



Not Now, Not Ever. *Together*

# A capability approach to ending domestic and family violence

Queensland public sector  
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**Queensland**  
Government



## **The Queensland Government's *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026* (the strategy) provides a positive plan to end domestic and family violence in Queensland.**

The strategy focuses on providing support to those who are experiencing domestic and family violence, and the long-term cultural transformation required to prevent violence in the future.

This document sets out a whole-of-government capability approach to deliver on the government's domestic and family violence reform agenda by supporting the Queensland public sector's (the sector) long-term capability development at both an organisational and individual level.

The sector is a large and diverse workforce, with differing needs and operating contexts. The high-level approach set out in this document takes account of the sector's inherent diversity.

### **Ending domestic and family violence**

Ending domestic and family violence requires long-term cultural transformation built on an understanding of the factors that contribute to it and a genuine change in beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. This includes:

- understanding the gendered nature of violence, where gender inequality and rigid gender norms create an imbalance in society that supports and drives violence against women and children
- embedding respectful relationships and a zero-tolerance approach to domestic and family violence can contribute to the cultural change required to prevent domestic and family violence.

Workplaces have a vital role to play in supporting employees affected by domestic and family violence and in showing leadership to drive cultural change. Everyone can take action to ensure people are safe at work, in the community and at home.

Most people experiencing domestic and family violence are women and children although we know men also experience it. The sector's capability approach focuses on ending domestic and family violence against women and children due to the clear evidence of this as a high priority public safety and health issue.

### **A multi-dimensional approach**

Achieving lasting changes requires working together through a multi-dimensional approach. This approach supports employee and organisational capability in the workplace, which in turn supports improved outcomes in the community. The collective and cumulative nature of the approach is depicted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Multi-dimensional approach**



The multi-dimensional approach is also reflected in the strategy’s supporting outcome: Queensland community, business, religious, sporting and all government leaders are taking action and working together.

Everyone in the community and the workplace can show leadership and help drive cultural transformation to make a positive difference for all Queenslanders.

### Role of Queensland public sector workplaces

The sector has developed resources to help recognise domestic and family violence and support people impacted by it. This is a foundational step in preventing and responding to domestic and family violence.

The sector’s [workplace support package and resources](#) are publicly available.

Central to the Queensland Government’s workplace commitment is [Directive 03/20 Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence](#).

The directive delivers on the Queensland vision for workplaces and sets out leave entitlements and conditions, and requires:

- domestic and family violence policies to be in place
- active promotion of the policy and support options for employees
- plans for organisational capability (including a mandatory online learning program).

Cultural change to help end domestic and family violence requires a long-term workplace commitment. This commitment includes:

- building foundational capability at the employee level to identify and respond to domestic and family violence, and broader leadership and cultural change skills

- provision of programs and supports at the organisational level, including White Ribbon Australia workplace accreditation, Directive 03/20 and awareness raising events such as Domestic and Family Violence prevention month.

Commitments at both the employee and organisational levels overlap and are depicted in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Employee and organisational levels**



## Building employee capability

The Queensland Government is building its workforce capacity to recognise, respond and help prevent domestic and family violence. This includes a combination of generic leadership skills, coupled with tailored knowledge of how to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence.

### Recognise, Respond, Refer eLearning program

Completion of this program (or an equivalent) is mandatory under Directive 03/20 Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence.

The program aims to raise employee awareness and understanding of:

- what domestic and family violence is
  - why it is a workplace issue
  - how to recognise signs of domestic and family violence
- how to respond and refer those impacted by domestic and family violence to available support options.



## Leadership competencies for Queensland

At the broadest level, the [Leadership competencies for Queensland](#) outlines the capabilities and associated behaviours the Queensland Government expects and encourages employees to demonstrate.

These capabilities and behaviours provide a high-level framework to support whole-of-government leadership development to respond to domestic and family violence in the workplace and embed long-term cultural change.

While these capabilities are designed for leaders at all levels in the workplace, they are leadership skills that can also be taken into the wider community and relationships which contribute to mutual respect, diversity and personal accountability within Queensland communities.

There are 11 leadership competencies in the Queensland Government framework. Building domestic and family violence related capability aligns most closely to the leadership competency Accountability: Fosters healthy and inclusive workplaces.

There are a range of programs available to help address the capability required for staff to understand the needs of diverse workforces, for example:

- cultural capability training and disability awareness training
- the specific circumstances and experiences that influence behaviour and attitudes, such as training to understand unconscious bias and anger and trauma impacts on individuals.

Individual agency workforce planning for capability development is a critical part of driving DFV capability improvement across the sector.

## Skills to support cultural change

Whole-of-sector initiatives are also important to help build skills needed to support cultural change, for example: [Everyday coaching skills for better conversations](#) and the soon-to-be-released Everyday conversations – healthy minds program. These programs aim to build the capability of all employees and managers in creating positive and healthy workplace cultures.

Linking domestic and family violence capability to health and wellbeing, inclusion and diversity and equity issues is important for improving support for employees and to bring about the cultural change required to end violence.

Many resources are available across the community and government to drive wider capability development, for example: [Positive and healthy workplaces guide](#).

## Building organisational capability

This whole-of-government capability approach aims to support the sector's long-term capability development in response to domestic and family violence.

Critical to all capability building is leadership and while all employees can be leaders of change, executives in the sector have clear responsibilities through CEO performance



agreements and Directive 03/20 for domestic and family violence employee capability and support.

Capability is also built through developmental opportunities, internal agency initiatives and partnership activities, for example: International Women's Day, and external program offerings.

External programs include:

### White Ribbon Australia workplace accreditation

White Ribbon Australia (WRA) accreditation:

- recognises workplaces that take active steps to prevent and respond to violence against women
- strengthens and helps drive the sector's commitment to implement the strategy
- provides a structured framework for the planning, development and assessment of domestic and family violence capability through an external agency, Communicare.

All departments achieved WRA workplace accreditation in 2019, fulfilling a Queensland Government commitment. Independent accreditation will continue from 2020.

### Tailored programs for use in individual agencies

In addition to the Recognise, Respond, Refer eLearning program, a range of other programs and resources are available, including:

- Griffith University's MATE Bystander program
- OurWatch's [Workplace Equality and Respect Standards](#) (WER).

Standard 3: Culture in the WER outlines behaviours, good practice, and measures for tracking progress for domestic and family violence capability, which can be used to help guide workplace planning.

These and other programs can meet training and skill development needs that support the prevention of domestic and family violence, and the creation of positive and healthy workplace cultures that promote gender equality.

## Building a community committed to the prevention of domestic and family violence

The sector has adopted a holistic approach to capability development, which aims to give organisations and employees alike the policy frameworks and practical skills needed to prevent and address domestic and family violence.

As Queensland's largest employer, the Queensland Government is uniquely placed to drive positive change in the workplace and in the community.

The capability approach offers the opportunity for every employee, and every agency, to build the skills needed to lead cultural transformation to help end domestic and family violence and make a positive difference for all Queenslanders.