

Property Manager's Factsheet

How to recognise and respond to family violence safely

On average in Australia, each week a woman is killed by her current or former partner.

Across Australia, the biggest driver of women and children experiencing homelessness is family violence.

Family violence is any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships.

Family violence is a whole-of-community issue that requires the combined and coordinated efforts of local, state, and federal governments, communities, and corporate sectors to respond in ways that can both support victim-survivors' recovery, keep perpetrators of family violence in view and accountable, and to prevent further abuses wherever possible.

Family violence can take the following forms:

- Psychological and emotional abuse
- Coercive control
- Physical violence
- Financial and economic abuse
- Sexual violence

Quick reference guide of the Residential tenancies regulation requirements 2021 on matters related to family violence: If a rental agreement is affected by family violence, renters, rental providers, and property managers have specific rights and obligations under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.

- A renter who is a 'protected person' under a family violence safety notice, family violence intervention order or personal safety intervention order can change the locks without the landlord's or property manager's consent.
- As a property manager, if the locks have been changed, you must not give keys to a renter who you know has been excluded from the rental property under a family violence safety notice, family violence intervention order or personal safety intervention order.
- If a person is experiencing family violence, they can apply to VCAT to end the rental agreement early or start a new agreement in the same property that does not include the person being violent (the respondent). This can also be done without a safety notice or intervention. Evidence such as letters, recordings, photos or statements from others can be used to show they are experiencing family violence. (Residential Tenancies Act 1997.)

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