

**WESTERN INTEGRATED FAMILY VIOLENCE  
COMMITTEE  
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2022 - 2024**

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Supporting integration of  
service responses to family  
violence across the west

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August 2022

## 1. Purpose

This Partnership Agreement documents how the Western Integrated Family Violence Committee (WIFVC) operates and is a statement of members' commitment to work together to strengthen the integration and effectiveness of family violence service responses in the western metropolitan region.

## 2. The role of the Western Integrated Family Violence Committee

The WIFVC is a regional governance structure that provides strategic leadership to drive effective responses to family violence across the local service system and support implementation of Victoria's family violence reforms in the western metropolitan region.

WIFVC is one of the 13 Family Violence Regional Integration Committees across Victoria funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). GenWest is contracted as the auspice organisation for funds and the employment of staff.

WIFVC fulfils its role in providing strategic leadership and system development by leading initiatives to contribute to the five state-wide strategic priorities in the Family Violence Regional Integration Committee Guidelines (2022):

1. Leading initiatives that support service integration and system improvements;
2. Supporting implementation, monitoring and evaluation of family violence reform initiatives;
3. Developing an evidence base to inform planning, prioritisation of system improvement initiatives and advocacy for system change;
4. Building workforce capacity and capability;
5. Effective cross-sectoral governance for system leadership.

### Policy Context

Recommendation #193 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV)<sup>1</sup> specifically recognised the value of Family Violence Regional Integration Committees as a vital component of the governance structure implementing the Commission's recommendations and overseeing systemic improvements in family violence policy across Victoria. Since its inception, the WIFVC has played a system leadership role focussed on increasing the safety of victim survivors and accountability of perpetrators.

The work of the WIFVC is informed by the following key Victorian Government policy reforms:

- [Ending Family Violence - Victoria's 10-year plan for change](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Royal Commission into Family Violence Volume VI 2016, p.130 accessed via <http://www.rcfv.com.au/MediaLibraries/RCFamilyViolence/Reports/Final/RCFV-Vol-VI.pdf>

- [Building from Strength: 10 Year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response](#)
- [Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement](#)
- Dhelk Dja: [Safe Our Way Agreement](#)
- [Family Violence Outcomes Framework](#)

### 3. Membership of the WIFVC

The WIFVC membership is made up of both service providers and other stakeholders that contribute to family violence service responses in Western Melbourne and Brimbank Melton. Membership of WIFVC is open to organisations working in the 7 Western metropolitan municipalities – Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Melton, Melbourne, Maribyrnong and Wyndham.

WIFVC is committed to a collaborative, cross sector approach to support the integration of service responses to family violence across the western metropolitan region and brings together the following sectors:

- Specialist family violence services
- Specialist perpetrator services
- Child and family services
- The Orange Door
- Sexual assault services;
- Victoria Police
- Child Protection
- Court services and Community Legal services
- Aboriginal community-controlled organisations
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse services
- Health services
- Housing and homelessness services
- Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AoD) services
- Community and Women’s Health services
- The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Area
- Early Childhood services
- Education services
- Elder Abuse services
- State and local Government
- Disability services.

Strategic cross sector linkages with other key regional governance structures and networks are maintained by the Principal Strategic Advisor.

Membership of WIFVC requires organisations to apply through the [WIFVC website](#). Funded agencies have full voting rights as a WIFVC member. However, Government representatives or statutory bodies are unable to hold voting membership. Membership applications should be signed by a senior organisational person nominating the committee representative and proxy if required. Membership applications require endorsement from the WIFVC

Governance Group. An induction is provided to all new WIFVC members to ensure that all members have a sound understanding of the purpose and operation of the WIFVC.

#### 4. Role of Members

Active participation by the members of the WIFVC is a key success factor for Family Violence Regional Integration Committees. It is expected that all member agencies and their representatives commit to working collaboratively to achieve the priorities of the WIFVC and participate in WIFVC meetings, relevant working groups and activities.

Agency representatives should have sufficient seniority and capacity to represent their agency to:

- contribute knowledge and expertise about their service/service sector and practice issues
- make commitments to partnership arrangements on behalf of their agency
- advocate for and drive FVRIC agreed priorities within their organisation
- negotiate the provision of relevant organisational data in support of the FVRIC's strategic planning process
- share information about FVRIC activities and initiatives with their agency.

#### 5. Role of the WIFVC Chair

The WIFVC is led by a part-time Independent Chair. The Chair is a remunerated role, representing WIFVC as a whole, not any one agency or member.

The key role of the Independent Chair is to provide strategic leadership within the western metropolitan region to foster a commitment to collaboration and innovation within the WIFVC and maintaining a focus on objectives as described in the Strategic Plan. The Independent Chair is responsible for the support and supervision of the Principal Strategic Advisor.

A review of the role of Chair will be undertaken every two years to ensure the effective operation of the WIFVC.

