

FAMILY VIOLENCE CHILD PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP

Service Model

for the 17 Specialist Family Violence Advisers

October 2025

Version 3

Acknowledgements

The service model for the *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* was developed through a facilitated process undertaken by the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare in March and April 2016. Consultations occurred with a range of stakeholders, including representatives from family violence services, men's services, Child Protection divisional staff, family violence experts, advocacy bodies and staff from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. This document is to be read in conjunction with the Implementation Plan, Position Description and Outcomes Measurement Framework.

July 2016

Contents

1.	Background/Context.....	4
2.	Service description	4
2.2	Service aim and objectives	4
2.3	Client.....	4
2.4	Target group and Referral Criteria	6
2.5	Referral source	6
2.6	Onward Referral	6
2.7	Information Sharing.....	6
2.8	Privacy and prohibited disclosure of reporter details	8
2.9	Access to CRIS.....	8
2.10	Practice Frameworks	9
2.11	Service governance arrangements	11
3	Key Service Characteristics	12
3.1	Strategic Focus.....	12
3.2	Operational focus and tasks	12
3.3	Aboriginal families	13
3.4	Cultural diversity.....	14
3.5	Parents with learning difficulties or a disability	14
3.6	Service components	14
4.	Staffing model	17
4.1	Staffing qualifications and competencies.....	17
4.2	Professional support.....	18
4.3	Responsibilities of Employing Agency	19
5.	Dispute Resolution	19
6	Outcomes and Performance Measurement.....	20
7.	Service Model Implementation	20
8.	Service Model Review	20

1. Background/Context

The Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence report has highlighted that family violence is present in a significant proportion of Child Protection cases¹:

- In 2013-14, 37,492 reports to Child Protection had family violence indicated at the time of the report, representing 46 per cent of the 82,073 reports (82,073).
- In the same period, of the reports to Child Protection where family violence was indicated at the time of the report, approximately 30 per cent (n=11,404) were investigated.

The 2015-16 State Budget committed \$17.57 million in funding over five years to the *Child Protection Flexible Responses Initiative*. The initiative, now known as *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership*, co-locates 17 Specialist Family Violence Advisers (SFV Advisers) in Child Protection offices across the State and aims to strengthen Child Protection practice, enable joint assessments, assist Child Protection to navigate the family violence system and strengthen opportunities to divert children away from statutory responses.

2. Service description

Services for victims and perpetrators of family violence operate in the context of the *Family Violence Act 2008*. The *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* co-locates a specialist experienced family violence adviser within Child Protection investigation teams in each of the department's 17 areas. Through this co-location arrangement, the Partnership aims to strengthen and improve responses to families primarily subject to a Child Protection investigation.

This service model was implemented in each of the 17 department areas in mid-2016. As a new model, it will be subject to careful review and monitoring.

2.1 Service overview

- To improve the capacity, confidence and understanding of Child Protection regarding family violence responses and the service system
- To build the local family violence service system's understanding and collaboration with Child Protection

In the light of emerging findings, the *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* service model² may be adjusted to reflect early learning.

2.2 Client

¹ Royal Commission into Family Violence, Volume 11, 2016, pp163-164

² The Statewide Steering Committee can approve any amendment to the Service Model as and when required.

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

The SFV Adviser's client is Child Protection. This reflects the intention of the Partnership to promote Child Protection's improved understanding of the dynamics of family violence, including perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and behaviours.

2.3 Service aim and objectives

The service aim of the *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* is to:

- support and promote improved understanding of the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent.
- restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and
- use this knowledge to assist Child Protection to achieve the following improved outcomes for the service system and for the families reported to Child Protection.

Child Protection Client Outcomes

To improve assessment, planning and intervention in Child Protection investigations where family violence is, or is suspected to be, present in order to:

- Increase safety and stability for families;
- Reduce the risk of harm to children;
- Safely reduce the incidence of re-reports to Child Protection and the number of children placed in out of home care;
- Strengthen the engagement of victims and perpetrators with support services; and
- Contribute to improved engagement with perpetrators to facilitate changes in perpetrator behaviour and improved child-centred parenting capacity.

Service System Outcomes

To contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system.

