

**Annual report on  
the implementation  
of the Family Violence  
Multi-Agency Risk  
Assessment and  
Management  
Framework  
2023–24**

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# Acknowledgements

## Aboriginal acknowledgement

The Victorian Government acknowledges Victorian Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We acknowledge and respect that Aboriginal communities are steeped in traditions and customs built on a disciplined social and cultural order that has sustained 60,000 years of existence.

We acknowledge the significant disruptions to social and cultural order, and the ongoing hurt caused by colonisation. We acknowledge the ongoing leadership role of Aboriginal communities in addressing and preventing family violence. We will continue to work in collaboration with First Peoples to eliminate family violence from all communities.

## Recognition of victim survivors

The Victorian Government acknowledges victim survivors. We honour their resistance and resilience. We keep at the forefront in our minds all those who have experienced family violence or other forms of abuse, and for whom we undertake this work.

## Family violence support

If you have experienced violence or sexual assault and require immediate assistance, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for police. For ongoing assistance, contact 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) to talk to a counsellor from the National Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence hotline. For confidential crisis support, information, and accommodation, contact the Safe Steps 24/7 family violence response line on 1800 015 188. If you are concerned for your safety or that of someone else, please contact the police in your state or territory, or call Triple Zero (000) for emergency assistance.

## Language used in this report

We use the term **victim survivor** to refer to adults, children and young people who have experienced family violence. We acknowledge that some people and cultures also prefer to use the term **people who experience violence**.

The word **family** has many meanings. This report uses the definition from the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (the Act). This acknowledges the variety of relationships and structures that can make up a family unit. It encompasses the different ways family violence can be experienced. This includes through family-like or carer relationships (in non-institutional paid carer environments).

The term **family violence** reflects the language in the Act. It includes the wider understanding of the term across all communities. For example, *Dhelk Dja: safe our way – strong culture, strong peoples, strong families*<sup>1</sup> provides a definition of family violence. This definition includes physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological and economic abuses. These abuses occur within families, intimate relationships, extended families, kinship networks and communities. Family violence extends to one-on-one fighting and abuse of Indigenous community professionals. It includes self-harm, injury and suicide.

We use the term **Aboriginal** to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The term **perpetrator** describes **adults** who choose to use family violence. We acknowledge that some Aboriginal people and communities prefer the term **person who uses violence**. The perpetrator is also the **predominant aggressor** in situations of misidentification.

**Young people who use family violence** need a different response to adults who use family violence. This is due to their age, developmental stage, and the possibility they are also victim survivors of family violence. We do not use the term perpetrator for these young people. Some programs use the term **adolescents** who use family violence in the home.

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<sup>1</sup> *Dhelk Dja: safe our way* is an Aboriginal-led agreement to address family violence in Victorian Aboriginal communities.

# Message from the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence



I am pleased to present the sixth annual report on the implementation of the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework 2023–24 (MARAM).

This report sets out our progress towards MARAM alignment. It shows the work of departments, agencies, peak bodies and organisations to align their policies and procedures with the MARAM Framework.

MARAM is a critical part of Victoria’s family violence reforms. It enables workforces across sectors to identify and respond to family violence.

MARAM risk assessment and management alone cannot eliminate family violence. However, it can help practitioners to support victim survivors to reduce their risk of harm, serious injury and death.

Highlights for 2023–24 include the following:

- We completed the MARAM 5-year Legislative and Evidence reviews in August 2023 and December 2023 respectively. This will ensure MARAM can continue to meet its objectives.
- We launched training for professionals who work with adults using family violence in November 2023. No to Violence and Safe and Equal deliver this training.
- Professionals across the service system completed more than 89,000 MARAM and MARAM-aligned training sessions.
- Practitioners completed 134,000 risk assessments and safety plans using MARAM online tools.
- The Central Information Point delivered more than 8,000 reports (including 2,097 of the new Brief Reports).
- The information sharing teams managed more than 88,000 information sharing requests.

Our workforces continue to grow in confidence in undertaking risk assessments, risk management and information sharing under MARAM. This is having positive impacts for victim survivor safety.

I thank all ministers who have framework organisations in their portfolios. You have created sustained efforts to advance this essential reform.

This report comprises my own portfolio report and those provided to me by:

- the Hon. Anthony Carbines MP, Minister for Police, Minister for Community Safety, Minister for Victims
- the Hon. Ben Carroll MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for Education
- the Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Youth Justice
- Harriet Shing MLC, Minister for Housing and Building

- Ingrid Stitt MLC, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Multicultural Affairs
- the Hon. Lizzie Blandthorn MLC, Minister for Children, Minister for Disability
- the Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP, Minister for Health, Minister for Ambulance Services
- the Hon. Nick Staikos MP, Minister for Consumer Affairs
- the Hon. Sonya Kilkeny MP, Attorney General.

Appendix 5 sets out a complete list of portfolios.

I also acknowledge the people who work across government, the family violence sector and community services. Your continued dedication is improving our response to family violence.

I particularly thank those who work in specialist family violence services, sexual assault services, and The Orange Door network. You are crucial partners in our efforts to respond to family violence. Your work is central to managing risk and creating safer communities.

Thank you to the victim survivors who have shaped the MARAM reforms. We are grateful for your stories and insights. You have helped us embed lived experience within the MARAM Framework.

Thank you to everyone who plays a role in our family violence prevention workforce. Your work keeps Victorians safe.



**Natalie Hutchins MP**

Minister for Prevention of Family Violence

Minister for Women

Minister for Government Services

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples

# Introduction

The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework was established in legislation in 2018.

It responds to the first 2 recommendations of Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016).

MARAM ensures services effectively identify, assess and manage family violence risk. It covers all aspects of service delivery. This includes:

- early risk identification
- screening
- assessment and management
- safety planning
- collaborative practice
- recovery.

MARAM aims to:

- create a shared understanding of family violence and perpetrator behaviour
- increase the safety of people experiencing family violence
- keep perpetrators in view and accountable for their actions
- provide guidance to organisations on aligning to MARAM to ensure consistent service delivery
- ensure the family violence response accounts for diverse experiences. This includes:
  - Aboriginal communities
  - diverse communities and identities
  - children
  - young people
  - older people
  - different family and relationship types.

MARAM is being implemented alongside two other reforms. These are the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS).

Family Safety Victoria leads the implementation of MARAM and the FVISS. The Department of Education leads the implementation of the CISS.

Organisations are prescribed under the regulations as **MARAM Framework organisations** and/or **Information Sharing Entities** (ISEs).

Under the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, framework organisations must ensure their policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools align to MARAM.

Section 193(2) of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* requires that we table an annual report in parliament. This report sets out the progress of MARAM implementation.

This document is the sixth report since the legislation came into effect. It covers implementation activities from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Family Safety Victoria (FSV) oversees implementation across the Victorian Government. It does this through governance, reporting and annual surveys. FSV also supports the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing across its various workforce portfolios.

Each department tailors its policies, resources and training to the needs of its workforce. This includes communication about the reforms and responses to barriers the workforces face.

There are 4 strategic priorities for implementing MARAM across government:

- leadership
- collaboration
- capability
- continuous improvement.

This report is structured in 4 sections that represent each of these priorities.

Appendices 1–4 provide more context for the reforms, legislation and information sharing governance structure.

Appendices 5–6 set out the work of each portfolio.

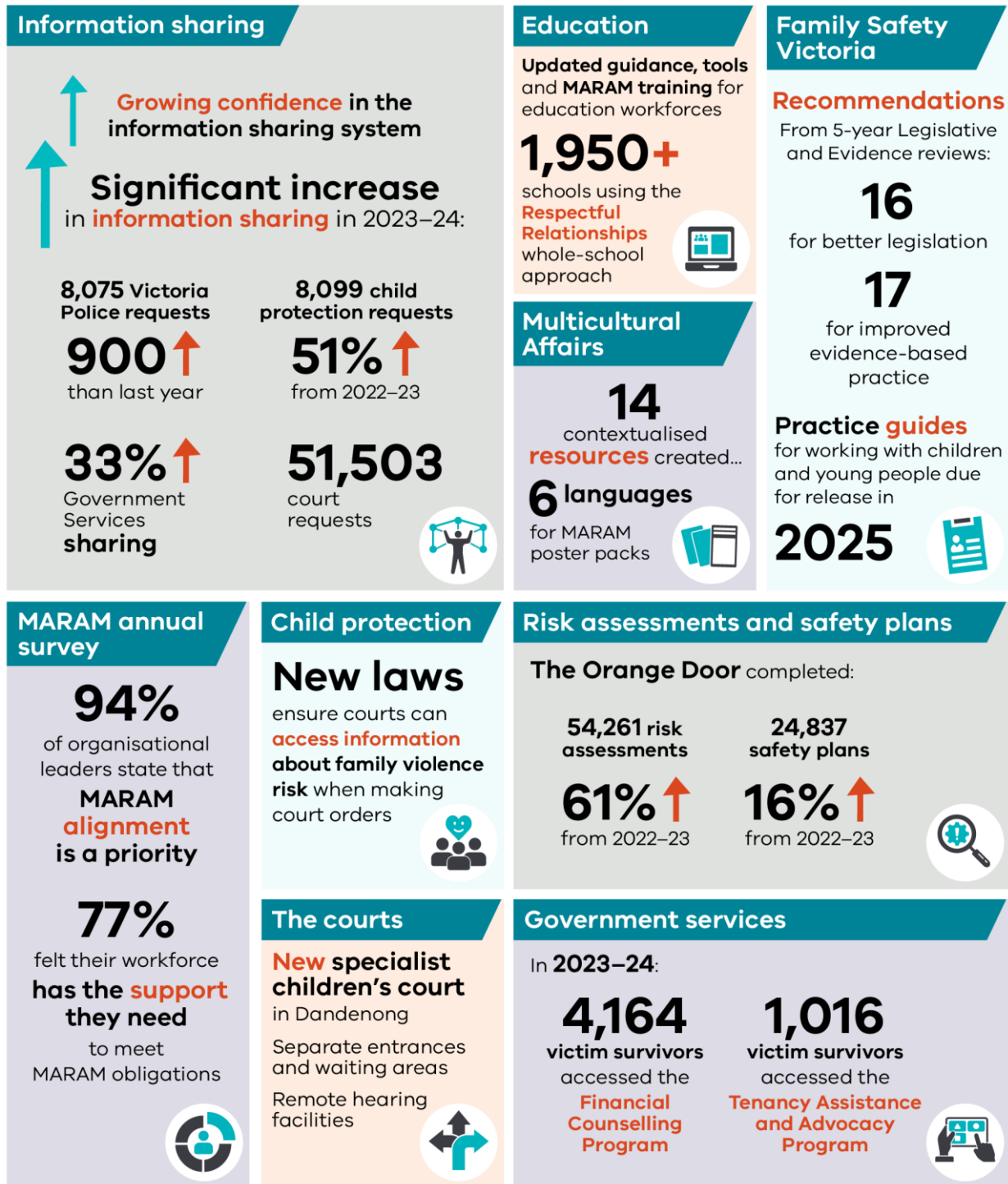
Appendix 7 gives a summary of the results of the 2024 MARAM Annual Survey. This sets out the current state of MARAM alignment across the Victorian Government.

This report highlights FSV’s work in 2023–24 to implement the MARAM reforms.

FSV works within the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing as reform lead. It also works across all portfolios.

# Whole-of-government snapshot

Figure 1: 2023–24 MARAM highlights



# 1. Leadership

## **Strategic priority 1: Demonstrate clear leadership that cultivates trust across service systems and organisations**

Any reform that seeks to change the way we work needs clear and consistent leadership.

In 2023–24, departments and sector peaks continued to build on this leadership.

This work deepened Victoria’s shared understanding of family violence. It helped framework organisations to improve their risk assessment practices.

We did this through strong governance, oversight and consistent messaging.

