

Water Corporation Family Violence Policy

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Contents

Policy Statement	3
Purpose.....	3
Legislation	3
Privacy	3
What is family violence?.....	3
Our role in addressing family violence?	4
Support Available.....	5
Complaints policy and procedure.....	5
Application and review	5

If you wish to access a hard copy of this policy (at no charge), please contact us via our contact details listed at the bottom of this policy.

Policy Statement

We listen to our customers and understand the difficulties faced by people affected by family violence. At all times we prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our employees and customers. We have zero tolerance for family violence and are committed to supporting affected customers by protecting their privacy, assisting with water service related matters, and offering connections to external specialist organisations that can provide family and domestic violence support. Water Corporation customers experiencing family violence will be given full support and treated with empathy, compassion and respect. We remain committed to ensuring personal and private information is handled confidentially and securely.

Purpose

Water Corporation is committed to supporting customers affected by family violence. This policy outlines our approach to assisting customers with their water service needs, safeguarding their personal information, and offering connections to external specialist support services.

Legislation

The Water Services Code of Practice (Family Violence) 2020 specifies the minimum requirements that apply to Water Corporation in relation to support for victims of family violence.

Privacy

Information obtained from, or relating to, customers affected by family violence is handled in accordance with Water Corporation's information security and privacy frameworks. Such information is securely recorded and stored within Water Corporation systems that are subject to strict access requirements, principle of least privilege, role-based access permissions, and activity monitoring, and may only be accessed by authorised staff for legitimate business purposes. When information is no longer required, it must be securely destroyed or archived following authorised disposal processes. Further information on how personal information is protected is set out in Water Corporation's Privacy Statement

What is family violence?

Family violence is the intentional and systematic use of violence and abuse to control, coerce and create fear. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, spiritual, or social in nature. Further information on what is considered family violence is available [here](#).

Perpetrators of family violence can use control over their victims as a form of economic abuse, such as incurring debt in the victim's name, refusing to contribute to costs and refusing to pay bills. Victims of family violence may suffer significant psychological and emotional impacts while attempting to resolve debts at the same time as ensuring their personal safety. In addition, perpetrators may gain access to the victims' confidential information such as their whereabouts, for example, through their knowledge of the personal details of the victim.

Our role in addressing family violence?

Water Corporation has zero tolerance for family violence and is committed to supporting customers who may be affected.

Our role is to support customers with their water service-related matters, protect their privacy and confidentiality, and offer connections to external organisations that provide specialist family and domestic violence support, including organisations whose staff have lived experience of family and domestic violence and are equipped to provide informed, trauma-aware support

This approach helps ensure our customers:

Will have confidential and respectful interactions with our employees, who:

- Are approachable and provide assistance with water service-related enquiries and account management;
- Can apply appropriate privacy measures to a customer's account, preventing the need for customers to repeatedly explain their circumstances; and
- Can offer connections to external organisations that provide specialist family and domestic violence support.
- Information obtained from, or relating to, customers affected by family violence is handled in accordance with Water Corporation's information security and privacy frameworks. Such information is securely recorded and stored within Water Corporation systems that are subject to strict access requirements, principle of least privilege, role-based access permissions, and activity monitoring, and may only be accessed by authorised staff for legitimate business purpose. When information is no longer required, it must be securely destroyed or archived following authorised disposal processes. Further information on how personal information is protected is set out in the Water Corporation's Privacy Statement.
- Will be confident that Water Corporation will consider their individual circumstances when assessing payment difficulties or financial hardship and, where eligible, offer:
 - access to an appropriate financial hardship program;
 - flexible payment arrangements or payment options;
 - available financial relief measures and concessions; and
 - information and time to consider their options and make informed decisions.
- Can be assured that, where they are experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship, a three-month hold may be placed on their account, during which no recovery action will be taken and no interest will accrue.
- Will not be asked to provide evidence of family violence unless it is reasonably necessary. Where evidence is required, Water Corporation seek the minimum information required and will take reasonable steps to avoid customers having to repeatedly disclose their circumstances.
- Will be provided with information about Water Corporation's complaints process should they wish to raise a concern or seek a review of a decision.

Support Available

Customers will be provided with information about the financial support and assistance available to them, as well as connections to external specialist support services where appropriate. Customers at any point of disclosure may be connected through a warm transfer during their interaction with Water Corporation or provided with contact details to access support at a time that is suitable for the customer.

Complaints policy and procedure

Please refer to our [complaints policy and procedure](#) if you are not satisfied with how we have handled your situation.

If you have a complaint, please contact us via:

Phone: 13 13 85 Account enquiries (8am-5pm weekdays)

Email: watercorporation.com.au/contact

Website: watercorporation.com.au/billhelp

National Relay Service - 13 36 77 (for customers with hearing or speech difficulties) Translating and Interpreter Service - to arrange an interpreter call us on 13 14 50

If your complaint isn't resolved or you are unhappy with the outcome, you may refer your complaint to the Energy & Water Ombudsman. The Energy & Water Ombudsman will investigate your complaint and may mediate the dispute.

Address: Energy and Water Ombudsman Western Australia, PO Box Z5386, St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6831

Phone: (08) 9220 7588 or 1800 754 004 (free from landlines)

Email: energyandwater@ombudsman.wa.gov.au

For further information on the Energy and Water Ombudsman complaints process please visit energyandwater.ombudsman.wa.gov.au

Application and review

The Corporation is responsible for overseeing the operation and management of our Family Violence Policy, including monitoring the effectiveness of the policy. All Water Corporation employees are required to be aware of this policy and the options available to assist customers.

This policy will be reviewed at least every five years to ensure it meets the needs of customers experiencing family violence. The review will incorporate the views and recommendations of our stakeholders.

We will ensure procedures and work instructions are reviewed and maintained to ensure our interactions with customers experiencing family violence are conducted in a sensitive manner according to the guidelines set in this policy