To achieve this outcome the SFV Adviser will work with Child Protection to:

- Contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system
- Identify and consistently document the impact of family violence on each child
- Recognise the protective parent as a victim/survivor
- Recognise and respond appropriately to perpetrator behaviour and perpetrator-driven risk
- Identify and address systemic barriers to joint practice by family violence and Child Protection
- Strengthen referral pathways between Child Protection and specialist family violence services
- Encourage joint family violence risk assessments (MARAM assessments) and safety plans and enhanced information sharing
- Create a better understanding of each organisation's processes
- Identify, consistently document and respond to the risk from perpetrators to each child
- Support cultural safety - keeping Aboriginal people and other groups connected to their culture
- Improve the quality and depth of information sharing and documentation, including material that may be relevant for legal processes.

2.4 Target group and Referral Criteria

The target group for the *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* are families who are subject to Child Protection involvement where family violence is, or is suspected to be, present with a primary focus on families subject to a Child Protection investigation.

The SFV Adviser will support Child Protection to work with children and their families subject to a Child Protection investigation where family violence has been identified as a risk. Priority groups include (but are not limited to):

- Families subject to a first investigation
- Families where there has been 3 reports to Child Protection in the last 12 months
- Aboriginal children and families
- Children under two
- Women at increased risk due to factors beyond gender (e.g. CALD children and families, and women with disabilities)
- Where serious risk factors are present
- When reviewing the report, children are found to have disengaged from school or childcare
- Where there is an unborn report

2.5 Referral source

Requests for involvement by the SFV Adviser will be sourced from within area based Child Protection Investigation Teams.

Periodically, the SFV Adviser may also be consulted on Child Protection cases in the Intake or Case Management phases (and from community-based Child Protection practitioners).

Each area will establish local arrangements and procedures to manage referrals to the SFV Adviser.

The volume and nature of requests for involvement by the SFV Adviser will require careful monitoring through supervision and local governance and implementation arrangements.

2.6 Onward Referral

Where appropriate and subject to agreement with Child Protection, the SFV Adviser will directly refer a family member, or assist Child Protection to make a referral to a local or statewide specialist family violence service provider. The SFV Adviser will develop a comprehensive knowledge of:

- local and statewide family violence service providers for men, women and children;
- referral pathways;
- up-to-date waitlists for these services; and
- protocols for referral into these services.

2.7 Information Sharing

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

Child Protection and the SFV Advisers are bound by:

- (a) the Information Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (PDPA);
- (b) the *Health Privacy Act 2001* (HRA);
- (c) and any applicable code of practice made under the PDPA and the HRA.

Child Protection and the SFV Advisers are also required to comply with all Commonwealth legislation and the information sharing provision of the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005* (CYFA). During the investigation phases, the information sharing provisions in the CYFA prevail over the PDPA when Child Protection and the SFV Advisers are sharing information between each other.

In administering its statutory functions pursuant to the CYFA, Child Protection receives confidential and private information in respect of children that may be in need of protection, their parents, family and/or friends and members of the public. As part of their role, SFV Advisers also receive information that may assist Child Protection to determine whether a child is in need of protection. Information sharing and consultation between Child Protection and the co-located SFV Adviser may lawfully take place in the following circumstances.

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA)

Child Protection Intake Phase

While most consultations between Child Protection and the SFV Advisers will occur during the investigation phase, some consults may occur at intake. The SFV Adviser is an employee of a prescribed “service agency” under Section 3 of the CYFA being “a body that receives funding from the Secretary under a State contract to provide family violence services”. In the intake phase, section 35 of the CYFA allows Child Protection to consult with the SFV Adviser for the purposes of:

- Seeking advice on or assessing risk to a child; or
- Seeking advice on or determining which community-based child or family service is an appropriate body to provide assistance in respect of a wellbeing report.

Child Protection can therefore consult with the SFV Adviser for the above purposes.

Child Protection Investigation Phase

Information sharing between the SFV Advisers and Child Protection during the investigation phase is governed by Part 4.6 of the CYFA not the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. Child Protection may disclose information arising during the investigation phase to “a person who is, or is a member of a class of persons who are, authorised in writing by the Secretary”. The SFV Advisers will be authorised by the Secretary as a class of persons approved to receive information arising during the investigation. Giving information to Child Protection during the course of an investigation in good faith does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the SFV Adviser nor does it make the SFV Adviser subject to any liability (s208) which includes liability under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. The SFV Adviser can give information to Child Protection (s209).