## **Highlights from 2023–24**

- **FSV** worked with leaders, human resources and policy and project staff across the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. This work aimed to improve understanding of MARAM responsibilities. FSV supported the department to model practice change across sectors. It developed e-Learns for organisational leaders and policy staff. This provided training on how to apply and support MARAM in day-to-day work.
- **Youth justice** recruited 2 family violence practice leads. These roles support MARAM implementation and build staff capability to respond to family violence. The positions model a shared understanding of family violence and MARAM responsibilities for staff across the youth justice sector.
- **Victoria Police** worked with the **Family Violence Reform Board** on system-level activities, including MARAM. Discussions included developing and implementing a new Victoria Police strategy for family violence, sexual offences and child abuse.

### **Project spotlight: Consumer Affairs Victoria**

A dedicated family violence sector lead in Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) works with:

- the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria
- the Department of Government Services
- CAV-funded agencies delivering financial counselling and tenancy advocacy services.

This work supports these organisations and programs to align to MARAM.

In 2023–24, the sector lead developed common language and communication policies.

This will ensure workforces receive consistent advice about MARAM and family violence practice.

The sector lead also supported funded agencies to update their policies and tools in relation to family violence responses.

### Case study: Ballarat Community Health

Ballarat Community Health (BCH) plays an important role in supporting victim survivors of family violence. This includes counselling and working with families and young people.

BCH has been prescribed as a MARAM framework organisation since 2021.

Committed leadership from BCH's executive team supported the organisation to align to MARAM.

This includes:

- identifying MARAM alignment as a priority
- completing an implementation plan encompassing training, policies and tools
- tailoring training and communication so that each staff member knows how MARAM applies to their day-to-day work.

## Leadership examples from the annual survey

Framework organisations show strong commitment to implementing MARAM.

In 2023–24, the annual survey found that:

- 94% of organisational leaders rated alignment to MARAM as a medium to high priority
- more than three-quarters (77%) felt their workforce is equipped with the tools, resources, and training needed to meet their obligations.

But there is room for improvement. Only 57% of leaders said they had a detailed understanding of their responsibilities under MARAM.

This shows that we need to do more to support organisational leaders to meet legislative requirements and reform objectives.

As in previous years, survey respondents also pointed to barriers to implementing MARAM in their organisations. These include:

- not enough staff time
- staff workload
- lack of specific guidance for the statewide service sector to address practice challenges.

## Plans for 2024–25

Across the government and community sectors, we will work to build leadership for MARAM alignment.

For example, **Ambulance Victoria** plans to employ a dedicated family violence clinical governance officer. This role will integrate MARAM into Ambulance Victoria's practices and address identified gaps in workforce knowledge.

Ambulance Victoria will also develop a dashboard to monitor family violence presentations.

In addition, the Department of Justice and Community Safety's **Victim Services, Support, and Reform** portfolio plans to:

- further develop the family violence practice manual for its Victim Services area. This will ensure consistent support for victim survivors
- implement training initiatives for the Victims of Crime Helpline to improve capability in identifying the predominant aggressor in family violence cases.

## 2. Collaboration

### Strategic priority 2: Facilitate consistent and collaborative practice

Framework organisations work together to keep victim survivors safe and perpetrators in view. This includes through sharing information.

In 2023–24, departments and sector peaks supported consistent and collaborative family violence responses.

As a result, framework organisations made real progress in working together effectively.

This is shown by:

- a significant increase in information sharing requests in 2023–24. This reflects growing workforce confidence in prioritising victim survivor safety over confidentiality
- more than 133,698 risk assessments conducted across the system using MARAM tools.

### Highlights from 2023–24

- The **Central Information Point** introduced a brief report. This report contains a subset of critical risk information for immediate decision making. It is designed for use within 24 hours.
- **The Orange Door** worked closely with **Victoria Police** to determine how to share information about predominant aggressor identification and risk assessment.
- **CAV's** Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Program worked with property managers to help victim survivors access rental properties and maintain tenancies. Child and Family Services Inc. in Ballarat delivers this program.

#### Project spotlight: Updates to the TRAM platform

Tools for Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) is an online platform developed by FSV.

It contains risk assessment templates and safety plans. These provide a consistent approach for professionals undertaking family violence risk assessment and management.

The main users of TRAM include The Orange Door network and some specialist family violence services.

In 2023–24, the platform was rebuilt on a new server. This update improved the platform's look and useability. It also reduced security-related risks.

The new platform allows for better functionality in the future.

The updates to TRAM support framework organisations to identify, assess and manage family violence risk.

**Case study: The Orange Door<sup>2</sup>**

Brothers Travis (15 years) and Scott (17 years) contacted The Orange Door for help.

They told the practitioner they had not slept or eaten properly for days and had been sleeping at a bus stop for the past week.

Their parent had substance dependencies and forced them out of the house.

Travis and Scott said they were afraid of being separated due to their ages. Travis falls under child protection, while Scott does not.

The Orange Door's work to support Travis and Scott is an example of collaborative practice in action.

First, the practitioner engaged a child and young person practice leader. The practice leader arranged emergency accommodation and e-vouchers to meet the brothers' immediate needs.

The practitioner then connected Travis and Scott with a youth outreach service that could assess their longer-term accommodation and support needs.

The boys engaged with the outreach services and were in safe accommodation the following morning.

The practitioner also consulted with the community-based child protection service at The Orange Door to assess Travis' risks from his parent.

The information sharing schemes made this quicker and more efficient.

**The MARAM Child and Young Person practice guides**

We are developing practice guides that focus on children and young people.

These will be released in 2025.

The guides support consistent and collaborative practice.

Figure 2 shows some of the ways portfolios will use the new guides.

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<sup>2</sup> Names have been changed.

Figure 2: Preparing for the Child and Young Person practice guides



## Collaboration examples from the annual survey

The annual survey found 73% of organisational leaders agree their organisation applies consistent and collaborative practice.

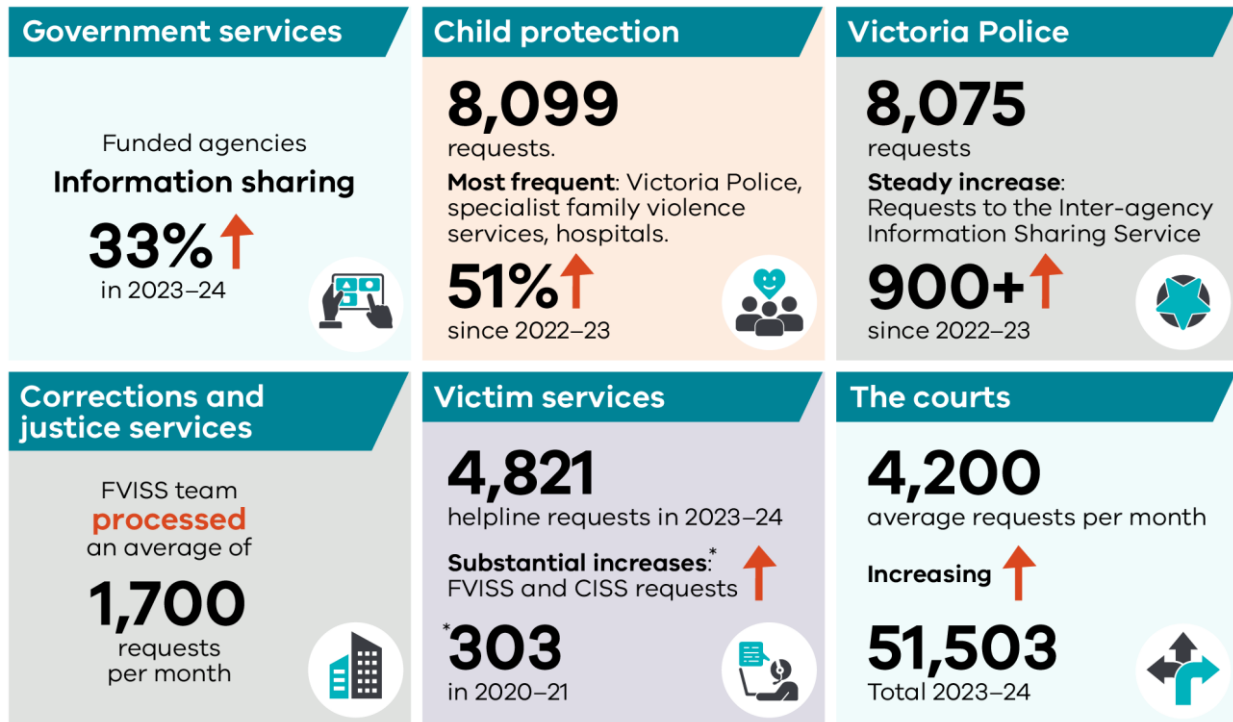
This includes using MARAM tools to identify, assess and manage family violence.

### Information sharing

The survey also showed increased numbers of requests for information under the Information Sharing Schemes in 2023–24. Figure 3 provides some examples.

This demonstrates that our workforces are more confident with using the schemes to support consistent and collaborative practice.

Figure 3: Information sharing by department<sup>3</sup>



The annual survey shows that:

- frontline workers are confident in their understanding of the FVISS (86% of respondents) and CISS (85%)
- frontline workers shared information regularly (more than once a week) using the FVISS (27%) and the CISS (27%)
- workers shared information often (once a week to once a month) using the FVISS (31%) and the CISS (34%)
- organisational leaders believe their organisation shares information safely (84%). They understand how the information sharing schemes work (76%).

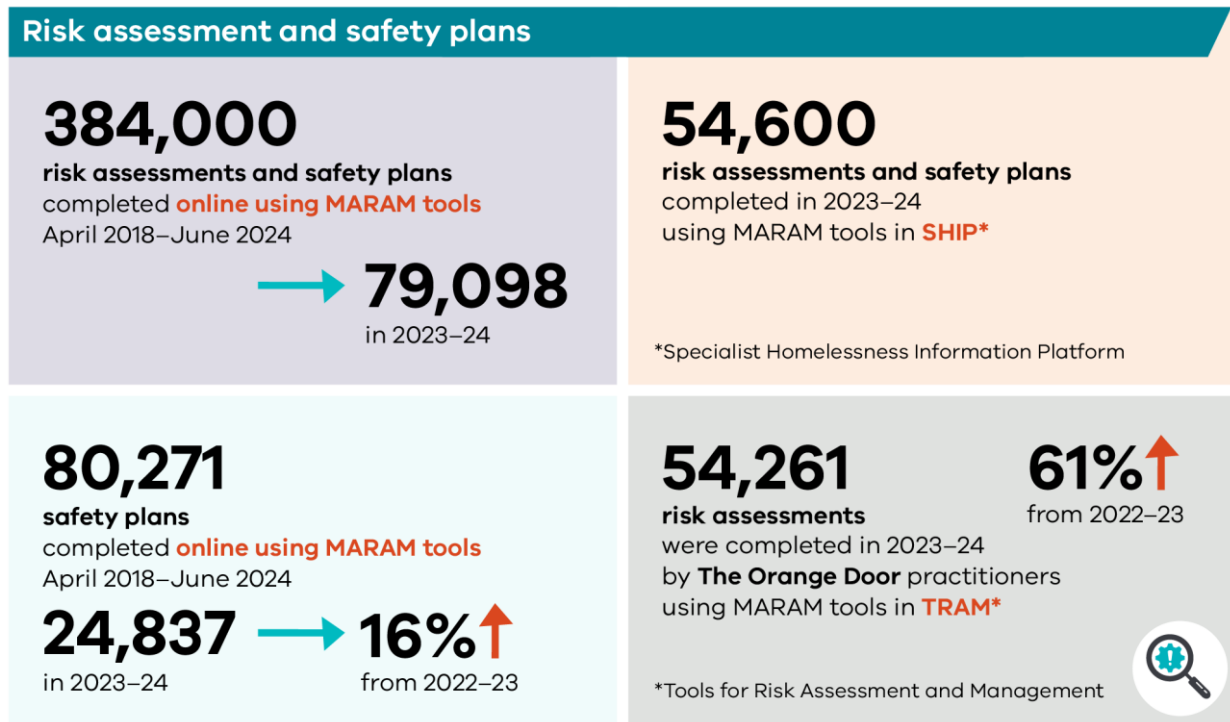
### Risk assessments and safety plans

Similarly, use of MARAM risk assessments continues to grow.

