



## **POSITION DESCRIPTION – Family Violence Child Protection Partnership**

<b>Position:</b>	Specialist Family Violence Practitioner
<b>Team:</b>	Family Violence Crisis Accommodation and Support Services
<b>Organisation:</b>	Centre Against Violence
<b>Employment type:</b>	Ongoing and Fixed Term to 2021 2022. Full-time (76 hours per Fortnight) Not Neg.
<b>Location:</b>	The position is based at Centre Against Violence with substantial time in the week spent at DFFH Wangaratta or Wodonga
<b>Start Date:</b>	As negotiated
<b>Classification:</b>	Award agreement SCHADS, Level 5. Pay point 4
<b>Salary Range:</b>	To be determined in negotiation with candidate based on qualifications and experience.
<b>Reports To:</b>	CEO

This role may at times be required to operate outside normal office hours with relevant overtime or time in lieu applying.

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### **Context**

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 Workers 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.

### **BACKGROUND**

Centre Against Violence (CAV) was previously known as Upper Murray Centre Against Sexual Assault (UMCASA). The original organisation UMCASA was established in the early 1990s by a group of people from north east Victoria. In 1992, the organisation was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act and has always been managed by a community-based Board of Management. In 2012 the new name of Centre Against Violence was created to incorporate the diversity of programs operating under the auspice of the organisation.

CAV receives core funding through the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. From time-to-time special project funding is sought from other sources.

CAV operates within a feminist framework in respect of our understanding and analysis of sexual assault and family/domestic violence. CAV provides crisis care and case management for victim survivors of family violence attending to safety and recovery within a MARAM framework. CAV also provides advocacy, information and support to adults, children and young people who have experienced sexual assault and their supporting family members and friends. We also offer services to children and young people under 18 years old who are identified as having harmful sexual behaviours.



CAV is committed to helping people of all gender identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, religions, ages and physical abilities. This includes trans, gender diverse and non-binary people of all gender identities and expressions as well as cisgender women and men. We respect and celebrate the diversity within our communities and workplace and recognise that people may use different terms to describe their identity and experiences.

At CAV you are required to include and celebrate differences such as gender, age, culture, disability, sexual orientation, religion, spirituality, family and caring responsibilities. These are all valued, respected and celebrated.

CAV is linked to the Victorian after hours sexual assault crisis telephone service: SACL. Our agency provides 7 days per week 24 hours per day crisis care service to victim survivors of recent sexual assault (Recent = past two weeks).

CAV is also linked to Safe Steps, the state-wide family violence crisis service. CAV provides 24/7 crisis care for victim survivors affected by family/domestic violence.

CAV refers to the following Codes of Practice:

- Code of Practice: Principles and Standards for Specialist Family Violence Services for Victim-Survivors 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2020 DV Vic
- HSB– Intervention network for children and young people identified as using harmful sexual behaviours
- SAS Victoria- the peak body for sexual assault services and harmful sexual behaviours services. Standards of practice produced under the SAS Victoria networks guidelines are upheld.
- CAV's policies and procedures set standards of practice

CAV operates a service delivery system which complies with the requirements of ISO:9001 Quality Management System, Human Services Standards and the Rainbow Tick Standards.

Workers employed in CAV programs are provided with permanent employment subject to funding for this program being retained and to successful completion of six months' probation demonstrated by compliance to the terms of employment described in the CAV Employment Agreement which includes all requirements of the Quality Management System.

## **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Specialist Family Violence Worker is a senior practitioner with extensive knowledge of family violence. The position is responsible for providing operational and strategic advice to Child Protection practitioners and their managers who undertake investigations of families where a child is or may be in need of protection due to family violence.

The position will assist Child Protection in the planning and conduct of investigations and support the development of plans that aim to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The Specialist Family Violence Worker works collaboratively with the Child Protection senior managers and practitioners to provide effective service delivery and support.

Through co-location at a Child Protection office, the position aims to strengthen and improve responses to families subject to a Child Protection investigation. The 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 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 towards 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 Specialist Family Violence worker will work with Child Protection to:

- Contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system
- 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 (CRAF 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.

The Specialist Family Violence Worker'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.

## **ACCOUNTABILITIES**

The position will operate at both strategic and operational levels.

## **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, 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.

## **OPERATIONAL FOCUS**

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 conferences<sup>1</sup>, 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.



## **KEY SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Knowledge and skills**

1. Expert knowledge of local family violence support services and approaches in the local area.
2. A minimum of three years' experience working in the family violence service system, preferably with supervisory experience.
3. Demonstrated knowledge and high level understanding of:
  - a. the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent;
  - b. mechanisms to restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and
4. The capacity to use this knowledge to assist Child Protection achieve improved client and system outcomes.
5. An established strong working relationship with Child Protection is desirable.
6. Capacity and desire to support improved engagement by Child Protection with both victims and perpetrators.
7. 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 CRAF and Victoria Police Code of Practice.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. Highly developed written and oral communication skills including:
  - a. a demonstrated high level of skill in accurately recording data, correspondence and reporting; and
  - b. providing written and oral evidence to the Children's Court of Victoria, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria and other relevant courts and tribunals.
11. Use a range of IT/web-based applications to manage workflow in accordance with organisational guidelines and privacy principles.
12. Keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with organisational requirements, information security and privacy policies and requirements.

### **Personal qualities**

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



## **QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIRMENTS**

- A degree or diploma in a relevant or related community services discipline is preferred.
- Registered Practitioner or willing to become registered
- 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
- Current National Police Check

## **SAFETY SCREENING**

- *The successful candidate holds a current Victorian Drivers Licence without risk of loss through demerit points.*
- *The successful candidate holds or is willing to undertake a current Police Check and WWC ensuring their suitability as an employee of CAV.*
- *Is not and has not been subject to an intervention order by this title or any other used in Australia or overseas*
- *The successful candidate agrees that CAV selection panel reserves the right to contact previous employers and organisations that have contracted the candidate even if such contacts have not been named as referees for the purpose of checking authenticity and claims to experience/knowledge.*
- *The successful candidate, when offered the position, accepts the position with a declaration that there is no health status, either physical or mental that disables their ability to work effectively on a daily basis and notifies CAV if there is any need for modification to aid them at work.*
- *Applicants who have lived overseas for 12 months or longer during the past 10 years are required to provide the results of an international police check. Applicants should contact the relevant overseas police force to obtain this and submit as part of their application. Details of overseas police agencies are available on the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website ([www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)) and search under 'Character and Police Certificate Requirements – How do I obtain a police certificate?'*