New reports to Child Protection by SFV Adviser

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

The SFV Adviser can report new allegations of harm about a child in good faith to Child Protection on open cases. A new allegation of harm to a child constitutes a report under sections 28, 29 or 183. If the SFV Adviser's new allegation of harm is classified as a new report the identity of the SFV Adviser remains confidential in the absence of the SFV Adviser's written consent (sections 41 and 191).

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (PDPA)

When disclosing information between each other in intake and post investigation phase, Child Protection and the SFV Advisers must comply with the privacy provisions in the PDPA and/or the *Health Records Act 2001*. Pursuant to the PDPA and the HRA, personal and health information may be shared without the consent of the individual when the disclosure is for the primary purpose for which it was collected. If possible, consent should always be sought prior to disclosing information even if the disclosure is for the primary purpose for which it was collected.

In addition, personal and health information can be disclosed for a purpose related to the primary purpose, or in the case of sensitive information it is directly related to the primary purpose and where the individual would reasonably expect the disclosure of information for the secondary purpose.

Pursuant to the PDPA, the SFV Adviser (and Child Protection) can also share personal information without consent if they reasonably believe 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; or
 - a serious threat to public health, public safety or public welfare; or
- there is a suspicion of unlawful activity and the information is used or disclosed as a necessary part of its investigation or in reporting its concerns to relevant persons or authorities.

2.8 Prohibited disclosure of reporter details

Sections 41 and 191 of the CYFA prohibit Child Protection practitioners from disclosing information about a reporter, including providing such information to the SFV Advisers.

Section 209 prohibits Child Protection from disclosing to any other person, including the SFV Adviser, the name of a person who has given information in confidence to Child Protection or any information that is likely to lead to the identification of that person.

Aside from this limitation, both Child Protection and family violence services are committed to open and transparent sharing of information where permitted by the information sharing provisions of the CYFA, the PDPA and the HRA.

2.9 Access to CRIS

CRIS is the information system used to record details of Child Protections involvement with a child and their family

Due to the secrecy provisions in the CYFA including the protection of a reporter's identity, the protection of the identity of people who have given information to the department in confidence and the department's obligation to comply with the PDPA and the HRA it is not possible to allow the SFV Advisers to have access to CRIS. The SFV Advisers may have access to Child Protection documents and reports provided that such access does not reveal the identity of a reporter or a person who has given information to Child Protection in confidence, the information is relevant to the current investigation and is otherwise permitted by the PDPA and the HRA. As is current practice, any record of the SFV Adviser's involvement in a case should be recorded by Child Protection and uploaded onto CRIS. For example, if the SFV Adviser undertakes a MARAM assessment, that assessment should be uploaded onto the CRIS system by Child Protection.

2.10 Practice Frameworks

Child Protection Frameworks

The SFV Advisers will be based in the Child Protection Investigation Team in each local area office. Child Protection Investigation Teams are responsible for investigating reports that indicate a child is or may be at risk of significant harm. Such investigations usually involve:

- preparing an *investigation plan* based on the information contained in the report
- careful consideration of any past Child Protection involvement with the child and their family
- consultation with professionals and services involved with the family
- visit(s) to the child's home to assess the risk to the child
- undertaking assessments of caregivers or potential caregivers
- making a determination (a substantiation) as to whether the child is or may be at risk of significant harm
- participating in and contributing to the preparation of case plans at the point of substantiation.

In undertaking an investigation, Child Protection is guided by a number of provisions in the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* in particular a set of *Best Interests* principles and *decision-making* principles.³ These principles are reflected in a *Best Interests Case Practice Model* which guides the day to day practice of Child Protection practitioners. The *Best Interests Case Practice Model* states⁴:

The CYFA requires that family services, Child Protection and placement services work in ways that reflect the Best Interests principles and associated provisions of the CYFA. The Best Interests framework provides a common basis for professionals to work together and with local communities and other services to meet the needs of vulnerable children and their families, by encouraging a consistent focus on the following:

- *Safety*
- *Stability*
- *Development*

³ Sections 10-14, CYFA 2005

⁴ Department of Health and Human Services, 2012, Best Interests Case Practice Summary Guide, p. 3

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

Each of these dimensions of the child's experience needs to be viewed through the lens of the age and stage of the child, their culture and their gender. The child's best interests need to be considered holistically and in a culturally competent way at every point of contact with the service system.