Figure 4 shows an increase in 2023–24 in the number of risk assessments and safety plans undertaken by The Orange Door. (It also includes some specialist family violence services outside The Orange Door.)

<sup>3</sup> Figure 3 does not capture all information sharing. Information sharing entities, including non-government organisations, can share information with one another to keep victim survivors safe and perpetrators in view. There is no legal requirement for information sharing entities to collect data on the number of requests they receive.

Figure 4: Risk assessment and safety plans



**Case study: Child protection**

Child protection received a report of siblings aged 11 and 3 who were experiencing severe family violence and coercive control by their father. Their mother’s parenting capacity was also affected by substance use issues.

At the time of the report, the mother acknowledged the impact of family violence on her and the children.

The children were afraid of their father and did not want to spend time with him.

While they were in their mother’s care, she sought help and engaged with child protection and other services.

Child protection assessed the risk to the children and their mother as ‘serious risk’.

The mother accessed alcohol and other drugs services, specialist family violence services and therapeutic services for the children.

The father agreed to engage with a men’s behaviour change program. He was also encouraged to seek supervised contact with the children to enable him to spend time with them safely.

The mother said she was impressed that the child protection practitioners were non-judgemental. She stated they made her feel safe to disclose the family violence she and the children experienced.

## Plans for 2024–25

The **Health** portfolio will pilot a ‘train the trainer’ program to help public hospitals and integrated health services to use the information sharing schemes.

It will also help health services and hospitals across Victoria to access Adults Using Family Violence resources.

The **courts** will also implement an Adults Using Family Violence tool. They will tailor this for their workforce and update the client management database.

The **Housing** portfolio will publish updated *Homelessness services guidelines and conditions of funding*. These guidelines incorporate vital information to help homelessness services align to MARAM.

The **Prevention of Family Violence** portfolio will release Child and Young Person practice guides in 2025. These resources will support departments and organisations to deliver consistent practice. They also address the recommendations of the MARAM 5-year Evidence review.

## 3. Capability

### Strategic priority 3: Build workforce and staff capability

MARAM's long-term success depends on building workforce capability.

This means training practitioners in their MARAM and information sharing responsibilities.

In 2023–24, we prioritised training and other capability-building activities across government.

Figure 6 provides a summary of completed training.

### Highlights from 2023–24

- **FSV** developed a new, non-accredited Adults Using Family Violence training program and practice guides. FSV piloted these with practitioners in the health, justice, police, child protection and mental health workforces. Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) helped to ensure the program's cultural safety. Delivery of the training program commenced in November 2023.
- The **Education** portfolio delivered Respectful Relationships professional learning to 519 early childhood educators. In total, 5,043 educators have attended the professional learning since it began in 2018. More than 1,950 government, Catholic and independent schools in Victoria use the Respectful Relationships whole-school approach.
- In **Housing**, Homes Victoria worked with the Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) to deliver information sessions and training. These sessions aimed to build the workforce's understanding of MARAM. CHP convened a group of MARAM leaders across the homelessness sector. The group met 6 times to provide feedback about the MARAM tools.
- The **Housing** portfolio also developed tailored Adults Using Family Violence identification and intermediate training for Forensic Disability Services Staff. This workforce supports people with cognitive disability who are involved in the criminal justice system. Public housing staff also received targeted MARAM Adults Using Family Violence identification training.
- The **Health** portfolio promoted eLearn's for elder abuse and financial abuse for organisations in the health sector.
- **The Youth justice** sector provided MARAM intermediate victim survivor training for all custody staff (53) and 170 community-based staff. Of these, 87% rated the quality of the training as very high or high. Participants (94%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were more confident in their ability to engage effectively with those accessing services.

#### Project spotlight: Victoria Police training

Immersive simulation training gives recruits the confidence to put their theoretical knowledge of family violence response into practice.

The training uses actors in 3 scenarios. This includes a scenario where recruits respond to and manage risk factors relevant to the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor.

This supports recruits to identify family violence risk factors. It gives them the chance to assess and manage risk. It also allows them to practise trauma-aware approaches to support victim survivors.

In 2023–24, 994 recruits completed the immersive, simulated learning program.

**Case study: MARAM training in the health sector**

A specialist family violence practitioner was working with a client who is an adult using family violence.

The client appeared to present a very serious risk. They had several intervention orders against them and no access to their children.

The practitioner knew this information. However, they had developed a rapport with the client. Over time, they started to believe the client's version of events that they had not been violent.

After attending the full-day MARAM training on resisting collusion and motivating change, the practitioner realised they had been colluding with this client.

The term 'collusion' refers to ways that an individual, agency or system might reinforce, excuse, minimise or deny a perpetrator's violence or the extent of that violence.

Using tools from the training, the practitioner changed the way they engaged with the client.

They used a balanced approach to support the client's self-reflection about the impacts of their behaviour.

The practitioner now notices the invitations for collusion. They feel more confident in how to respond.

They have started collaborating and sharing information with other services. This helps to keep the client using violence in view and accountable. It also supports the victim survivor's safety.

**The MARAM Adults Using Family Violence training package**

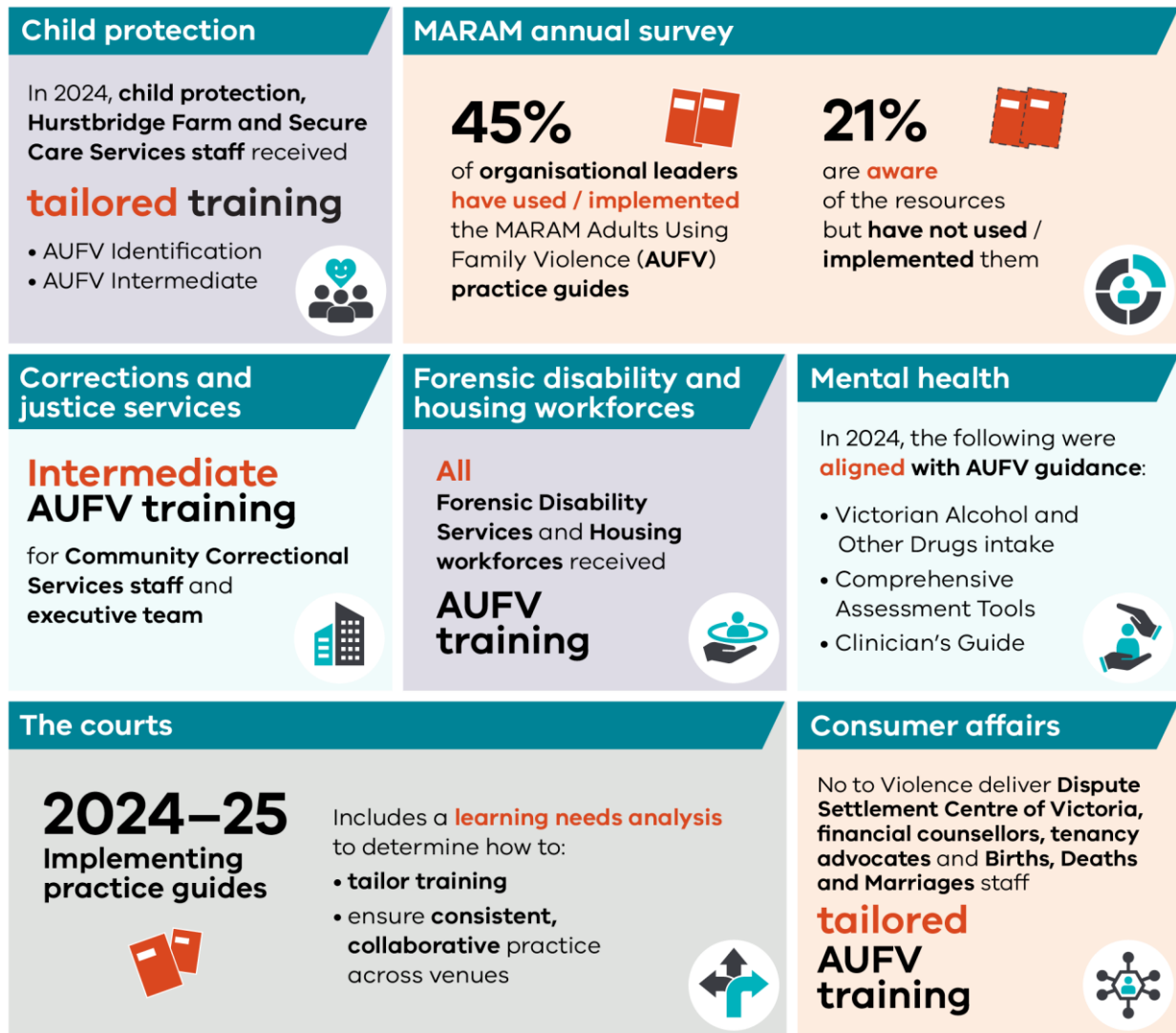
The Adults Using Family Violence training package commenced in November 2023.

It complements the Adults Using Family Violence practice guides released in February 2022.

The above case study demonstrates the importance of training to support practitioners working with adults using family violence.

Figure 5 shows how some portfolios are rolling out the tools.

Figure 5: Using the Adults Using Family Violence practice guides and training package



## Capability examples from the annual survey

The survey showed that 78% of respondents who were professional, and frontline staff had undertaken training on various MARAM topics in 2023–24.

Of these, 76% rated the training highly useful or somewhat useful.

For organisational leaders or executives, 95% indicated that they or staff in their organisation completed training in 2023–24.

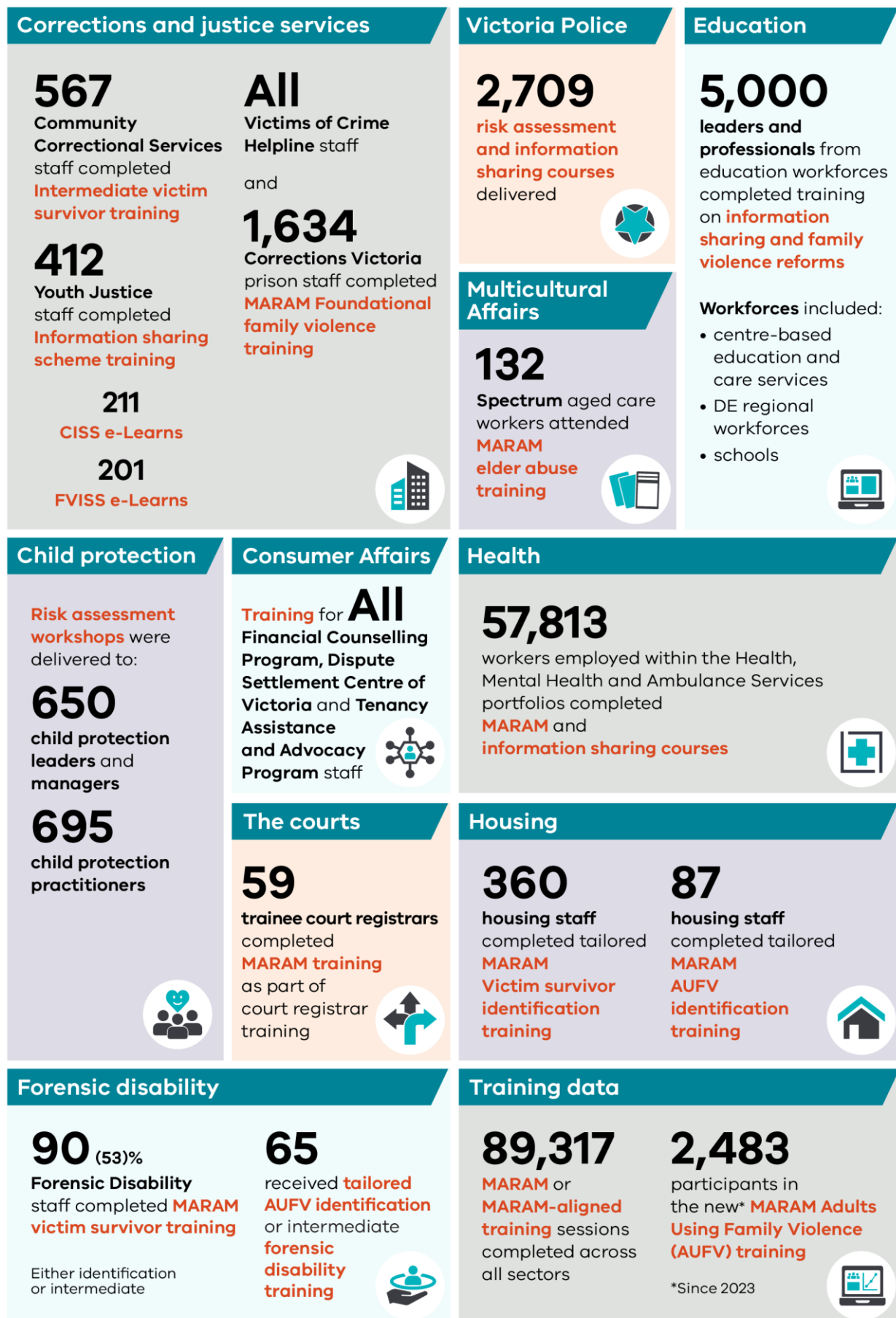
Of these, 83% rated the training highly useful or somewhat useful. Appendix 7 provides more detail.

