

Supporting Older Women and Women with Disability to Report Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) to the Police

If the older woman or woman with disability you are supporting would like to make a report to the police, **this should be arranged as soon as possible**.

Providing information about the available support and what to expect during the reporting process can help reduce fear and empower the person to feel more in control of their situation.



Attending with support workers

Ask the person you are supporting if they would like a trusted support worker, family member or friend to attend (if safe and appropriate). This person could:

- Provide emotional and practical support
- Help navigate the reporting process
- Support her to ask questions and express her needs
- Assist with follow-up steps

Tip: Only involve a support person if you have the woman's clear consent — check in privately first to clarify her wishes.



Communication assistance

Consider if the older woman or woman with disability has any communication needs, and check their preferred way of receiving information. For example you could:

- Arrange for sign language interpreters or speech-to-text services
- Arrange for language interpreters for people with limited English
- Request alternative formats such as braille, large print, or Easy English
- Check if the person would benefit from support with reading or writing documents

Tip: Ask the police to note any communication needs for future interactions with the person you are supporting.



Accessible locations

Before attending a police station with the person you are supporting, you should consider:

- Is the police station location accessible for the older woman or woman with disability? For example, is there step-free access, seating, or quiet waiting areas?
- Does the woman feel safe and comfortable attending in person?
- If not, request an alternative safe location (e.g. home visit, support service etc.)

Tip: Plan ahead with the person and the police to identify the safest and most suitable location.



Specialist police officers

The older woman or woman with disability may feel more comfortable speaking to a female officer or if available, a specialist police officer. For example:

- Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO)
- Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO)
- Aged Crime Prevention Officer (ACPO)
- Multicultural Liaison Officer
- LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officer

Tip: Check with the person you are supporting first, then clearly communicate any preferences or concerns to the police.

Remember: If you assess an immediate threat to someone's safety, contact emergency services (000) immediately.

Consent to contact triple zero (000) is not required in an emergency situation.

For more information and resources on identifying and responding to DFSV of older women and women with disability, visit adc.nsw.gov.au

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