

Domestic and family violence refuges

Information for self-funded refuges

Refuges (sometimes called shelters) provide a place of safety for women and children escaping domestic and family violence in their homes or community.

Government-funded refuges offer temporary supported accommodation services for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, with priority given to women and children escaping imminent high risk situations. Many of the women and children placed in refuges will have experienced multiple complex issues which require the support of skilled professionals.

More information is available on the DVConnect website at <http://www.dvconnect.org/womensline/about-womens-refuges/>

How do women affected by domestic and family violence access a refuge?

In most cases, placement in a refuge is arranged through DVConnect, the statewide domestic and family violence crisis hotline. DVConnect will speak with the person seeking support and undertake an initial risk assessment before finding a placement at a refuge. Referral organisations including DVConnect will only refer women to refuges they know are safe, secure, supportive, accountable and connected into the support service system through local relationships.

Self-funded refuges

While most refuges receive government funding to provide temporary supported accommodation services to women and children in need, there are refuges that offer domestic and family violence services without receiving government funding. These are known as self-funded refuges.

For self-funded refuges to be considered as a referral point for domestic and family violence organisations they need to demonstrate that the service can appropriately meet the safety, security and support needs of women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Organisations such as DVConnect must be confident that any self-funded refuges they refer to are safe and appropriate.

Suitability assessment guide

A suitability assessment guide is available to assist referral organisations to consider the appropriateness of self-funded domestic and family violence refuge services prior to making referrals. The guide may also be used by self-funded domestic and family violence refuges (or organisations seeking to establish a self-funded refuge) to self-assess the suitability of their current and/or proposed services.

The guide outlines five criteria for assessment:

1. Safety
2. Understanding risks and needs
3. Working with clients
4. Staff
5. Governance.

The suitability assessment guide can be found at:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence/domestic-violence-self-funded-refuges>

Registration as a Residential Service may be required.

There are requirements under the Residential Services (Accreditation Act) 2002 that all **residential services** must apply for registration and accreditation.

To consider the requirements of registration and accreditation, information is available on the Department of Housing and Public Works Residential Services unit:

Online:

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/Housing/IndustryRegulation/ResidentialServices/>

Phone: (07) 3008 3450

Email: residentialservices@hpw.qld.gov.au