### Satisfaction with training

In 2023–24, workers’ satisfaction with training was 99%. This exceeded the budget performance measure target of 90%.

The higher satisfaction level shows that participants value and enjoy facilitated training sessions.

Figure 6: MARAM training in 2023–24



### Housing staff feedback about MARAM e-Learn training

'I found it helped to consolidate and explain things I had not quite got before.'

'This put the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme into clear perspective.'

'My understanding of [working with] children and youth is vague as I've mostly worked with adults. It was helpful doing case studies that involved children.'

'I really liked the video about legal responsibility and duty of care. It was very clear and simple to understand.'

## Plans for 2024–25

**Child protection** will make MARAM training mandatory in all staff professional development plans in 2024–25.

In the **Education** portfolio, the department will deliver training on the workforce's MARAM responsibilities. It will also update the e-Learns on information sharing and family violence reform. This includes developing a refresher course.

The **courts** will tailor MARAM Adults Using Family Violence training to ensure it is appropriate for court operations. This will also assist practitioners to undertake brief interventions with respondents in family violence intervention order matters.

The **Prevention of Family Violence** portfolio will:

- roll out the MARAM Child and Young Person practice guides to all The Orange Door sites. Induction training will include these new guides
- update minimum standards for men's behaviour change programs. This includes men's referral services.

## 4. Continuous improvement

### Strategic priority 4: Recognition of good practice and commitment to continuous improvement

A key element of any reform is reinforcing the change that it brings.

MARAM is a complex reform that is continuously improving.

We regularly release new practice guidance.

### Highlights from 2023–24

- The **Housing** portfolio introduced a community of practice for the specialist homelessness sector. This initiative shares and integrates MARAM best practice into homelessness service delivery.
- The MARAM Annual Survey received 1,040 responses this reporting year, including from frontline workers.
- In the **Mental Health** portfolio, communities of practice accelerated learning and information sharing for frontline workers. This supports MARAM use in mental health and alcohol and other drugs services.
- **Victoria Police** introduced the new streamlined intervention order (SIVO) application. SIVO allows police members secure access to, locate, track and record the service of all intervention orders from their handheld technology devices. This application supports Victoria Police to manage and monitor intervention order service across the state.

#### Project spotlight: Survey of school principals

The Department of Education included a family violence module in its annual survey of school principals.

The survey asked principals about their awareness of the information sharing and family violence reforms. It also asked them about their confidence in responding to students experiencing family violence. The survey received 624 responses.

Key findings include:

- increased engagement with The Orange Door – 93% of respondents had used The Orange Door and 97% were aware of it
- 93% of respondents were confident in their school's ability to identify students affected by family violence
- more than half of schools reported having current cases of family violence in their school. Of those, 68% were managing 1–4 active cases at the time.

Principals requested that the Department of Education develop more resources or supports to identify and support students affected by family violence.

### Findings from the MARAM Legislative and Evidence reviews

Continuous improvement is fundamental to MARAM. The *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* requires:

- a one-off 5-year review of the legislation supporting MARAM and information sharing
- recurring 5-year reviews of the evidence base supporting MARAM.

These reviews were completed this year and tabled in Parliament.

## Legislative review

The Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor completed the Legislative review. They found that the reforms had positively affected a shared understanding of family violence. They also found there had been a cultural shift from safeguarding perpetrator privacy towards promoting accountability and victim survivor safety.

The review made recommendations that:

- encourage timely information sharing
- promote transparency in relation to the Central Information Point
- support victim survivor agency
- provide clear and targeted guidance for practitioners
- introduce clearer requirements, timelines and accountability for MARAM alignment.

## Evidence review

The Evidence review found MARAM remains consistent with best practice in family violence risk assessment and management. Allen and Clarke Consulting completed the review.

The review made recommendations regarding:

- how MARAM supports risk assessment with Aboriginal and diverse communities
- the experience of children and young people
- changing presentations of risk, including substance abuse, coercion and technology facilitated abuse
- better use of the MARAM practice guides so assessment tools are not applied in a ‘tick box’ manner.

The Victorian Government plans to implement improvements based on the reviews starting in 2024–25. This work supports continuous improvement.

## Continuous improvement examples from the annual survey

The annual survey found that 92% of organisational leaders or executives had supported actions to align their organisation to MARAM in 2023–24.

Actions included:

- identifying and supporting relevant professionals to attend MARAM training or other service-specific training (76%)
- reading the MARAM Framework and other supporting materials (73%)
- considering the impact of MARAM on their organisation’s day-to-day operations (68%)
- updating and creating new policies, procedures and practice guidance to align with MARAM (68%)
- implementing or updating a family violence referral protocol, agreement or guideline to align with MARAM (62%).

**Case study: Corrections and justice services**

Community Correctional Services is ensuring that the justice system uses the right family violence terminology.

This includes moving away from the term ‘perpetrator’ and using ‘adult using family violence’. This recognises that family violence is a choice. It aligns with the language of the broader family violence sector.

**Plans for 2024–25**

The **Multicultural Affairs** portfolio will, where possible, update data collection to measure multicultural communities’ access to family violence services. This will help us understand barriers to seeking support.

In the **Prevention of Family Violence** portfolio, FSV will update the 5 core MARAM non-accredited training packages. The new training will reflect updated family violence data and research, consultation feedback and findings from the Evidence review. It will include training on:

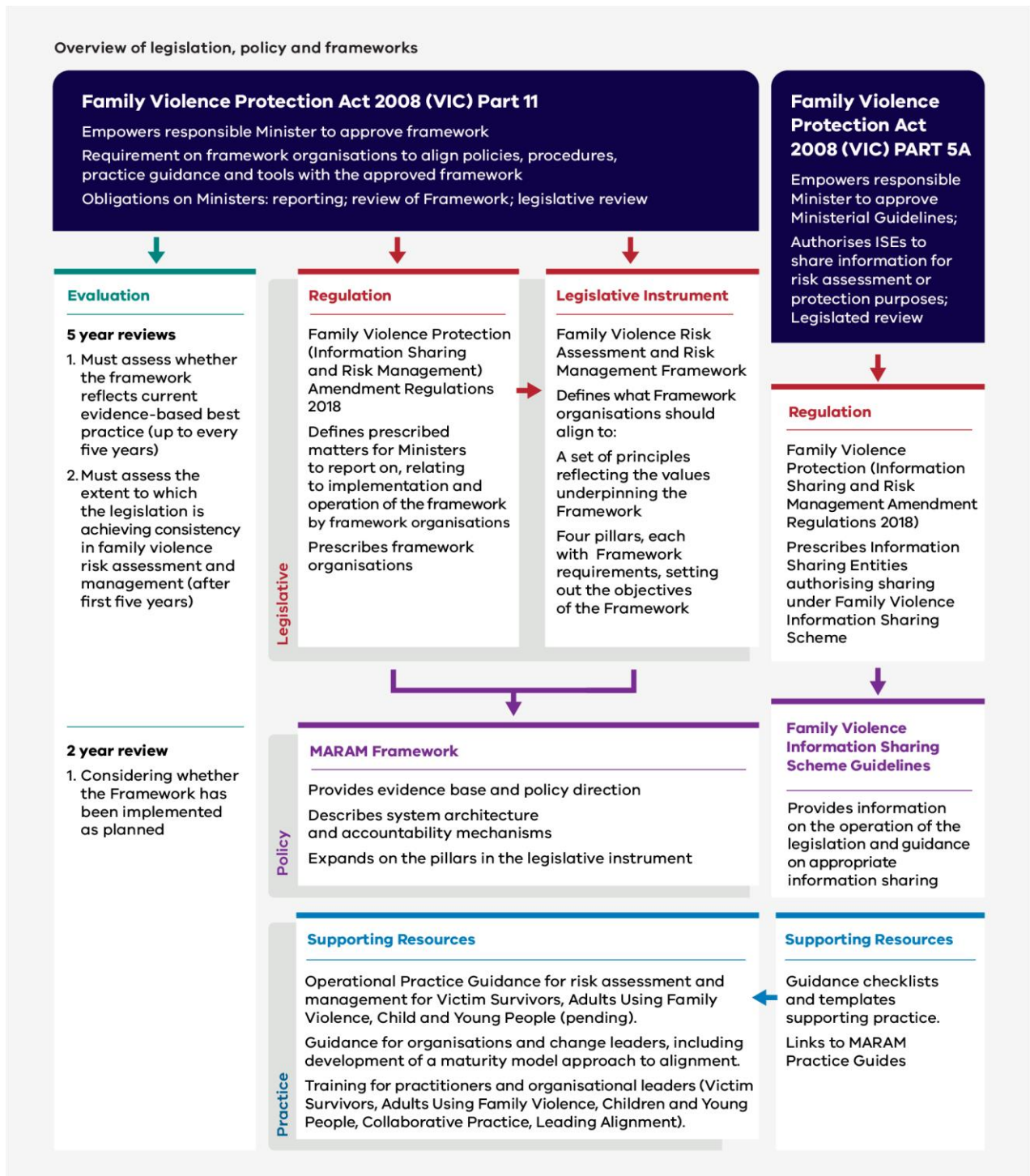
- collaborative practice
- leading alignment
- identification of family violence risk
- intermediate risk assessment
- comprehensive risk assessment.

**Victoria Police** will release a new strategy for police responses to family violence. The new strategy will align with MARAM. It will include sexual offences and child abuse.

The new strategy will replace *Policing harm, uphold the right: strategy for family violence, sexual offences and child abuse 2018–2023*. It will provide a roadmap for 2024–2029. Victoria Police will review the strategy each year to measure its effectiveness.

# Appendix 1: Legislation and regulations

Figure 7: Overview of legislation, policy and frameworks



## Family Violence Protection Act 2008

The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) reporting process, legislated in the Act, has 2 stages:

- Under s. 192 of the Act, portfolio ministers prepare an annual report for the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence on the prescribed matters relating to the implementation and operation of MARAM by 30 September (MARAM portfolio reports).

2. Under s. 193 of the Act, the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence must prepare a consolidated annual report of the prescribed matters to be tabled within 6 sitting dates after 1 January, in the financial year immediately following the financial year to which the report relates (MARAM consolidated report).

Portfolio reports are not tabled but are subject to Freedom of Information requests.

