

1. Policy statement

This policy sets out Coliban Water's commitment to effectively support customers who may be experiencing family violence, either directly or indirectly.

Whilst this policy statement uses the language of family violence, it is inclusive of men's violence against women.

2. Purpose

Family violence is a serious issue that poses substantial risk to the health and wellbeing of our community. Coliban Water recognises that our customers may experience issues of family violence and as an essential service provider, actively supports customers that may be experiencing family violence.

Coliban Water seeks to empower customers to request assistance in regards to family violence related concerns, regardless of their current financial capacity.

3. Responsibility

Coliban Water is committed to providing leadership in preventing all forms of family violence in order to create a safe, inclusive and respectful community.

Coliban Water commits to the following outcomes in the next 12 months in support of this Policy:

- Employee training
 - All employees who interact with Coliban Water's customers will be trained to look for identifiers and indicators of family violence, responding to the complex issues associated with family violence so that they can work and engage with customers in a respectful and appropriate manner.
- Family violence disclosure
 - Coliban Water will provide for a process that avoids customers having to repeat disclosure of their family violence and provides for continuity of service.
- Action for non-payment
 - Coliban Water recognises that family violence is a potential cause of payment difficulties. Customers who self-disclose or are identified as experiencing family violence will be referred to the Account Solutions Team where their accounts will be case managed. Victims of family violence will be included in the Coliban Assist Program to shield them from restriction and/or legal action.
 - Joint accounts
 - Each customer's individual circumstance will be taken into account and a solution will be tailored to the individual's needs.
 - Waiving or suspending debt
 - Coliban Water will assess each individual's circumstances and will provide a solution under our Coliban Assist Program.
- Information Management
 - All personal information concerning family violence will be kept confidential in line with Coliban Water's Privacy Policy including the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs), Information Access Restrictions Policy and the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

However, the IPPs permit the use and disclosure of personal information in certain circumstances. This includes when the organisation reasonably believes that the use or disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare, a serious threat to public health, public safety or public welfare or taking appropriate action in relation to suspected unlawful activity or serious improper conduct.

- Coliban Water will implement an internal process to identify potential customers experiencing family violence and ensure that their personal details are managed with the highest degree of privacy and sensitivity. All personal information will be securely handled remain confidential.
- Support and Assistance
 - Coliban Water may refer customers to external support networks for further assistance. Coliban Water will continue to develop strong relationships with external support networks to fully assist our customers and employees. Coliban Water will publish on our website, and keep up to date, the assistance and referrals available to customers affected by family violence and how customers can access this assistance.
 - Coliban Water recognises there may be customers that are perpetrators of family violence (either actual or alleged). Safety is paramount in this circumstance and Coliban Water staff who witness perpetration of family violence may call Victoria Police. Perpetrators will be referred to the relevant support services for assistance.
 - Coliban Water will provide a copy of this Policy to customers upon request.

This policy and any associated procedures and policy will be reviewed annually. This policy will continue in operation until replaced by a subsequent version or rescinded.

4. Definitions

Coliban Water accepts the definition of family violence as defined in the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)* as:

- Behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour:
 - is physically or sexually abusive; or
 - is emotionally or psychologically abusive; or
 - is economically abusive; or
 - is threatening; or
 - is coercive; or
 - in any other way controls or dominates the family member, and causes that family member to fear for the safety of wellbeing of that family member or another person.
- Behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to above.

5. Links

- Hardship Policy
- Coliban Water's Family Violence Policy – employee (Internal Use)
- Relevant procedures from the Account Solutions and Contact Centre teams (Internal Use)
- Link to www.coliban.com.au – referrals and assistance information