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| Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals, information sharing schemes, and MARAM  |
| Factsheet for Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals (Local Services)September 2023 |
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# Information sharing and MARAM requirements

As mental health and wellbeing service providers under the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022*, Local Services are prescribed by regulations to participate in the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS). Local Services are also prescribed to align their policies, procedures, practice guidance, and tools, to the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM).

This factsheet providers an overview of the information sharing schemes, the MARAM, and training available to Local Services staff.

# What are CISS and FVISS?

CISS forms Part 6a of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* and allows prescribed services to share information to promote the wellbeing or safety of a child or a group of children. For more information see [www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme).

FVISS forms Part 5a of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* and allows prescribed organisations to share information to assess or manage family violence risk in relation to both children and adults. Information sharing requests made under FVISS must relate to assessing or managing family violence risk. For more information see [www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme).

# Who can I share information with?

Only prescribed organisations or services can request and share information under the information sharing schemes. These are known as Information Sharing Entities (ISEs). The Victorian Government maintains an online ISE List available at [iselist.www.vic.gov.au/ise/list/](https://iselist.www.vic.gov.au/ise/list/).

The ISE List is updated at regular intervals but is not a live list. Information sharing entities are responsible for verifying whether a person requesting information is from an information sharing entity before they share any information.

# What type of information can I share?

ISEs must only share information under CISS to the extent necessary to promote the wellbeing or safety of a child or group of children, consistent with the best interests of the child or children.

ISEs must only share information under FVISS where it is necessary to assess or manage risk to the safety of a person from family violence, and to hold perpetrators of family violence accountable for their actions.

### Excluded information

Excluded information cannot be shared under either information sharing scheme. Excluded information isinformation that, if shared, may endanger a person’s life or physical safety, prejudice an investigation or a coronial enquiry, contravene legal professional privilege, contravene a court order, or law that prohibits the disclosure of the information, is contrary to public interest, or contravenes a court order or law that prohibits the disclosure of the information.

The [Family Violence Information Sharing Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-information-sharing-scheme) and [Child Information Sharing Scheme Ministerial Guidelines](https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme-ministerial-guidelines) provide further guidance on excluded information.

### Consent

* Children: consent is not required to share anyone’s information to promote a child’s wellbeing or safety under CISS, or to assess or manage family violence risk to a child under FVISS. However, it is important to note that the views of the child and their relevant family members should be sought and taken into account when proposing to share their confidential information, where it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so.
* Adult family violence victim survivors: consent is required to share information under FVISS about adult victim survivors Consent is not required when sharing information is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to an individual’s life, health, safety, or welfare.
* Perpetrators of family violence: consent is not required under FVISS to share information about an alleged perpetrator (for an assessment purpose) or perpetrator (for an assessment or protection purpose), including adolescents who use family violence.

### Further information

Resources to help you understand and implement CISS and FVISS are available at [www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing](https://www.vic.gov.au/guides-templates-tools-for-information-sharing).

# What is the MARAM?

The MARAM, established in law under Part 11 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, sets out responsibilities for identifying, assessing, and managing family violence risk across the family violence and broader service system. Prescribed organisations, known as framework organisations, are required to align their policies, procedures, practice guidance, and tools to the MARAM.

There are three levels of MARAM responsibilities: identification, intermediate, and comprehensive. Specific responsibilities underpin each of these levels.

Organisations are responsible for deciding what level of MARAM responsibilities their staff members will be aligned to. A useful resource for mapping team members against the responsibilities is the MARAM Responsibilities Decision Guide available at [www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources).

It is likely most Local Services team members will be aligned to the **intermediate** level of responsibilities. This is because, in their work delivering mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support, they may engage with people in crisis situations or who may be at high risk of experiencing family violence. These team members will need to be able to identify behaviour related to family violence; conduct intermediate risk assessments and risk management; consult, make referrals and share information; and collaborate with other agencies to support people experiencing violence and keep people using violence in view.

Other team members not directly involved in the delivery of care may be aligned to the **identification** level of responsibilities. These staff may be able to identify behaviours related to family violence and to consult, refer and share information.

### Further information

MARAM practice guides and resources, including organisational-focuses resources, are available at [www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources](https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources).

# Information sharing schemes and MARAM training

A range of free eLearning courses for Local Services are available on the Victorian Government information sharing and MARAM reforms online learning system - [www.vic.gov.au/training-for-information-sharing-and-maram](https://www.vic.gov.au/training-for-information-sharing-and-maram).

**Its recommended Local Services workers complete training modules about the information sharing schemes, and the MARAM training courses relevant to their level of MARAM responsibilities.** Any Local Services practitioners who have limited family violence knowledge, or who may be new to working with people experiencing family violence, may also benefit from completing the stand-alone Family Violence Foundation Knowledge eLearn.

# Need to know more?

# Visit [Frequently asked questions about information sharing and MARAM](https://www.vic.gov.au/frequently-asked-questions-about-information-sharing-and-maram) for information and responses to common questions from ISEs about CISS, FVISS and the MARAM.

For any queries related to policy, implementation, or training, please contact infosharing@health.vic.gov.au.

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