

What is FASS and how can it help you?

- Legal Aid WA's Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS) offers a free duty lawyer and social support worker service for anyone with a family law problem who is affected by family violence.
- You can find FASS at the Family Court of WA at Level 2, 150 Terrace Road, Perth.
- You can also access FASS when the Family Court travels on circuit to Broome, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany.
- FASS duty lawyers can give you legal advice about parenting matters, applying for or defending a Family Violence Restraining Order, protection and care matters, urgent property matters, and divorce.
- FASS social support workers can help you to manage risk. They can also give you counselling, referrals to other services, in-court support, and help dealing with organisations outside the court system such as police, refuges, and housing services.
- You can ask for help from FASS by calling Legal Aid WA on 1300 650 579 Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm (Australian Western Standard Time). If you are at Family Court just ask to see the FASS staff.

Where else can I find information?

National FASS: nationallegalaid.org

Family Violence Law: familyviolencelaw.gov.au

Contact Us

Legal Aid WA Infoline (Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm)
1300 650 579; FASS@legalaid.wa.gov.au

FASS service providers

Perth Legal Aid & Anglicare WA FASS
Bunbury Legal Aid Office
South West Community Legal Centre
Waratah Support Centre
Albany Community Legal Centre
Albany Legal Aid Office
Anglicare WA Albany
Centrecare Kalgoorlie
Kalgoorlie Legal Aid Office
Geraldton Centacare Family Services
Geraldton Legal Aid Office
Anglicare WA Broome
Broome Legal Aid Office



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SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIANS

- Aboriginal Communities • Counselling & Separation
- Disability Services • Family & Domestic Violence
- Financial Assistance • Housing & Homelessness
- Mental Health • Parenting Support • Suicide Postvention
- Sexual Abuse Support Services • Youth Services



FAMILY
ADVOCACY
& SUPPORT
SERVICES



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What is family violence?

- Violence, or a threat of violence, by one family member towards another
- Any other behaviour that coerces or controls a family member or causes them to be fearful
- Family violence can happen between intimate partners, ex-partners (including same sex relationships), siblings, grandparents, children towards their parents or from family carers to a relative. It can also include people related to each other through culture, kinship or religion.

Examples of family violence

Family violence is not just hurting someone, it also includes behaviours in the pictures (right). If you have concerns about these types of behaviours you can seek legal advice and social support from FASS. It can be helpful to talk it through with someone else and understand what your legal options are and how you can increase safety for yourself and your family.

If you are experiencing or at risk of family violence, these steps can increase your safety:

- You may need to take immediate action to make yourself safe and plan for the future.
- Depending on your circumstances, you may decide to apply for a restraining order or other orders to help protect you from family violence.
- You may also wish to access counselling or other social support services.

Children and family violence

A child may directly experience, or be exposed to, family violence. A child is exposed to family



violence when they see or hear family violence or experience its effects in any other way, e.g:

- hearing threats to hurt or kill a family member
- comforting a family member who has been hurt by another family member
- cleaning up mess at home when a family member has deliberately damaged property
- seeing police or an ambulance help a family member who has been hurt
- being asked to keep quiet about the violence

Family violence can impact children in many ways, causing the child to experience:

- physical injury, neglect or self harm
 - low self-esteem, depression, anxiety and other mental health problems
 - difficulty in communicating their feelings
 - difficulty making friends
 - behavioural problems, including aggression and dangerous risk taking
 - problems at school
 - poor concentration and academic results
- Children can heal from their experience of family violence. The FASS social support worker can help you get support for your child or children.

Parents, carers and adults in children's lives can act in ways that are 'protective' such as:

- providing children with a place where they feel physically and psychologically safe
- parenting that provides structure, warmth, emotional support and positive reinforcement
- ensure there is positive support from other adults outside their immediate family, such as relatives, family friends and teachers

Programs to help people:

The aim of the programs is to support people to change their behaviours so that their family members feel safe. Legal Aid WA's Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS) can provide information about programs available. You can also access more information about available programs on the FASS website.