A significant proportion of investigations undertaken by Child Protection involve family violence concerns. To support Child Protection's practice with children and families experiencing family violence, please refer to Assessing and managing family violence procedures and advice located on the Child Protection Manual.

Specialist Family Violence Service Frameworks

The Royal Commission into Family Violence provides the following description of Victoria's 28 specialist family violence services⁵:

These services aim to keep women and children safe, and their work includes risk assessment and management and safety planning with women who are in a violent relationship, are thinking of leaving their relationship, or have left it.

Different specialist family violence services deliver support services in different ways. Women experiencing family violence often have a diverse range of needs—legal, housing, financial, health and wellbeing, and so on.

The specialist services provide support and advocate on behalf of women as they make their way through the various service systems. As part of a case-management response, specialist family violence services can work with women to do the following:

- *apply for a family violence intervention order*
- *accompany a woman to appointments with her lawyer and to any court hearings*
- *arrange for locks to be changed at her house*
- *talk to her children's school to explain the terms of a family violence intervention order*
- *help her set up a new bank account and obtain a new mobile phone*
- *help her negotiate with government departments and agencies such as Centrelink, the Office of Housing,*
- *and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection if there are visa concerns*
- *help her secure suitable alternative housing—whether this be crisis accommodation (a refuge), transitional or social housing, or private rental*
- *help her identify and act on employment, education and training opportunities*

In addition, a number of services provide Men's Behaviour Change programs designed to help perpetrators cease their violent behaviour. Family Violence service providers operate in the context of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*.

The physical co-location of the SFV Advisers in Child Protection local area offices aims to support improved collaboration and understanding across these three critical services – Child Protection, women's family violence services and men's family violence services. The Partnership builds on the learnings from other co-

⁵ Royal Commission into Family Violence, 2016, Final Report, Volume 11, p.3

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

location arrangements including the community based Child Protection practitioner and Multi-Disciplinary Centres (MDC's).

By co-locating experienced family violence advisers in the same location as Child Protection, opportunities for better understanding and appreciation of the respective roles of each service can be enhanced. The focus of consultation on children subject to an active investigation aims to bring practitioners together in a real time operational environment to work through each other's understanding of the dynamics that may be operating in a particular family and the strategies that might be best deployed to address the issues present.

The introduction of an experienced family violence adviser with deep knowledge of the dynamics of family violence aims to drive improved understanding and practice across Child Protection and the key services working with children and families where family violence is or may be present. The learning acquired through these processes will also inform strategic considerations at the local level by helping to identify barriers and develop solutions that emerge from day to day practice.

2.11 Service governance arrangements

Governance will operate at three levels:

Statewide Steering Committee

The Statewide Steering Group will:

- Provide continuous advice and feedback on the development and evolution of the service model.
- Contribute to the final design and evolution of the service model, based on the key findings and recommendations from the workshops and other reform initiatives.
- Authorise the Service Model, Implementation Plan and Position Description (and any other documentation produced to support the Partnership).
- Maintain the fidelity of the model while continuing to foster flexibility and innovation.
- Amend the Service Model or other documentation as and when appropriate.
- Address problem solving and troubleshooting issues that may arise as the model evolves and to ensure a uniform approach across the 17 area locations.
- Establish a standard MOU to be used across the 17 area locations
- Provide ongoing advice on the implementation of the Partnership having regard to the changing service system.
- Establish statewide monitoring and review arrangements.
- Meet on a monthly basis to support initial implementation, thereafter on a quarterly basis to monitor and review the operation of the service model.