## **Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018**

The prescribed matters are:

- (a) actions taken by a public entity or a public service body to support framework organisations and section 191 agencies, in relation to the implementation and operation of the approved framework
- (b) a summary of the progress of implementation of the approved framework by framework organisations and section 191 agencies
- (c) proposed future actions to be undertaken by public entities or public service bodies, to support ongoing implementation and operation by framework organisations and s. 191 agencies with the approved framework.

# Appendix 2: MARAM Framework on a page

Figure 8: MARAM Framework on a page

## MARAM Framework Pillars, Principles and Responsibilities

### The Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)

#### 4 Pillars to guide organisational alignment



#### 10 MARAM Practice Responsibilities set at organisational level

- Resp 1. Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement
- Resp 2. Identification of family violence
- Resp 3. Intermediate risk assessment
- Resp 4. Intermediate risk management
- Resp 5. Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals
- Resp 6. Contribute to information sharing with other services (FVISS and CISS)
- Resp 7. Comprehensive assessment
- Resp 8. Comprehensive risk management and safety planning
- Resp 9. Contribute to coordinated risk management
- Resp 10. Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and management

#### Framework requirements for each Pillar

<p>Demonstrate understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family violence risk &amp; impact</li> <li>• Spectrum of family violence types</li> <li>• Complexity of experiences in community (intersectionality)</li> <li>• Use of the evidence-based risk factors to support determination of risk</li> </ul>	<p>Apply consistent, collaborative practice through use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MARAM tools to screen, identify, assess, manage family violence risk</li> <li>• FVISS/other laws to share information</li> <li>• Structured professional judgement:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) victim survivor self-assessed level of fear</li> <li>2) evidence - based risk factors</li> <li>3) info sharing and collab</li> <li>4) own professional judgement</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p>Organisational leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand their organisation's responsibilities in family violence risk assessment and management, and those that relate to the operation of the information sharing scheme.</li> <li>• Equip their workforce with the tools, resources and training to meet those responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p>Contribute to understanding of the evidence base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish governance to oversee alignment</li> <li>• Collect consistent information about the evidence-based risk factors from use of the tools and client feedback</li> <li>• Lead change management activities to promote continuous improvement</li> </ul>
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#### 3 Levels of Practice for Professionals

**Comprehensive**  
All responsibilities

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**Intermediate**  
All except 7 and 8

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**Identification**  
All except 3, 4, 7 and 8

#### 10 Principles to guide the service system



## Appendix 3: MARAM change management strategic priorities

### **Strategic Priority 1: Demonstrate clear leadership that cultivates trust across service systems and organisations**

The Victorian Government, departments, and sector peak bodies will provide clear and consistent leadership that encourages a shared understanding of risk, respects sector expertise, and cultivates trust across organisations.

### **Strategic priority 2: Facilitate consistent and collaborative practice**

The Victorian Government, departments and sector peak bodies ensure service systems have operational procedures that enable the timely identification of risk, information sharing and consistent and collaborative practice.

### **Strategic priority 3: Build workforce and staff capability**

The Victorian Government, departments, and sector peak bodies ensure staff across sectors will be supported to build their capacity, skills, and practice knowledge to identify and manage risks, and share information effectively, in line with their roles and expertise.

### **Strategic priority 4: Recognition of good practice and commitment to continuous improvement**

The Victorian Government, departments and sector peak bodies ensure mechanisms for sharing lessons learned across sectors are in place to reinforce good practice.

# Appendix 4: Prescribed organisations

## Organisations prescribed under MARAM, FVISS, and CISS

### CISS, FVISS and MARAM – all reforms

- Alcohol and other drugs services
- Ambulance Victoria (including contracted services)
- Care services (formerly out-of-home care services)
- Child protection
- Children’s Court
- Community health services
- Community housing organisations, including Tenancy Plus Programs
- Community-managed mental health services
- Complex Needs Coordinators (MACNI)
- Denominational hospitals
- Department of Education, to the extent it delivers Child Health and Wellbeing Services
- Designated Mental Health Services
- Doctors in schools
- Family Records and Intercountry Services
- Forensic Disability
- Government, Catholic and independent schools
- Homelessness services (providing access point, outreach, or accommodation services)
- Homelessness support providers (other than those already prescribed under phase 1)
- Justice Health
- Justice Health’s funded or contracted services for young people
- Kindergartens
- Long day care
- Magistrates’ Court
- Maternal and Child Health Services
- Multi-agency Panels to Prevent youth Offending
- Multicultural and settlement support services
- Out-of-school-hours care
- Perpetrator interventions, including trials under the Family Violence Perpetrator Intervention grants
- Public health services
- Public hospitals
- Public housing
- Publicly funded early parenting centres
- Publicly funded metropolitan, regional and rural health services
- Refugee Minor Program
- Registered community-based child and family services (including Child FIRST)
- Relevant non-government school system bodies
- Risk Assessment and Management Panels
- Sexual assault support services

- Sexually abusive behaviour treatment services
- Specialist family violence services (including family violence counselling and therapeutic programs)
- State-funded aged care services
- Student disengagement and wellbeing services and programs funded by the Department of Education
- Supported playgroups
- The Orange Door (Support and Safety Hubs)
- Victims Assistance Program services
- Victims of Crime Helpline
- Victoria Police
- Youth Justice
- Youth Justice funded community support services or programs
- Youth Parole Board (Secretariat)

### FVISS and/or MARAM only (not CISS)

- Adult Parole Board
- Corrections and Justice Services-funded or contracted rehabilitation and reintegration services or programs, prisoner services or programs, and clinical services or programs for offender rehabilitation
- Corrections Victoria, Community Correctional Services and privately operated prisons
- Court-ordered family violence counselling
- Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria
- Family Violence Restorative Justice Service
- Justice Health's funded or contracted services for adults
- Parentline (MARAM only)
- State-funded Financial Counselling Program
- State-funded Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program

### CISS or FVISS only

- Commission for Children and Young People
- Disability Services Commissioner
- General practitioners
- General practice nurses
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
- Victorian Institute of Teaching
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

### CISS only

- Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages

## Appendix 5: List of portfolios reporting

Minister	Portfolio	Responsibilities
The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP	Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Minister for Government Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist family violence services</li> <li>• Sexual assault services</li> <li>• The Orange Door network</li> <li>• Risk Assessment and Management Panels</li> </ul>
The Hon. Anthony Carbines MP	Minister for Police Minister for Community Safety Minister for Victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria Police</li> <li>• Victims of Crime Helpline</li> <li>• Victims Assistance Program</li> <li>• Family Violence Restorative Justice</li> </ul>
The Hon. Ben Carroll MP	Deputy Premier Minister for Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Education</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Education services</li> </ul>
The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC	Minister for Corrections Minister for Youth Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Parole Board</li> <li>• Corrections and Justice Services (including Community Correctional Services, Corrections Victoria, and Justice Health)</li> <li>• Youth Justice</li> <li>• Youth Justice Funded Services</li> <li>• Youth Parole Board</li> </ul>
Harriet Shing MLC	Minister for Housing and Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social housing</li> <li>• Homelessness services</li> </ul>
Ingrid Stitt MLC	Minister for Mental Health Minister for Ageing Minister for Multicultural Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health services</li> <li>• Alcohol and other drugs services</li> <li>• Organisations that provide settlement or targeted casework services specifically for migrants, refugees, or people seeking asylum</li> <li>• State-funded aged care services</li> </ul>
The Hon. Lizzie Blandthorn MLC	Minister for Children Minister for Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Centre-based early childhood education and care services</li> <li>• Community-based child and family services (including Child FIRST)</li> <li>• Registered out-of-home care services (including Secure Welfare Services, care services, and Hurstbridge Farm)</li> <li>• Refugee Minor Program</li> <li>• Supported playgroups</li> <li>• Forensic Disability Services</li> <li>• Multiple Complex Needs Initiative</li> </ul>

Minister	Portfolio	Responsibilities
The Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP	Minister for Health Minister for Ambulance Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitals and health services</li> <li>• Independently managed registered community health centres</li> <li>• Early Parenting Centres</li> <li>• Bush Nursing Centres</li> <li>• General practitioners</li> <li>• General practice nurses</li> <li>• Maternal and child health programs</li> <li>• Ambulance Victoria</li> </ul>
The Hon. Nick Staikos MP	Minister for Consumer Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria</li> <li>• Consumer Affairs Victoria funded community programs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Financial Counselling Program</li> <li>– Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny	Attorney-General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magistrate’s Court of Victoria</li> <li>• Children’s Court of Victoria</li> <li>• Court Network</li> <li>• Aboriginal Justice Group funded programs:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Koori Women’s Place</li> <li>– Ngarra Jarranounith Place</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Appendix 6: Portfolio summaries

## Education and Children portfolios

The **Department of Education** continued to run training via webinars, face-to-face workshops and e-Learns.

This training supported education workforces prescribed under phase 2 of CISS, FVISS and MARAM. It aimed to build capability in the implementation and use of the reforms.

The human resources eLearning module for managers and principals had 97 new completions in 2023–24. This brought the total number of completions of the module to 797 since it commenced in 2019. The module is for corporate managers, principals and school leaders who support staff experiencing family violence.

The department's Respectful Relationships regional workforce continued to deliver training to Respectful Relationships school staff. This training:

- promoted a shared understanding of family violence
- focused on identifying and responding to disclosures of family violence.

Early childhood educators also received Respectful Relationships professional learning. This learning:

- promoted respectful relationships within the teaching approach
- strengthened educators' capabilities to respond to disclosures of family violence
- covered how to make referrals to family violence response services.

The department engaged the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare to develop and deliver training for education workforces. This training helped participants understand screening, safety planning and making referrals and reports.

From October 2024, MARAM-nominated staff will receive training on updated guidance and tools. MARAM-nominated staff include staff that have a role that involves wellbeing. This includes wellbeing coordinators and leadership staff.

## Child Protection portfolio

**Child protection** established a family violence community of practice in 2023. This is led by the Office of Professional Practice. It is for child protection practitioners and other staff who support family violence practice.

Information from the community of practice is provided via the Family Violence tile of the Child Protection Learning Hub.

Objectives of the community of practice include:

- facilitating a statewide dialogue about family violence practice
- providing safe and supportive learning environments for family violence practice
- embedding contemporary family violence practice frameworks
- sharing knowledge and resources to increase understanding of family violence
- supporting family violence practice leaders to embed and sustain practice change.

**Hurstbridge Farm** introduced MARAM eLearning training modules. These modules focus on practice development and continuous improvement.

Staff complete the modules on shift time during their induction. This ensures all staff have foundational knowledge of MARAM.

**Secure Care Services** will continue to conduct 6-monthly audits of MARAM eLearning module completion rates. This includes following up with staff to support 100% completion. This will be reported in 2024–25.

## Forensic Disability portfolio

MARAM learning and development is part of the suite of learning for **Forensic Disability Services**.

Staff have completed both the MARAM victim-survivor and the MARAM Adults Using Family Violence training.

The training was either the identification level or intermediate level, depending on staff roles.

Forensic Disability Clinical Services recruited a senior psychologist. Among other duties, this role will lead feedback and debriefing with the clinical team.

## Public Housing and Complex Needs Coordination portfolios

MARAM learning and development is part of the suite of learning for **public housing and complex needs coordinators**.

Staff have completed both the MARAM victim-survivor and the MARAM Adults Using Family Violence training at the identification level.

## Housing portfolio

**Homes Victoria** funds and works with **Council to Homeless Persons** (CHP) to deliver information sessions and training. This aims to build the workforce's understanding of MARAM in their role.

In 2023–24, CHP created a community of practice to integrate best practice in MARAM alignment. The group included MARAM leaders from across the Victorian specialist homelessness sector. It has met 6 times since October 2023.

During the year, the community of practice:

- provided feedback to FSV about the user experience of the MARAM tools in the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform
- promoted MARAM and information sharing of tools and resources
- developed strategies to improve The Orange Door and referral pathways.