#### 6. Role of Auspice

As auspice, GenWest is responsible for:

- Receiving funding from DFFH and acquitting it as per the service agreement.
- Providing the infrastructure and administrative support to the WIFVC.
- Auspicing applications for new funds as endorsed by the Governance Group
- The employment of the Principal Strategic Advisor and additional WIFVC staff as required.
- Development of an annual budget, which is approved by the WIFVC Governance Group.
- Meeting DFFH contract requirements in conjunction with the Independent Chair.

A leadership agreement outlines how the Auspice, Independent Chair and Principal Strategic Advisor (PSA) work together to support the work of the Western Integrated Family Violence Committee.

## 7. Role of the Principal Strategic Advisor

The Principal Strategic Advisor's role is to lead and support the work of the WIFVC. The PSA works closely with the WIFVC Chair to ensure that the WIFVC provides strategic leadership within the western metropolitan region. The Principal Strategic Advisor is responsible for the support and supervision of the Project Support Worker.

## 8. Role of the Project Support Worker

The Project Support Worker's role is to provide administrative, operational and project support for the activities of the WIFVC.

## 9. Role of the Governance Group

The WIFVC Governance Group leads the strategic integration work of the full committee, to improve service responses to family violence in the west in line with the strategic priorities outlined in the Family Violence Regional Integration Committee Guidelines 2022.

### **Responsibilities**

The Governance Group's key role is to:

- Drive the work of WIFVC and ensure it operates effectively;
- Develop the WIFVC Strategic Plan
- Ensure that WIFVC focuses on key strategic priorities outlined in the WIFVC Action Plan and help monitor progress in achieving these;
- Wherever possible, assist WIFVC to leverage reform opportunities to improve policy and practice;
- Maximise opportunities for the experience, expertise and knowledge of WIFVC members to contribute to broader reforms and the work of agencies like Family Safety Victoria and Respect Victoria;
- Approve membership applications to WIFVC; and
- Monitor the budget, which is to be tabled quarterly.

### **Governance Group structure**

The Governance Group is elected by member organisations, with nominees from:

- 1 x Victim Survivor service
- 1 x Perpetrator service
- 1 x Child & Family service
- 2 x Services targeted specifically to diverse communities
- 4 x Open nominees (open for nomination by the following sectors: Community Legal Services, Mental Health, Alcohol & Other Drug Services, Housing and Community Health)

Standing members are:

- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
- Nomination of auspice agency
- Independent Chair
- Victoria Police
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO)
- The Orange Door Hub Manager
- Sexual Assault Service

The membership term is for two years. Apart from standing members, membership of the Governance Group is by election. If the nominated member is unable to attend a meeting, a member may send a proxy with approval from the Chair. If a member misses 3 consecutive meetings without notice or justifiable reason, the Governance Group will review their membership. Casual vacancies will be appointed by the Governance Group following a call for expressions of interest from WIFVC members.

### **Meetings**

- The Governance Group will meet every six weeks for 1.5 hours either face-to-face or at in-person as required.
- The Principal Strategic Advisor & Project Support Worker will service the meetings.
- A quorum is 50% + 1 = 5 members.
- A summary of the Governance Group meeting outcomes is to be provided to the WIFVC membership.

A review of the governance structure will be undertaken every two years to ensure that it continues to support the effective operation of the WIFVC.

## **10. WIFVC Meetings**

The WIFVC meetings are regular meetings of member organisations to support information sharing and strategic discussion of WIFVC priorities.

- WIFVC meetings will be held at least quarterly.
- WIFVC may establish ongoing sub-committees, time limited working groups or other forums as required.
- The Independent Chair and the Principal Strategic Advisor will prepare the agenda and papers in alignment with the WIFVC Strategic Plan.
- The Principal Strategic Advisor and Project Support Worker will service the meetings.
- The broader committee makes decisions on Governance Group appointments who then lead the day-to-day decision making of the WIFVC. The WIFVC Governance Group and/or WIFVC Chair may also call for votes of the broader committee on other matters as required.
- Wherever possible, decisions will be through discussion and by consensus.

- If the issue requires resolution and consensus is not achieved, a vote may be taken. A vote will require a minimum of 20 people with voting authority and a majority will constitute half plus one.

## 11. Communication

WIFVC members will receive regular, timely updates from the Principal Strategic Advisor and Project Support Worker regarding relevant work of the committee via email distribution lists, regular eNewsletters, Member update reports, WIFVC meetings and via the WIFVC website.

## 12. Dispute and Grievance Resolution

This dispute and grievance resolution procedure relates only to WIFVC business. It is expected that Members will raise issues directly and attempt to work through the issue. If it is necessary to escalate, Members may contact the Independent Chair. If the conflict cannot be resolved with the WIFVC, the DFFH Area should be notified.

## 13. Review of the Partnership Agreement

This Partnership Agreement is to be reviewed every two years by the WIFVC Chair and WIFVC Governance Group to ensure the effective operation of the committee.