Divisional Implementation Group

The Divisional Implementation Groups

- Established in each of the four department of divisions.
- Include representation from the positions' employing organisations and a senior Child Protection manager from each local area

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

- Meet on a monthly basis during the initial establishment phase (three-six months) and thereafter on a quarterly basis.
- Manage the implementation of the service model according to the Implementation Plan.
- Manage the establishment and ongoing operation of the *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* including the volume of consultation and advice requests.
- Develop, finalise and periodically review a local written agreement/MoU on the operation of the role (a Statewide template of the written agreement/MoU will be developed).
- Align the implementation and ongoing operation of the service model with other reform initiatives.
- Support local and State-wide evaluation and monitoring activities.
- Participate as required in activities led by the Statewide Steering Group.
- Provide periodic reports to the CEO of the Family Violence Provider, the Child Protection Area Manager and to Practice Leader(s) on the operation of the service model.
- Provide periodic reports to the Regional Family Violence Partnerships or Regional Integrated Family Violence Committees on the operation of the role.
- Respond to strategic issues and matters arising from the operation of the service model.

Local Implementation Group

In the department's 17 local areas, the Family Violence Service Provider and Child Protection will each nominate an individual to work together and plan the implementation of the service model locally. Sound local implementation will be required to ensure the SFV Advisers are supported and effectively inducted into the role.

3 Key Service Characteristics

The positions will operate at both strategic and operational levels.

3.1 Strategic Focus

The strategic focus involves supporting the development of more integrated service response by Child Protection and family violence services through:

- Identifying emerging trends, needs and gaps in service delivery and practice issues, particularly in the investigation phase, and to use this knowledge to generate changes in systems and approaches.
- Facilitating engagement between and promoting joint work by Child Protection and family violence services in the local area.
- Improving the quality and consistency of family violence related information, assessment and interventions in case notes.
- Identifying the need for, participating in, and/or delivering Child Protection training and professional development activities.
- At the local level, supporting the implementation of the government's responses to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

3.2 Operational focus and tasks

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

The operational focus will occur through direct engagement with activities and tasks associated with Child Protection investigations:

- To jointly identify and document, with Child Protection, issues in responses to family violence and develop solutions to system gaps and practice issues.
- Provide specialist advice to Child Protection practitioners undertaking investigations where family violence is present.
- Where permitted, facilitate client information sharing, and where appropriate, support joint work between Child Protection and family violence services to achieve better engagement with services for victims and perpetrators of family violence.
- Where permitted, provide information about the client's history from the Specialist Family Violence Agency and other family violence men's and women's services operating in the local area.
- Support Child Protection to understand the dynamics of perpetrator behaviour and use this information to:
 - improve engagement with perpetrators and to create stronger feedback loops between men's services and Child Protection; and
 - enhance understanding and work with the non-offending parent.
- Initiate exceptions conferences⁶, contribute to the rationale for substantiation, and participate in secondary consultation with Child Protection to enable more informed assessments of safety and risk to victims and perpetrator behaviour.
- Assisting Child Protection practitioners to understand and navigate the family violence system
- Making outward referrals (where possible warm referrals) in collaboration with Child Protection to specialist family violence services and expediting referrals.
- Maintain an in-depth knowledge of the family violence support services in the area and the eligibility requirements for such services.
- Keeping up to date information on waitlists and alternatives for family violence support services in the area.
- Assisting Child Protection to secure placement for clients in refuge or crisis accommodation.
- Coordinating other family violence advisers in the area to attend joint home visits with Child Protection.
- Targeting the use of funding and resources in responding to clients that experience and/or use family violence; and
- Building the capacity of Child Protection.

Given the significant family violence reforms due to commence in Victoria, the service model may require regular review and modification. It is expected the nature of the specialist role is likely to evolve over time.

Underpinning both the operational and strategic focus will be recognition of the particular needs of the following client groups:

3.3 Aboriginal families

⁶ Also referred to as case reviews or reflective practice reviews. Usually convened by involved professionals to strategically examine and draw themes and learning from 'exceptional' cases and case outcomes.

The *Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework*⁷ has been developed to support organisations in delivering services that address cultural competence and cultural safety.

The framework states that developing and maintaining cultural knowledge is central to healthy childhood development and identity formation in Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal culture and spirituality are increasingly recognised as protective factors for families and children.

In work with Aboriginal families, it is important to acknowledge the recent history of Aboriginal families, which may have caused unresolved grief and trauma which impacts on parenting. It is also important to avoid a narrow Western nuclear family lens that only looks at the mother–infant relationship. For example, assessments of parenting in Aboriginal communities must explore the role of extended family, clans and kinship networks in parenting.