**Homes Victoria** worked with framework organisations to implement MARAM. It supported them to apply the findings from program evaluations to revise policies, guidelines and practice. This work included the **Tenancy Support Program** and **Supporting Safe and Productive Communities** initiatives.

The scope involved:

- collaborating with stakeholders to shape new guidance documents or revise existing ones
- ensuring alignment with best practice
- meeting the evolving needs of victim survivors.

These efforts will be integrated with the *Second rolling action plan 2023–2026* under *Building from strength: 10-year family violence industry plan for family violence prevention and response*.

## Consumer Affairs Victoria portfolio

In 2023–24, community programs funded by **Consumer Affairs Victoria** enhanced consistent and collaborative practice.

This included work to create links with real estate agents to support victim survivors' access to rental properties or maintain tenancies. This boosted victim survivors' confidence to seek support from the Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program (TAAP).

Programs also engaged in working groups and partnerships. These covered the intersection of family violence, financial abuse and legal issues delivered by Financial Counselling Programs. They included laws relating to:

- family
- property
- tax
- small business
- insurance.

These groups also shared family violence case studies to advocate for change to systems that perpetrators use to commit financial abuse. This includes Australian Taxation Office and Australian Securities and Investments Commission systems.

**Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria** engages with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and the Magistrates' Court. It creates clear pathways and processes to support victim survivors. It also ensures that victim survivors can receive culturally appropriate assistance.

Following the 5-year MARAM review, Consumer Affairs Victoria will focus on:

- supporting prescribed organisations with additional training, tools and resources
- consultation and practice guidance tailored to organisations' roles and functions
- enhance information sharing and MARAM capability.

Consumer Affairs Victoria will also develop a roadmap for workforces who frequently interact with vulnerable consumers. This will boost family violence best practice.

## Health portfolio

### Ambulance Victoria

During 2023–24, **Ambulance Victoria** provided tailored and mandatory MARAM training for staff.

The organisation also progressed work to implement MARAM. This included:

- initial mapping and audit of the Adults Using Family Violence framework and tool
- review of clinical governance structures and clinical referral pathways to support secondary triage
- options for integrating training.

Ambulance Victoria regularly held meetings to:

- review progress with implementation
- identify challenges and risks
- discuss mitigation strategies.

Ambulance Victoria continued to strengthen its relationship with Family Safety Victoria, Victoria Police and family violence agencies.

In 2024–25 Ambulance Victoria plans to:

- employ dedicated family violence clinical governance officers to integrate MARAM into Ambulance Victoria’s practices
- address gaps in workforce knowledge and training
- focus on adults using family violence while aligning with current reform directions.

## Health

The Department of Health’s role in leading MARAM implementation for health workforces transferred to Safer Care Victoria in 2023–24.

2023–24 also saw the launch of the new **Strengthening Hospitals Responses to Family Violence (SHRFV) model**.

This model provides dedicated project funding for 8 public hospitals and health services. These organisations will lead work to embed the Adults Using Family Violence practice guides.

Practice leads worked alongside SHRFV statewide leads to support hospitals to understand, prepare for and implement Adults Using Family Violence practice.

This included 14 regional workshops for 146 attendees from 56 hospitals.

In 2024–2025, practice leads will build on this work to extend the reach and availability of Adults Using Family Violence resources to hospitals.

St Vincent’s Hospital developed the **Family Violence Risk Identification Form (FVRIF)**. This clinical and data collection tool is aligned with both MARAM and the Family Violence Data Collection Framework.

It enables clinicians to identify and report MARAM-based risk factors from patients and families experiencing or using family violence.

The data can be represented visually and is readily available to the executive team.

There is a daily report and review of all FVRIFs completed.

Education about FVRIFs is included in staff orientation and mandatory training packages.

The MARAM FVRIF data is also collated and presented at a monthly meeting with the Family Violence Coordination and Response Group (FVCRG). This group comprises key stakeholders and managers.

This meeting focuses on risk management and follow-up. It proactively identifies emerging themes and educational needs.

The reporting has enhanced services through:

- more targeted training
- intervention improvement
- improved staff wellbeing and referrals
- improved information sharing.

The department also promoted the MARAM identification-level Family Violence Against Older People (Elder Abuse) eLearn course and a MARAM workshop on identifying and responding to financial abuse.

## Mental Health portfolio

Victoria's mental health and wellbeing system is undertaking major reform as a result of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Implementing family violence reform at the same time is challenging. However, the mental health workforce is committed to improving its response to family violence.

Feedback about MARAM training for health workforces is consistently positive. This is particularly the case for new practitioners or those wanting to improve their MARAM knowledge and skills.

The Centre for Mental Health Learning also had positive feedback about its work in 2023–24. In 2024–25, it will schedule additional sessions of its webinar and training resources for working with men who use family violence. This includes content on resisting collusion and motivating change.

A new 2-hour MARAM intermediate training program for mental health and wellbeing clinicians will continue during 2024-25.

## Corrections and Justice Services portfolio

In 2023–24, the team:

- ensured all activities for the reform implementation across the corrections system adhered to MARAM
- created a centralised MARAM reform focus point
- provided input and change management expertise to implement MARAM within the corrections system
- monitored progress on MARAM and FVISS activities while managing emerging risks and issues.

Corrections Victoria undertook a pilot at a men's medium security prison to test the MARAM implementation model and collect data. The pilot was a significant milestone in informing next steps for MARAM alignment in prisons.

Community Correctional Services went live with their revised MARAM tools and practice guidance in April 2024. This work will strengthen risk identification and management.

There are several family violence services available across the corrections system. This includes services for people using family violence and victim survivors who are either in prison or subject to the supervision of Community Correctional Services.

Programs for priority cohorts include:

- victim survivor programs
- perpetrator programs
- parenting and healthy relationships programs.

## Corrections and Justice Services E\*Justice Family Violence Screen project

The new screen will be a single source of all family violence and MARAM information for staff. Staff will also be able to collect and report on family violence data for the corrections system.

The MARAM implementation team engaged with stakeholders across Corrections and Justice Services.

The team also worked closely with their technology solutions partner. This included completing the design, function, development and testing of the solution. It also included commencing development of the eLearn.

Corrections and Justice Services will maintain good practice and continuous improvement by:

- progressing the E\*Justice project to ensure identification of persons using family violence and victim survivors across the system
- releasing the E\*Justice eLearn to support implementation of the new screen
- planning to implement the new E\*Justice screen in phases with Community Correctional Services to go-live in early 2025 and Corrections Victoria to go-live in the future, in-order-to coincide with Corrections Victoria MARAM implementation.
- updating practice guidance to accommodate the introduction of the new E\*Justice screen.

## Victims portfolio

Victims Assistance Program (VAP) agencies have strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders. These relationships support information sharing and collaboration when working with victims of family violence. They also support co-case management approaches.

VAP agencies meet regularly with stakeholders and networks. This includes with The Orange Door workforce. These meetings aim to boost effective referral pathways, information sharing, secondary consultations and best practice.

VAP agency leadership staff (program managers and team leaders) attend quarterly VAP Leadership Network meetings. These forums discuss MARAM and family violence practice.

The VAP Family Violence Practice Lead (FVPL) Network allows Helpline and VAP FVPLs to discuss practice dilemmas. This supports consistent practice across the state.

The Department of Justice and Community Safety's **Victims Services Support and Reform** will continue to provide comprehensive MARAM training to upskill existing staff. The *Family violence practice manual* will further support misidentification assessments by the **Victims of Crime Helpline**. This keeps perpetrators in view and accountable.

The **Victims of Crime Helpline** will also enhance collaborative practices by establishing pathways to redirect L17s to The Orange Door for child wellbeing responses. Manual information sharing pathways will ensure these referrals receive a holistic response from The Orange Door and child protection services.

This initiative aims to improve coordination and ensure comprehensive support for vulnerable young individuals affected by family violence.

Family violence practice leads working with the **Victims of Crime Helpline** complete assessments of L17 referrals. These assessments identify predominant aggressors. They are shared with The Orange Door and Victoria Police.

In 2023–24, the Helpline received 19,439 L17s. Practice leads identified that in 26.5% of these cases, the identified male affected family member was the person using violence.

## Youth Justice portfolio

Youth justice will commence a project to analyse MARAM alignment and family violence practice across community, custody and central youth justice.

This project will identify gaps and opportunities to strengthen MARAM alignment.

Youth justice will then develop tailored resources and training. It will also update practice guidelines if required.

This analysis will be completed via self-assessments and interviews with youth justice representatives across each of the workforces.

## Multicultural Affairs portfolio

FSV funds a consortium of social services organisations. This includes:

- Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC)
- AMES Australia
- Jewish Care.

The consortium supports support framework organisations in the multicultural and settlement sectors to align to the MARAM Framework.

This included conducting a survey of framework organisations.

The survey identified the benefits and challenges associated with MARAM alignment. It also captured each organisation's knowledge and application of MARAM responsibilities.

As part of phase 2 alignment, FSV reviewed all existing funding arrangements within the Multicultural Affairs portfolio. This identified organisations for MARAM alignment.

FSV also reviewed the portfolio's criteria for prescription of services and organisations.

The review will provide greater clarity on which organisations are required to prescribe. It will enhance framework organisations' understanding of their responsibilities.

Any new funding and programs within scope will include MARAM requirements in program guidelines and funding agreements.

In 2024–25, DPC's Multicultural Affairs portfolio will participate in the **MARAM and Information Sharing Working Group**.

## Prevention of Family Violence portfolio

Plans for 2024–25 include:

- establishing a community of practice for priority workforces. This will foster learning, encourage collaboration and promote new ways to embed MARAM and information sharing
- establishing regular meetings with the Centre for Workforce Excellence. This will involve aligning training approaches and developing materials for accredited and non-accredited MARAM training. Training will include Victorian Government workforces and funded agencies
- redeveloping the original 5 core MARAM training packages. This work will reflect updated family violence data and research, consultation feedback and findings from the MARAM 5-year Evidence review
- continuing to implement recommendations from the 5-year Evidence review and Legislative review. Implementation plans will guide FSV's work on recommendations over the coming years.

Findings from Evidence and Legislative reviews demonstrate that:

- MARAM is valuable and useful across sectors
- MARAM supports a shared understanding of family violence and improved system collaboration
- Information sharing is an essential enabler to MARAM. There have been no adverse impacts identified since the commencement of the reform.

FSV will further embed MARAM across framework organisations. This will improve practice and system responses to adults using family violence. It will also support organisations to keep adult and child victim survivors safe.

All **The Orange Door** sites include service system navigators who develop referral pathways to improve client outcomes.

On-site practice leaders also provide essential skills and support. This ensures the workforce can work safely with victim survivors of all ages. It also ensures that adults using family violence are engaged, connected and responsible for stopping their violence.

Practice leaders help to maintain culturally safe engagement with the Aboriginal community.

## Courts portfolio

This year, the Magistrates' Court finished implementing MARAM victim survivor tools and practice guidance across court operations, specialist courts and programs.

Requests for information under the FVISS and the CISS continue to increase, with a monthly average of around 4,200 requests.

The courts are developing the Courts Information Sharing Portal (CIS Portal). This secure, online tool will enable courts to share information under the FVISS and CISS faster and more efficiently. The CIS Portal will streamline administrative processes to help manage the high volume of requests.

Representatives from specialist venues of the Children's Court of Victoria took part in surveys facilitated by Swinburne University and Safe and Equal. The survey findings will inform the development of risk identification and assessment tools as part of the MARAM Child and Young Person Practice Guides.

In 2024–25, the courts will:

- implement the Adults Using Family Violence practice guides
- maintain staff capability and ensure new court staff, including trainee court registrars, receive MARAM training
- update the client management database to include the MARAM Adults Using Family Violence tool.

