadvantage the survivor advocate.

### **Payment method**

Payment will be provided by direct debit payment, or in the circumstance of one-off engagements, a prepaid debit card will be offered.

The organisation will encourage all external organisations to remunerate advocates in line with the paid participation rates above.

### **Payment process**

The process for managing paid participation is as follows:

1. The organisation nominated contact an individual to be part of a paid participation engagement, and will provide:
  - a) detail on the scope of the engagement, level of influence and outcome sought, time and effort required. This may also include further information such as a plain language statement or terms of reference.
  - b) a payment invoice form for logging hours and out of pocket costs, with bank details
  - c) an 'Australian Tax Office Statement by Supplier' form (this form does not apply if the individual has their own ABN).
2. Following the conclusion of the engagement all forms need to be completed by the survivor advocate with assistance from the organisation nominated contact as required.
3. The organisation nominated contact will submit these completed forms to Finance via email [insert]
4. The organisation nominated contact will advise the individual of when they should expect to receive.
5. In some circumstances, including for discreet engagements or amounts under \$100 a pre-paid debit card will be provided. In this case, the participant will be informed before they agree to participate, and the commission nominated contact will arrange and provide the pre-paid debit card and provide all receipts to Finance.

### **Interactions with Centrelink payments**

Receiving a payment may have implications on Centrelink payments. Depending on how much a survivor advocate earns from participating may affect their own Centrelink payment. For more information, see the [Services Australia](#) webpage on income reporting.

### **Disputes**

Any disputes over payment are to be discussed with the organisation nominated contact in the first instance, and then if not resolved presented to the commission CEO for determination.

**Responsibilities**

Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure the policy is updated as per the regular policy review cycle or if there are changes remuneration rate to the maintain parity with community standards.</li></ul>
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Always abide by this policy and associated procedures.</li></ul>

**Related policies and procedure**

- XX
- XX

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