Working with Aboriginal families therefore requires a holistic approach that encompasses the social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of individuals and the community as a whole.

3.4 Cultural diversity

The department's *Diversity and inclusion framework 2022–2027*⁸ outlines a cultural diversity plan that recognises that providing culturally responsive, competent respectful and accessible services is a core responsibility of the department and the services it funds. Service provision will be underpinned by an understanding of cultural identity and differences in parenting practices. In working with culturally and linguistically diverse groups, consideration should be given to issues of unresolved trauma, grief and loss in refugee and migrant families who may have fled from war or oppression and the impact of traditional parenting practices on the caregiving role of the parents. Developing an understanding of culturally specific practices may involve consulting with culturally specific services and/or local communities.

3.5 Parents with learning difficulties or a disability

Parents with learning difficulties, an intellectual or physical disability may require more learning opportunities to adequately develop parenting skills. Service provision must be flexible and encourage a strengths based approach that draws on information from all services that may be involved with the family to develop a program tailored to a parent's individual needs. Working with parents who have a learning difficulty or an intellectual or physical disability may involve utilising resources available through Healthy Start or contacting disability services to ensure the best means of communication.

3.6 Service components

Practice Principles for the SFV Adviser

The following practice principles underpin the operation of the role:

⁷ Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, 2008, *Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework*

⁸ *Diversity and inclusion framework 2022–2027*

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

- Contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system
- Recognise the protective parent as an adult victim/survivor
- Recognise and respond appropriately to perpetrator behaviour and perpetrator-driven risk
- Identify and address systemic barriers to joint practice by family violence and Child Protection
- Strengthen referral pathways between Child Protection and specialist family violence services
- Encourage joint family violence risk assessments and safety plans and enhanced information sharing
- Create a better understanding of each organisation's processes
- Identify and consistently document the risk from perpetrator to each child
- Actively create cultural safety - keeping Aboriginal people connected to their culture.

Key roles and responsibilities

The table below describes the tasks and responsibilities of the SFV Advisers positions:

Key Roles and Responsibilities	SFV Advisers (17 positions)
Employer	Family Violence CSO
Location	One per department area – co-located in Child Protection offices
Phase of department operation	Investigation
Primary Operational Roles and Tasks	<p>Provision of consultation and advice to CP practitioners undertaking investigations with a particular focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perpetrator behaviour and impact upon the protective parent. 2. Supporting engagement with the broader family violence service system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To jointly identify and document, with Child Protection, issues in responses to family violence and develop solutions to system gaps and practice issues. • Provide specialist advice to Child Protection practitioners undertaking investigations where family violence is present. • Where permitted, facilitate client information sharing, and where appropriate, support joint work between Child Protection and family violence services to achieve better engagement with services for victims and perpetrators of family violence. • Where permitted, provide information about the client's history from the Specialist Family Violence Agency and other family violence men's and women's services operating in the local area. • Support Child Protection to understand the dynamics of perpetrator behaviour and use this information to improve engagement with perpetrators and to create stronger feedback loops between men's services and Child Protection; and enhance understanding and work with the non-offending parent. • Initiate exceptions conferences, contribute to the rationale for substantiation, and participate in secondary consultation with Child Protection to enable more informed assessments of safety and risk to victims and perpetrator behaviour. • Assisting Child Protection practitioners to understand and navigate the family violence system • Making outward referrals (where possible warm referrals) in collaboration with Child Protection to specialist family violence services and expediting referrals. • Maintain an in-depth knowledge of the family violence support services in the area and the eligibility requirements for such services. • Keeping up to date information on waitlists and alternatives for family violence support services in the area. • Assisting Child Protection to secure placement for clients in refuge or crisis accommodation. • Coordinating other family violence workers in the area to attend joint home visits with Child Protection. • Targeting the use of funding and resources in responding to clients that experience and/or use family violence; and • Building the capacity of Child Protection.
Key Roles and Responsibilities	SFV Adviser (17 positions)
Primary Strategic Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying emerging trends, needs and gaps in service delivery and practice issues, particularly in the investigation phase, and to use this knowledge to generate changes in systems and approaches. • Facilitating engagement between and promoting joint work by Child Protection and family violence

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

	<p>services in the local area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving the quality and consistency of family violence related information, assessment and interventions in case notes.• Identifying the need for, participate in, and/or deliver Child Protection training and professional development activities.• At the local level, supporting the implementation of the government's responses to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.
Key Roles and Responsibilities	SFV Adviser (17 positions)
Professional Development Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying the need for, participate in, and/or deliver Child Protection training and professional development activities.