## Victoria Police portfolio

Highlights from 2023–24 include:

- The SIVO application (discussed in section 4) also features a compliance function. This enables supervisors to access real-time information about all applications and intervention orders requiring service. This is particularly crucial for pending court dates or intervention orders that have not yet been served.
- Victoria Police expanded the pool of employees who complete the MARAM Annual Survey to include:
  - Family Violence Training Officers
  - Interagency Information Sharing Service team members
  - the Police Academy
  - the Centre for Family Violence
  - other frontline specialist members.
- The MARAM and Workforce Directors Group meets quarterly to provide strategic advice on the implementation of the MARAM Framework. This year, Victoria Police contributed to the development of MARAM practice guides and tools related to children and young people and adults using family violence. The group also engaged with partners to implement recommendations of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor relating to the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor.

- An internal pilot program sought to examine police risk assessment decision making. This includes identifying opportunities for practice changes. It is part of broader work to strengthen the accurate identification of the predominant aggressor. A new practice guide for identifying the predominant aggressor is being developed for use in 2024–25.

# Appendix 7: Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Survey

In the 2023–24 reporting period, we made several updates to the MARAM Annual Survey.

These included:

- changing the name from the MARAM Annual Survey to the Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Survey
- expanding the survey to include frontline workers. Previous years' surveys only included organisational leaders, executives or those with responsibility for setting policies, procedures or practice guidance within their organisation
- creating the survey in-house, saving outsourcing costs, and providing greater flexibility on survey design, editing and access to the data.

## Across sectors

The survey received 1,040 responses. The response rate in 2023–24 was 188% higher than the previous year. This is mostly due to the inclusion of professional and frontline staff, and greater engagement from the human services, health, justice and government services sectors.

## Demographics

Most respondents were employed in human services (42.4%) and health (41.7%). They come from large (65%) or medium (30%) organisations that provide regional, metropolitan and statewide services.

## Across workforces

Respondents included:

- 804 (77%) professional or frontline staff who identify, assess or manage family violence risk in their day-to-day work
- 158 (15%) leaders or executives who set organisational policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools for assessing family violence risk
- 78 (7.5%) who are not leaders or executives, but whose role involves developing organisational policies, procedures, practice or program guidance and tools relevant to family violence risk.

Figure 9 outlines the responses received to the survey by sector. Across framework organisations, commitment to MARAM is strong.

**Figure 9: Survey responses by sector**

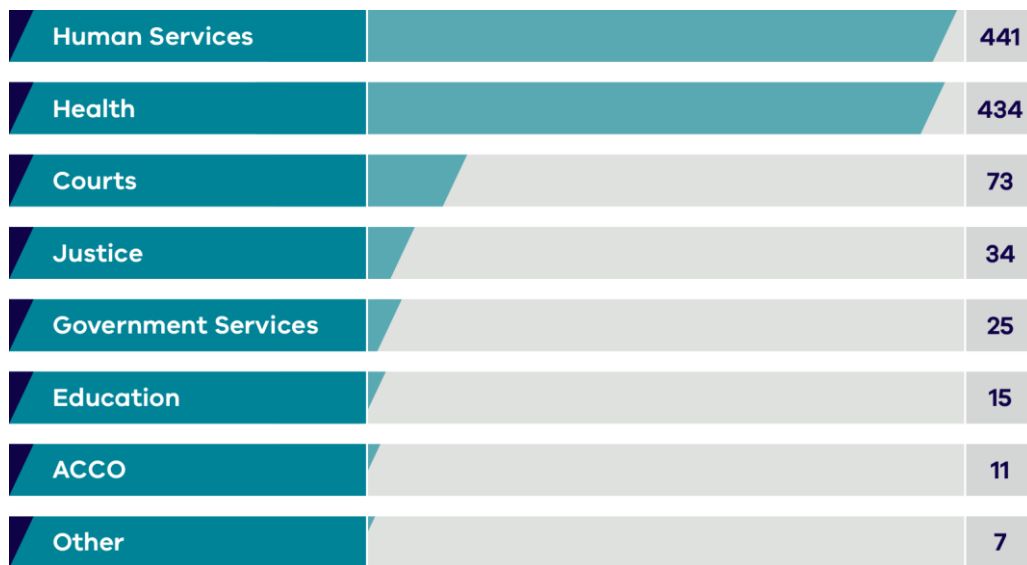


Figure 10 shows that 94% of organisational leaders rated alignment to MARAM as a high or medium priority.

**Figure 10: Importance of organisational alignment to MARAM**



Figure 11 shows that more than three-quarters (77 per cent) felt their workforce is equipped with the tools, resources and training needed to meet their obligations under MARAM.

**Figure 11: My organisation has the tools, resources and training to meet MARAM obligations**



Figure 12 shows that 73% of organisational leaders agree their organisation applies consistent and collaborative practice using MARAM tools to identify, assess and manage family violence.

**Figure 12: My organisation applies consistent and collaborative practice using MARAM tools**



Figure 13 shows there is room for improvement. Only 57% of surveyed leaders said they had a detailed understanding of their responsibilities under MARAM. This was a decrease of 17% from 2023 results.

**Figure 13: Understanding of MARAM alignment**

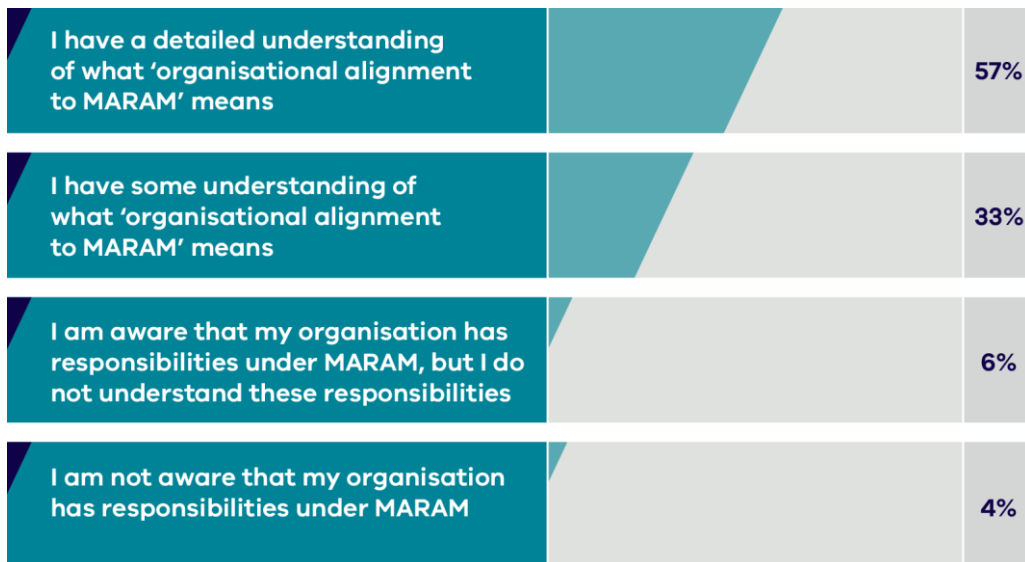


Figure 14 focuses on the training completed by staff. It shows that 78% of professional and frontline staff had undertaken training on MARAM topics in 2023–24.

Of these respondents, 76% rated the trainings as highly useful or somewhat useful.

**Figure 14: Training completed by professional and frontline staff**

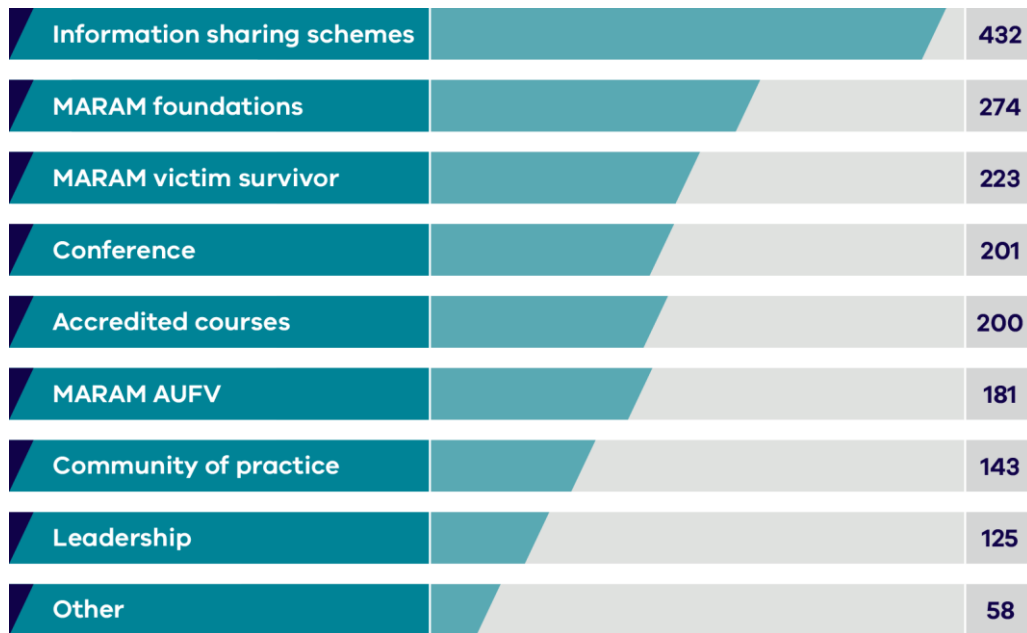
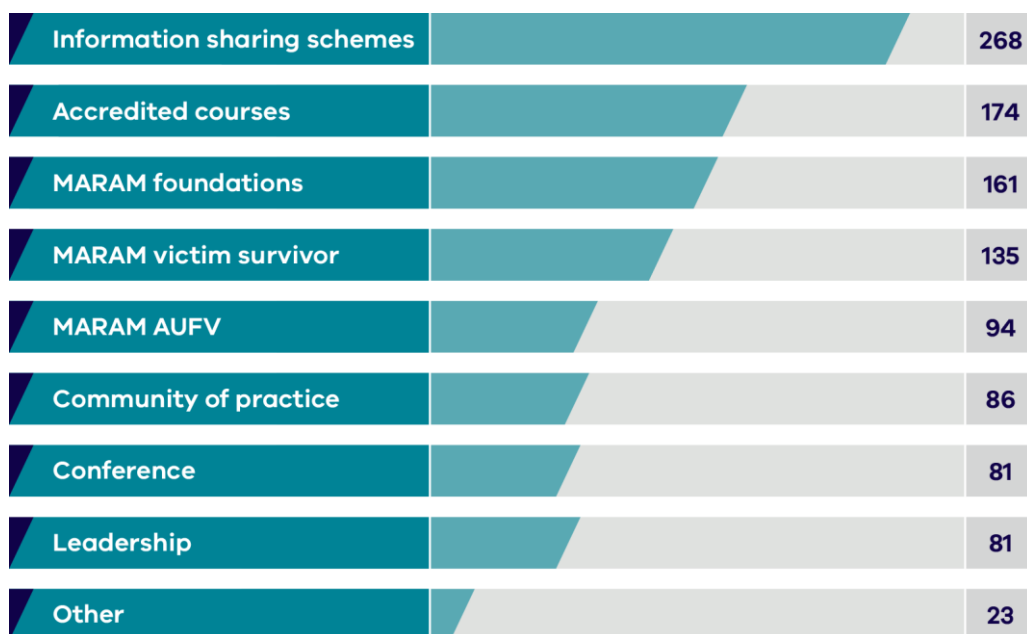


Figure 15 focuses on training completed by organisational leaders or executives. It shows that 95% of leaders or executives (or staff in their organisation) completed training in 2023–24.

Of these respondents, 83% rated the training as highly useful or somewhat useful.

