

Coliban Water has a zero tolerance for violence which includes family violence, men's violence against women and financial abuse

Family violence:

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 feel fear for the safety or 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.

Our Commitment:

Staff training

- Our customer facing teams and customer team managers receive ongoing training to identify and respond to the complex issues associated with family violence.

Family violence disclosure

- Customers who are identified or self-identify family violence will not be asked to repeat their lived experience.
- We provide a dedicated single point of entry through our trained specialists in our Customer Care Team
- We will assign a dedicated case manager and provide you with a direct contact number where requested.
- Organisations supporting a victim survivor will not be asked to repeat their lived experience and can access our dedicated single point of entry.

Action for non-payment

- We recognise 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 Customer Care Team where their accounts will be individually case managed.
- Victim survivors will, with their consent, be included in the Coliban Assist Program to shield them from restriction and/or legal action.
- Victim survivors will be provided with the option to secure their account, this will mean that the account is only visible to trained staff within the Customer Care team.
- Victim survivors can elect to have a password added to their account for an additional layer of security.
- Joint accounts
 - Our customers individual circumstance will be considered, and a solution will be tailored to their individual needs.
 - Either account holder can request to have their account secured.
- Individualised account management.
 - We will assess each customers individual circumstances and provide a solution that may include;
 - Tailored payment arrangements.

- Access to utility relief grants and concession entitlements (subject to eligibility).
- Suspension of debt, reduced payment instalments, and or partial or full debt waivers (assessed on a case-by-case basis).

Information management

- All personal information concerning family violence will be kept confidential in line with Coliban Water's Privacy Policy, which includes the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs), Information Access Restrictions Policy and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.
- We will ensure that the personal details of victim survivors are managed with the highest degree of privacy and sensitivity.

Support and assistance

- We may refer customers to other external support networks, such as financial counselling or family violence services for further assistance.
- We 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.
- Safety is paramount, Coliban Water staff who witness family violence events may call Victoria Police.
- Perpetrators will be referred to relevant support services for assistance.
- We will provide a copy of this Policy to customers upon request.

Zero-tolerance approach

- We take a zero-tolerance approach to perpetrators using water services to perpetrate family violence and financial abuse.
 - We will not restrict the water supply at a property where family violence has been identified or self-disclosed.
 - Our employees will not knowingly collude with perpetrators.
 - If an employee or contractor identifies that a water service or account is being used to perpetrate family violence or financial abuse, we will undertake the reasonable steps to stop the identified abuse and prevent further acts of abuse.

Our policies:

- We will publish on our website, and keep up to date, the assistance, and referrals available to customers affected by family violence and how customers may access such assistance.
- Provide a copy of the policy to a customer upon request, and
- Provide for a periodic review of our Family Violence policies, processes, and procedures.

Support for Customers and Employees:

Customers:

- We promote customer safety by providing for the secure handling of information about those affected by family violence, including confidentiality.
- We provide a process that, avoids customers having to repeat disclosure of their family violence, and provides for continuity of service.
- We provide a means for referring customers who may be affected by family violence to specialist family violence services.
- We recognise family violence as a potential cause of payment difficulties and will provide hardship support to customers affected by family violence.
- We specify Coliban Water's approach to debt management and recovery that thoughtfully considers situations of family violence, and
- We take a zero-tolerance approach to perpetrators using water services to perpetrate family violence and financial abuse.

Employees:

- We promote internally, the support provided to employees affected by family violence, including any training, leave, external referrals and counselling available.
 - We provide employees with access to Family Violence Contact Officers who are trained to support and assist employees affected by family violence or perpetrating family violence, in or outside the workplace.
 - We provide all relevant employees with ongoing training to:
 - a) identify customers affected by family violence
 - b) deal appropriately with customers affected by family violence, and
 - c) apply Coliban Water's Family Violence policies and related processes and procedures to customers affected by family violence, and
 - We promote employee safety ensuring information in relation to those affected by family violence is secure and confidential.
-