Consultation and Advice

Upon referral from the Team Manager or Practice Leader in the Investigation Team at Child Protection, the SFV Adviser will provide consultation and advice on the case referred. This will initially involve an exchange of information about what is known about the family including previous involvement and factors relevant to risk assessment. Consultation will also include the provision of advice based on the SFV Adviser's knowledge of the dynamics of family violence, including perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and the range of local support services.

The provision of consultation and advice can range from a one-off consultation to ongoing periodic advice as the case proceeds through the investigation phase. In some cases, dependent upon local arrangements and agreements, the SFV Adviser may accompany Child Protection on a visit to the family home to assist with the Child Protection assessment and support engagement with local specialist services, including specialist family violence services and referral to men's family violence services.

Record of referral and referral outcome

The SFV Adviser will make an electronic record of all referrals through the completion of two standardised documents:

- A statewide consultation and advice form
- Data collection template

The consultation and advice form will include the CRIS number of each child subject to investigation and the consultation and advice provided.

Where referral leads to advice or consultation with Child Protection only, the consultation and advice form will be provided to Child Protection and uploaded into the CRIS system. As Child Protection is the client, this form will not be retained by the SFV Adviser or Specialist Family Violence Agency.

Where referral leads to direct client contact:

- The consultation and advice form will be provided to Child Protection and uploaded into CRIS, and retained for the SFV Adviser and their Agency's records
- The SFV Adviser will advise Child Protection of the outcome of any direct client contact, so that this information can also be uploaded by the Child Protection worker into CRIS, and

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

- The SFV Adviser will retain a copy of these notes for their and their Agency's records.

Any MARAM assessments completed by the SFV Adviser will be provided to Child Protection and uploaded into the CRIS system.

Role Location

The role is located in the Child Protection office in the local area.

Flexible working hours

The SFV Adviser will be required to operate flexible and accessible work hours that meet the needs of families. It is expected that a small proportion of the service response may take place outside normal business hours of 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

4. Staffing model

4.1 Staffing qualifications and competencies

The SFV Adviser will be a skilled and experienced staff member with high level knowledge of family violence service responses and service provision.

Knowledge and skills

Staff competencies include:

- Expert knowledge of local family violence support services and approaches in the local area.
- A minimum of three years of experience working in the family violence service system, preferably with supervisory experience.
- Demonstrated knowledge and high-level understanding of:
 - the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent;
 - mechanisms to restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and
 - the capacity to use this knowledge to assist Child Protection achieve improved client and system outcomes.
- An established strong working relationship with Child Protection is desirable.
- Capacity and desire to support improved engagement by Child Protection with both victims and perpetrators.
- Demonstrated understanding of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, the *Health Records Act 2001*, the MARAM Framework and Victoria Police Code of Practice.
- Willingness and ability to engage directly with perpetrators or with services working with perpetrators of family violence for the purpose of service linkage and referral.
- Demonstrated experience in developing and maintaining relationships with other stakeholders in a multi-disciplinary environment including capacity to problem solve and negotiate with other professionals.

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

- Highly developed written and oral communication skills including:
 - a demonstrated high level of skill in accurately recording data, correspondence and reporting; and
 - providing written and oral evidence to the Children's Court of Victoria, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria and other relevant courts and tribunals.
- Use a range of IT/web-based applications to manage workflow in accordance with organisational guidelines and privacy principles.
- Keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with organisational requirements, information security and privacy policies and requirements.

Personal qualities

- Good interpersonal, team and networking skills and capacity to work independently.
- Capacity to adapt to the evolving nature of the role.
- Enthusiasm for and willingness to lead change.
- Ability to lead professional development activities with Child Protection and the home family violence agency.
- Demonstrates initiative.
- Able to identify and influence systemic change.

