



Fact Sheet 3 The Level 2 Common Risk and Safety Framework (CRASF) tools

This Fact Sheet will cover:

- » Who should use the Level 2 tools?
- 1. Purpose and structure of the Level 2 tools
- 2. How should I use the Level 2 tools?
- 3. When and how should I use the Level 2 Safety Planning Tool?
- 4. Information sharing
- 5. Referring to a High Risk Team or other multi-agency response team
- 6. Other FAQs

Who should use the Level 2 tools?

The Level 2 tools are designed to be used by specialist domestic and family violence (DFV) practitioners, selected government workers, and other professionals with a role in responding to DFV (though this may not be their core business). This can include:

- » Specialist women's domestic violence services
- » Police
- » Child Safety Officers
- » Nominated health workers (e.g. hospital social workers)
- » Corrections staff (e.g. probation and parole officers, custodial officers)
- » Youth Justice officers
- » Education staff including Protection Officers and Guidance Officers
- » Housing Officers
- » Specialist DFV Court and court support staff
- » Men's behaviour change programs
- » DFV counsellors
- » DFV refuge/shelter workers
- » Sexual assault services
- » Homeless shelters
- » Professionals in community legal centres
- » Family law services
- » Disability service providers
- » Services relating to veteran's affairs

It is recommended that non-specialist DFV professionals liaise with a specialist DFV professional within their organisation when using the Level 2 tools.



1. Purpose and structure of the Level 2 Tools

The Level 2 tools are designed to support you to understand and assess the risk posed to a victim-survivor, and to work with them to manage that risk. This includes developing a safety plan and making appropriate referrals.

There are three possible outcomes to the Level 2 risk assessment tool:

DFV identified

Complete Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool

1

Low or no risk identified

- » Risk management and safety planning to be undertaken by the practitioner undertaking risk assessment or within their agency.
- » Where a case has been referred by another agency, provide feedback to referring agency.
- » Complete Level 2 Safety Planning Tool in partnership with the victim-survivor.
- » Review and revise the Level 2 risk assessment as needed on an ongoing basis to monitor and respond to changes to risk.

2

High risk identified

- » Use professional judgment to determine whether to manage case within agency or to refer the case to a multi-agency or High Risk Team.
- » Complete Level 2 Safety Planning Tool in partnership with the victim-survivor.
- » If managing the case within the agency, the Level 2 risk assessment should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to monitor and respond to changes to risk.
- » If the case is being referred to a multi-agency team, seek victim-survivor consent and use the Level 2 Referral Tool.

3

Imminent risk identified

- » Complete the Level 2 Safety Planning Tool in partnership with the victim-survivor.
- » Refer the case to a multi-agency or High Risk Team, using the Level 2 Referral Tool. Seek victim-survivor consent wherever possible and safe.

The Level 2 tools are **not** designed to assess risk posed by a person suspected of using violence, or to assess risk in cases of adolescent family violence.

2. How should I use the Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool?

There are three key components to the Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool:

- » **Part 1** supports you to collect information relating to the victim-survivor;
- » **Part 2** support you to assess the risk to the victim-survivor; and
- » **Part 3** supports you to make an overall assessment of risk considering both the risk assessment undertaken in Part 2 and your own professional judgment.

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Part 1 Victim-survivor information

Part 1 considers information relating to the victim-survivor. This includes demographic information to determine whether population-specific risk factors or safety planning considerations need to be taken into account.

It also includes information relating to the victim-survivor's children, where relevant. The Queensland Child Protection Guide tool should be completed for any children to help determine appropriate referrals.

Part 2 Assessment of risk

Part 2 supports you to assess the risk to the victim-survivor. There are four core components to this:

- » **A: Victim-survivor's assessment:** The victim-survivor's assessment of risk is a highly relevant consideration in determining risk. It is one of several considerations to accurately determine severity of violence, and overall risk. This section seeks to understand the victim-survivor's perception of risk and their experience of violence.

- » **B: Context:** Understanding the current context in which the violence is occurring. This includes the relationship between the victim-survivor and the person using violence (PuV), and any relevant PuV factors that may impact on the risk to the victim-survivor.
- » **C: General risk factors, including high risk factors:** Evidence-based factors relating to the PuV's past behaviours to assess and understand future risk to the victim-survivor.
- » **D: Population-specific risk factors (as relevant):** Specific risk factors can apply to certain population groups. These questions can be asked as relevant based on the person's demographic information in Part 1.

Part 3 Risk assessment summary

Part 3 enables you to make an overall assessment of risk. In arriving at the assessment outcome, you should consider all aspects of Part 2 and your own professional judgment. There are three risk levels: imminent risk, high risk and at risk.

Imminent risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» One or more high-risk factors are present, and these factors are deemed imminent or occurred recently (in the past 6 months)» The victim-survivor believes they or another person are at imminent risk of serious harm
High risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» One or more high risk factors are present but not recent, nor escalating in severity or frequency» A number of general risk factors are present and risk is escalating in severity or frequency» The victim-survivor believes they or another person are at risk of serious harm but the risk is not imminent.
At risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» No high-risk factors are present and risk is not escalating in severity or frequency, but some risk factors are present and persistent.
Low risk/ no risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» <u>No</u> high-risk factors present. Risk factors are present, and not escalating in frequency or severity and managed to a very low level through protective factors. Risk unlikely.