**Figure 15: Training completed by organisational leaders or executives**



## Appendix 8: Abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
ACCO	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation
AOD	Alcohol and other drugs
BCH	Ballarat Community Health
CCS	Community Correctional Services
CHP	Council to Homeless Persons
CIP	Central Information Point
CISS	Child Information Sharing Scheme
CJS	Corrections and Justice Services
CP	Child Protection
CRM	Client Relationship Management (The Orange Door)
CV	Corrections Victoria
DE	Department of Education
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DH	Department of Health
DGS	Department of Government Services
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
FDS	Forensic Disability Services
FSV	Family Safety Victoria
FVCRG	Family Violence Coordination and Response Group
FVISS	Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme
FVPA	Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)
FVRIF	Family Violence Risk Identification Form (St Vincent's Hospital)
FVRIM	Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor
HR	Human Resources
ISE	Information Sharing Entities
MARAM Framework	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework
MARAMIS	MARAM and Information Sharing
NTV	No To Violence
SCV	Safer Care Victoria
SHIP	Specialist Homelessness Information Platform
SHRFV	Strengthening Hospitals Responses to Family Violence
SIVO	Streamlined Intervention Order (application)
TAAP	Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program
TOD	The Orange Door

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
TPAG	Training and Practice Advisory Group
TRAM	Tools for Risk Assessment and Management
VACCA	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
WCC	Whittlesea Community Connections

# Appendix 9: Text-equivalent descriptions of figures

## Figure 1: Victorian Government highlights for 2023–24

### Family Safety Victoria

- From 5-year Legislative and Evidence reviews:
  - 16 recommendations for better legislation
  - 17 recommendations for improved evidence-based practice
- Practice guides for working with children and young people due for release in 2025

### Education

- Updated guidance, tools and MARAM training for education workforces
- More than 1,950 schools now use the Respectful Relationships whole-school approach

### Information sharing

- Significant increase in information sharing in 2023–24:
  - 8,099 child protection requests, a 51% increase from 2022–23
  - 8,075 Victoria Police requests, 900 more than last year
  - 51,503 court requests
  - 33% increase in Department of Government Services information sharing
- This shows growing confidence in the information sharing system

### Risk assessments and safety plans

- The Orange Door completed:
  - 54,261 risk assessments, a 61% increase from 2022–23
  - 24,837 safety plans, a 16% increase from 2022–23

### Government services

- In 2023–24:
  - 4,164 victim survivors accessed the Financial Counselling Program
  - 1,016 victim survivors accessed the Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program

### MARAM annual survey

- 94% of organisational leaders state that MARAM alignment is a priority
- 77% felt their workforce has the support they need to meet MARAM obligations

### Multicultural affairs

- 14 contextualised resources created, including MARAM poster packs in 6 languages

### Child protection

- New laws ensure courts can access information about family violence risk when making court orders

## Courts

- New specialist children’s court opened in Dandenong
- The court has separate entrances and waiting areas, and remote hearing facilities

## Figure 2: Preparation for the Child and Young Person practice guides

### Consumer affairs

- Working with peak bodies, Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria and funded agencies
- Identifying gaps in organisational procedures

### Mental health

- Working with services that work with children, including:
  - paediatric social workers
  - general practitioners
  - nurses
  - early parenting centres

### Child protection

- Implementing guidance and tools in 2025
- Updating program policies, procedures, guidelines and training

### Victoria Police

- Reviewing the guides
- Will consider developing other guidance material
- Ensuring culturally strong practice

### Victim services

The Family Violence Restorative Justice Service is reviewing policies to incorporate the new guidance and tools

## Figure 3: Information sharing among departments

### Corrections and justice services

- **1,700** requests on average processed by the FVISS team each month

### Victim services

- **4,821** victims of crime helpline requests (up from 303 in 2020–21)

### Courts

- **4,200** requests on average each month
- **51,503** requests in 2023–24

## Government services

- **33%** increase in Department of Government Services information sharing in 2023–24

## Victoria Police

- 8,075 Victoria Police requests, 900+ more than last year

## Child protection

- 8,099 requests, up 51% since 2022–23
- Most frequent requests came from:
  - Victoria Police
  - specialist family violence services
  - hospitals

## Figure 4: MARAM risk assessments and safety plans

### Risk assessment and safety plans

- 384,000 completed online since 2018, with 79,098 completed in 2023–24
- 54,600 completed using the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform in 2023–24
- 80,271 safety plans completed online from April 2018 to June 2024
- 54,261 risk assessments completed by The Orange Door using online tools, a 61% increase from 2022–23

## Figure 5: Using the Adults Using Family Violence practice guides and training package

### MARAM annual survey

- 45% of organisational leaders have used the MARAM Adults Using Family Violence (AUFV) practice guides
- 21% aware of the resources but have not used them

### Child protection

- Tailored AUFV identification and intermediate training for child protection, Hurstbridge Farm and secure services staff

### Consumer affairs

- Tailored AUFV training for Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria staff, financial counsellors, tenancy advocates and Births, Deaths and Marriages staff

### Mental health

- Alcohol and other drugs intake and assessment tools align with AUFV guides

### Forensic disability and housing workforces

- Tailored AUFV training for the entire workforces

## Courts

- Implementing practice guides in 2024–25
- Learning needs analysis to be completed in 2024–25

## Corrections and justice services

- Intermediate AUFV training for Community Correctional Services staff

## Figure 6: MARAM training in 2023–24

### Training data

- 89,317 training sessions across all sectors
- 2,483 participants in new MARAM Adults Using Family Violence (AUFV) training since it started in 2023

### Health

- 57,813 MARAM and information sharing courses completed by the health, mental health and ambulance workforces

### Child protection

- Risk assessment workshops for:
  - 650 child protection leaders and managers
  - 695 child protection practitioners

### Forensic disability

- 90 (53%) forensic disability staff completed training
- 65 receive tailored AUFV training

### Education

- 5,000 leaders and professionals completed training on information sharing and family violence reforms

### Victoria Police

- 2,709 risk assessment and information sharing courses delivered

### Consumer affairs

- All staff in financial counselling, dispute settlement and tenancy assistance attended training in 2023–24

### Housing

- 360 existing housing staff completed tailored MARAM victim survivor identification training
- 87 staff completed tailored MARAM AUFV identification training

### Multicultural affairs

- 132 Spectrum aged care workers attended MARAM elder abuse training

## Corrections and justice services

- All Victims of Crime Helpline staff completed MARAM foundational training
- 412 youth justice staff completed information sharing scheme training
- 1,634 prison staff completed MARAM foundational training
- 567 community corrections staff completed intermediate victim survivor training

## Courts

- 59 trainee court registrars completed MARAM training

## Figure 7: Overview of legislation, policy and frameworks

### Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) Part 11

Empowers responsible Minister to approve framework

Requirement on framework organisations to align policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools with the approved framework.

Obligations on Ministers: reporting; review of Framework; legislative review

### Evaluation

5-year reviews:

- Must assess whether the framework reflects current evidence-based best practice (up to every 5 years)
- Must assess the extent to which the legislation is achieving consistency in family violence risk assessment and management (after the first 5 years)

2-year review:

- Considering whether the framework has been implemented as planned

### Regulation

Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Amendment Regulations 2018:

- Defines prescribed matters for Ministers to report on, relating to implementation and operation of the framework by framework organisations

### Legislative instrument

Family Violence Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework:

- Defines what framework organisations should align to:
  - A set of principles reflecting the values underpinning the framework
  - 4 pillars, each with framework requirements, setting out the objectives of the framework

### MARAM Framework

Provides evidence base and policy direction

Describes system architecture and accountability mechanisms

Expands on the pillars in the legislative instruments

## Supporting resources

Operational practice guidance for risk assessment and management for victim survivors, adults using family violence, children and young people (pending)

Guidance for organisations and change leaders, including development of a maturity model approach to alignment.

Training for practitioners and organisational leaders (victim survivors, adults using family violence, children and young people, collaborative practice and leading alignment)

## Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) Part 5A

### Regulation

Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management Amendment Regulations 2018):

- Prescribes Information Sharing Entities authorising sharing under Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme

### Family Violence Information Scheme Guidelines

Provide information on the operation of the legislation and guidance on appropriate information sharing

### Supporting resources

Guidance checklists and templates supporting practice

Links to MARAM practice guides

## Figure 8: MARAM Framework on a page

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

#### 4 pillars to guide organisational alignment

- Pillar 1 – Shared understanding of family violence
- Pillar 2 – Consistent and collaborative practice
- Pillar 3 – Responsibilities for risk assessment and management
- Pillar 4 – Systems, outcomes and continuous improvement

#### 10 MARAM practice responsibilities set at organisational level

1. Respectful, sensitive and safe engagements
3. Identification of family violence
4. Intermediate risk assessment
5. Intermediate risk management
6. Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals
7. Contribute to information sharing and other services (FVISS and CISS)
8. Comprehensive assessment

9. Comprehensive risk management and safety planning
10. Contribute to coordinated risk management
11. Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and management

### 3 levels of practice for professionals:

#### **Comprehensive**

- All responsibilities

#### **Intermediate**

- All except 7 and 8

#### **Identification**

- All except 3, 4, 7 and 8

### Framework requirements for each pillar

#### **Pillar 1**

Demonstrate understanding of:

- Family violence risk and impact
- Spectrum of family violence types
- Complexity of experiences in community (intersectionality)
- Use of the evidence-based risk factors to support determination of risk

#### **Pillar 2**

Apply consistent collaborative practice through use of:

- MARAM tools to screen, identify, assess, manage family violence risk
- FVISS/other laws to share information
- Structured professional judgement –
  - Victim survivor self-assessed level of fear
  - Evidence-based risk factors
  - Info sharing and collab
  - Own professional judgement

#### **Pillar 3**

Organisational leaders:

- Understand their organisation’s responsibilities in family violence risk assessment and management, and those that relate to the operation of the information sharing scheme
- Equip their workforce with the tools, resources and training to meet those responsibilities

#### **Pillar 4**

Contribute to understanding of the evidence base:

- Establish governance to oversee alignment
- Collect consistent information about the evidence-based risk factors from use of the tools and client feedback
- Lead change management activities to promote continuous improvement

## 10 principles to guide the service system

To help achieve a shared understanding, the Framework principles support each pillar and help guide Victoria’s family violence system-wide response.

1. Family violence is unacceptable
12. Services collaborate and share information
13. Victim survivor agency is respected
14. Children are victim survivors in their own right
15. Gender inequality is a driver for family violence
16. Children’s vulnerabilities and needs are unique
17. Culturally safe and non-discriminatory services for Aboriginal people
18. Accessible non-discriminatory services for diverse groups
19. System-wide view for perpetrator accountability
20. A different approach for young people who use violence

**Figure 9: Survey responses by sector**

Sector	Number of responses
Human services	441
Health	434
Courts	73
Justice	34
Government services	25
Education	15
ACCO	11
Other	7

**Figure 10: Importance of organisational alignment to MARAM**

Priority level	% responses
High priority	72%
Medium priority	21.5%
Not sure	4%
Low priority	2%
Not a current priority	0.5%

**Figure 11: My organisation has the tools, resources and training to meet MARAM obligations**

Level of agreement	% responses
Strongly agree	33%
Agree	44%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%
Disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	1%

**Figure 12: My organisation applies consistent and collaborative practice using MARAM tools**

Level of agreement	% responses
Strongly agree	34%
Agree	38.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%
Disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	0.5%

**Figure 13: Understanding of MARAM alignment**

Statement	% responses
I have a detailed understanding of what 'organisational alignment to MARAM' means	57%
I have some understanding of what 'organisational alignment to MARAM' means	33%
I am aware that my organisation has responsibilities under MARAM, but I do not understand these responsibilities	6%
I am not aware that my organisation has responsibilities under MARAM	4%

**Figure 14: Training completed by professional and frontline staff**

Type of training	Number of responses
Information sharing schemes	432
MARAM foundations	274
MARAM victim survivor	223
Conference	201
Accredited course	200
MARAM AUFV	181
Community of practice	143
Leadership	125
Other	58

**Figure 15: Training completed by organisational leaders or executives**

Type of training	Number of responses
Information sharing schemes	268
Accredited course	174
MARAM foundations	161
MARAM victim survivor	135
MARAM AUFV	94
Community of practice	86
Conference	81
Leadership	81
Other	23

