

# If you are experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence, **your telco can help**

Phone and internet services can help you stay safe and connected.

If you are experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence, telcos can support you. They must prioritise your safety and privacy and help keep you connected.

## How your telco can help

Your telco has mandatory new rules it must follow if you are experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence.

Your telco must:

- **Help you** when you contact them.
- **Put your safety first** – you won't have to deal with the perpetrator
- **Keep your account safe** with extra security.
- **Protect your privacy** – such as hiding calls to support services on your bill.
- **Urgently reconnect your service** if it's been cut off or restricted, or offer you a new service.
- **Provide clear online information** about the help they offer.

## What your telco **MUST** do:

- Check it's safe to talk before starting the chat.
- Agree on a safe way to communicate.
- Avoid making you repeat your story when transferring you to another staff member.
- Connect you to trained staff or a specialist team.
- Offer privacy and security options, like setting up a new account or adding PINs for extra protection.
- Reconnect your service quickly if you're disconnected.
- Publish clear support info on their website/app.
- Provide at least 2 ways for you to contact them.
- Offer financial hardship help.
- Train staff on how to help and respond sensitively to you.
- Consult with experts to ensure their policies and procedures reflect best practice.

## What telcos **MUST NOT** do

- Ask you to contact the perpetrator.
- Ask for details or evidence about the abuse, unless it's to keep you or someone else safe or required by law.
- Disconnect, suspend or restrict your service for a minimum of 30 days after you report a safety risk.
- Show calls to certain helplines on your bill, including 1800RESPECT.

## What is domestic, family and sexual violence?

Domestic, family and sexual violence is when someone uses certain behaviours to hurt, scare, control or monitor you. It can include physical harm, emotional abuse, coercion, sexual violence, financial abuse and technology abuse. It can happen with partners, between family or extended family members and carers. Sexual violence can also occur with other people you know, colleagues or strangers.

## Complaints

- Start with your telco – they will treat your complaint as urgent if there is a threat to your or your child's safety. Your complaint must be resolved in 2 days.
- Complain to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) if your telco complaint is unresolved.
- Tell the ACMA if your telco has not followed the rules.

## Where to get help

If you're in immediate danger, **call 000**. For support services, contact:

- **1800RESPECT** – 1800 737 732
- **ElderHelp** – 1800 353 374
- **Full Stop** – 1800 385 578
- **National Debt Helpline** – 1800 007 007
- **National Disability Abuse & Neglect Hotline** – 1800 880 052
- **Rainbow Sexual, DFV Helpline** – 1800 497 212

## More about the new rules

The new rules are set out in the Telecommunications Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Consumer Protection Standard 2025.

## Who is covered?

If you're experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence, you're covered. This includes individuals (or someone acting for you), not for profit organisations and small businesses. Once you tell your telco, you can get support – even if you're not currently a customer.

Visit the ACMA website for help and more information