The outcome of this assessment informs safety planning and further referrals.

Other considerations

Timing of risk assessment

You should use the Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool as soon as possible after DFV has been identified. Risk assessment is a dynamic and ongoing process, and you should repeat or review the Level 2 risk assessment regularly, especially where there are any changes in circumstances for the victim-survivor or person using violence (PuV) which might impact on safety. Such changes could include:

- » The victim-survivor becomes more fearful for their safety
- » The victim-survivor is pregnant, gives birth or has a new partner
- » Any changes in family court matters (e.g., commencing, final orders being awarded)
- » The PuV is about to be released from custody

- » The victim-survivor or PuV commences or loses employment
- » The PuV has returned to the victim-survivor's residence or reconciled with the victim-survivor
- » The PuV's or victim-survivor's substance abuse or mental health symptoms have escalated or increased

Approach to undertaking risk assessment with victim-survivor

Information for the Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool should be obtained through a conversation with the victim-survivor where you aim to build rapport and trust. Questions should not be asked in a survey-style, "tick box" format. The Level 2 risk assessment tool can be completed either with the victim-survivor present, or after you have spoken to the victim-survivor.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to share the risk assessment with the victim-survivor, but only if it does not elevate risk. A risk assessment should not be shared if there is a chance that the PuV will be able to access it.

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Multiple PuVs

Where multiple PuVs exist, detail their names and the nature of their relationship to the victim-survivor in **Part 2B** of the Level 2 risk assessment tool. Indicate in **Part 2C** of the tool which PuV each risk factor relates to.

Priority population groups

People from priority population groups often face unique types of violence and barriers to reporting violence. See **Fact Sheet 6** for an overview of key considerations when engaging with victim-survivors from priority population groups.

Protective factors

Identifying protective factors is an important element of risk management and can help to inform safety action plans. However, it is important to recognise that **the presence of protective factors does not mean that the victim-survivor and/or children are safe**. The PuV can often circumvent protective factors and find ways of continuing to perpetuate abuse against the victim-survivor.

You should explore with the victim-survivor what protective factors are present for them and their children. These protective factors should be built upon when considering risk management and safety planning strategies.

3. When and how should I use the Level 2 Safety Planning Tool?

The Level 2 Safety Planning Tool should be completed in collaboration with the victim-survivor once the Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool has been completed, regardless of the level of risk identified. It should draw on the victim-survivor's goals, priorities, and the strategies they have used in the past to manage risk. Each safety plan should be comprehensive and tailored to the individual victim-survivor.

There are three key components to the Level 2 Safety Planning Tool:

- » **Part 1** Key considerations for safety planning
- » **Part 2** Existing supports and information sharing
- » **Part 3** Safety Action Plan

Part 1 details key considerations for safety planning. It summarises the risk level identified in the Level 2 Risk Assessment Tool, and supports you to work with the victim-survivor to determine what they need in order to feel safe.

Part 2 prompts you to consider any existing supports in place for the victim-survivor and children.

Part 3 supports you to consider all aspects of the victim-survivor's life which might impact upon their safety. This could include the level of contact they want to have with the PuV; their support networks; the needs of children, dependents and pets; their home environment; health and wellbeing; access to transport and finances; their community and cultural obligations; and their technology and personal devices.

You should work with the victim-survivor to safety plan around these considerations, and to connect them with relevant support services as needed. All family members, including children and other dependents, should be considered during the safety planning process.

Victim-survivors from different priority population groups will have unique safety planning concerns and needs which you will need to take into consideration when developing a safety plan with the victim-survivor. See **Fact Sheet 6** for more information on engaging with priority population groups.

4. Information sharing

The Information Sharing Guidelines provide detailed information to support you to share information in the context of DFV. See **Fact Sheet 1** for a more guidance on information sharing.

5. Referring to a High Risk Team or other multi-agency response team

Where the Level 2 assessment indicates a case is high or imminent risk, it may be appropriate to refer the case to a multi-agency response team.

If there is a High Risk Team or other multi-agency response team operating in your area, you can reach out to the teams' Coordinator or Chair to discuss whether it is appropriate for a case to be referred in. If a case does not meet the referral criteria, the team Coordinator or Chair can assist you in identifying alternative response options.

All referrals to High Risk Teams or other multi-agency response teams must include a completed Level 2 risk assessment and safety action plan form.

If you are uncertain what multi-agency teams are operating in your area, you can get in touch with your local DV specialist for more information. You can find services in your area on the Queensland Government service portal at: <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence/find-local-support>.

6. Other FAQs

Do I have to seek client consent before referring them to a multi-agency team?

Consent should be sought from a client before referring a case to a multi-agency team wherever safe, practical and possible. However, where there are serious concerns regarding the safety of individuals, information can be shared without consent. This must always be in accordance with the provisions in the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*.

How does Level 2 risk management differ from Level 3 risk management?

The Level 2 Safety Planning Tool is designed to support you to work with a victim-survivor to develop clear and specific strategies to increase their safety across a wide range of situations. Level 3 multi-agency teams facilitate a greater level of collaboration between agencies and incorporate a broader range of service responses to manage risk.

Victim-survivors considered to be at imminent risk of serious harm or lethality may be referred to a multi-agency or high risk team if available in your area.