Professional Qualifications

- A degree or diploma in a relevant or related community services discipline is preferred.
- A valid driver's licence is mandatory.
- A current Employee Working with Children Check (WWCC) card is required and will need to be provided prior to commencement of employment by the applicant. Currency will need to be maintained by the employee for the period of employment

Professional Development and Leave

The Specialist Family Violence Agency and the SFV Adviser will negotiate supervision, leave requests and professional development.

4.2 Professional support

The provision of professional support for staff engaged in co-located work arrangements is critical given the nature of such roles. SFV Advisers will require high quality supervision, access to good quality professional development and service provider support in their role to maintain objectivity, prevent drift from program guidelines and provide an opportunity for reflection and professional growth.

Learning from other co-location arrangements (e.g. the community based position in The Orange Door) suggests it is important that the SFV Advisers:

- are located half to one day per week located at their employing family violence agency. This allows for:
 - Supervision, professional development, and access to peer and team support
 - Engagement in employing agency activities such as team meetings

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

- Time to consult with and draw on the expertise of colleagues to inform specific case issues.
- have a day-to-day contact/liaison point being either a team manager/senior manager within Child Protection.
- have a clear supervision plan in place between the employing family violence agency and the day to day contact point within Child Protection so the responsibilities of each party are clear, and the degree to which the SFV Adviser is on task can be effectively assessed.
- actively participate in learning and development activities undertaken by the local agency, Child Protection Principal Practitioners and Practice Leaders.
- are supported by a statewide co-coordinator position to take responsibility for project oversight and support the Steering Committee.
- have access to an online peer support network (communities of practice).

4.3 Responsibilities of Employing Family Violence Agency

The SFV Adviser is co-located in a Child Protection office location. This arrangement places additional responsibilities upon the employing family violence agency, including the need to ensure:

- A comprehensive induction to the role, including facilitating and supporting the SFV Adviser's participation in statewide induction and training arrangements.
- Satisfactory work arrangements, including access to a laptop computer (to enable access offsite), I.T support, mobile telephone, office furniture and stationary at the adviser's home family violence agency (whilst located at a department office, the department will provide the adviser with a workstation with a desk and chair);
- Access to supervision and professional and peer support from a remote location;
- Facilitating and supporting the adviser's participation in statewide professional development activities associated with the role;
- Active participation in the Local Implementation Group and the Divisional Implementation Group; and
- Active and timely participation in the Dispute Resolution process (see 4.4).

5. Dispute Resolution

From time to time disputes may arise in the operation of the SFV Adviser role.

The dispute resolution process should follow the table below, **with an emphasis placed on resolving disputes at operational level.**

A tiered approach should be utilised to resolve disagreements and address issues at the point of practice. If patterns of issues or intractable issues arise, collaborative senior management oversight will ensure issues are resolved according to standard mechanisms.

Issue/s	Responsibility/mechanism	Roles
---------	--------------------------	-------

Family Violence Child Protection Partnership

Issue/s	Responsibility/mechanism	Roles
Day to day: Day-by-day communication	Supervisor at the employing Family Violence agency and relevant Child Protection Investigation Team Manager	Communicating with each other to resolve issues at practice level.
Operational Patterns or series of issues, and demand and referral trends	Supervisor at the employing Family Violence agency and relevant, Child Protection Investigation Team Manager	Resolve issues, or where this is not possible refer to Divisional Governance group.
Issues associated with complex cases	Supervisor at the employing Family Violence agency, relevant Child Protection Investigation Team Manager and Practice Leader	Advise and lead responses and strategies with complex cases and cohorts.
Strategic Intractable or system-related issues	Divisional Implementation Group. If unresolved, then refer to Statewide Steering Committee.	Respond to and develop joint options for tackling problem. Consider appropriate response and action and communicate decisions to all levels within both services.

If the matter cannot be resolved through these processes, a formal review process may be undertaken between the relevant Family Violence agency and the department.

Mechanisms for systematically reviewing issues related to the relationships and transactions between the SFV Adviser and Child Protection will also occur through the Local Implementation Group.

6 Outcomes and Performance Measurement

Refer to the document Family Violence Child Protection Partnership Outcomes Measurement Framework (July 2016).

7. Service Model Implementation

Refer to the document Family Violence Child Protection Partnership Implementation Plan (July 2016).

8. Service Model Review

The service model will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended in the light of emerging findings from the operation of the model by the Statewide Steering Committee.