Risk Identification Tool – Adult Person Using Violence

WARNING: This tool must not be used with, or in front of, a person suspected of using violence. This tool is to record your professional observations only.

Who can use this tool: All organisations or practitioners trained in the use of this Risk Identification Tool can use it. For information on tiers and roles and responsibilities, please see the RAMF.

What is the purpose of this tool: This tool aims to help practitioners identify the presence of risk factors for domestic and family violence perpetration, by recording and assessing information about a person suspected of engaging in DFV.

When should this tool be used: When you are in contact with a service user who you suspect may be using violence or may have been incorrectly identified as the 'primary victim'. In services where a service user has multiple contacts, you and other workers may identify narratives or behaviours indicating DFV perpetration over time and document your observations on an ongoing basis using this tool.

This tool consists of 3 parts:

Part A: Identify narratives and behaviours	In any service delivery environment, you should always be aware of the possibility that a service user may be using DFV. This Part guides workers to identify narratives and behaviours you might observe in the context of DFV across all relationship types.
Part B: Identify presenting needs and circumstances	Identifying the person's presenting needs and circumstances can help identify and manage DFV risk behaviours. This Part includes considering the person in their context to identify areas in the person's life that may elevate risk or be protective.
Part C: Decision on whether DFV risk is indicated	This Part guides practitioners on deciding whether DFV risk is indicated based on the information recorded in Part A and B. Practitioners are invited to: • record whether DFV risk is identified, and if immediate intervention is required, and • consider response options where you identify DFV risk is present.

Name of worker completing this tool:	
Date:	

Service user – Person suspected of using domestic and family violence

Full name:	
Date:	
Date of Birth:	
Contact details:	
Primary address:	
Gender identity:	☐ Woman/Girl ☐ Man/Boy ☐ Non-binary ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown ☐ Self-described, please specify:
Intersex status:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown
Transgender history, experience or identity:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown Pronouns:
Sexuality:	☐ Straight or heterosexual ☐ Gay, lesbian, or homosexual ☐ Bisexual or pansexual ☐ Asexual ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown ☐ Other, please specify:
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin:	☐ Aboriginal ☐ Torres Strait Islander ☐ Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Neither ☐ Unknown
CALD:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known Details:
LGBTIQA+:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known
Person with disabilities:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known Details:
Additional information and adjustments (if needed):	
Primary address:	
Relationship to victim-survivor:	

Victim-survivor (or other potential third party)

Full name:	
Date of Birth:	
Contact details:	
Primary address:	
Current location:	
Gender identity:	☐ Woman/Girl ☐ Man/Boy ☐ Non-binary ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown ☐ Self-described, please specify:
Intersex status:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown
Transgender history, experience or identity:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown Pronouns:
Sexuality:	☐ Straight or heterosexual ☐ Gay, lesbian, or homosexual ☐ Bisexual or pansexual ☐ Asexual ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown ☐ Other, please specify:
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin:	☐ Aboriginal ☐ Torres Strait Islander ☐ Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Neither ☐ Unknown
CALD:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known Details:
LGBTIQA+:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known
Person with disabilities:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known Details:
Additional information:	

Child (potential victim-survivor)

Full name:	
Date of Birth:	
Contact details:	
Primary address:	
Gender identity:	☐ Woman/Girl ☐ Man/Boy ☐ Non-binary ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown ☐ Self-described, please specify:
Intersex status:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown
Transgender history, experience or identity:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown Pronouns:
Sexuality:	☐ Straight or heterosexual ☐ Gay, lesbian, or homosexual ☐ Bisexual or pansexual ☐ Asexual ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Unknown ☐ Other, please specify:
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin:	☐ Aboriginal ☐ Torres Strait Islander ☐ Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ☐ Preferred not to say ☐ Neither ☐ Unknown
CALD:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known Details:
LGBTIQA+:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known
Person with disabilities:	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known Details:
Additional information:	

Part A – Identify Narratives and Behaviours

IMPORTANT: Do not ask these questions directly of the person you suspect may be using violence, as this could escalate risk to the victim-survivor.

Part A of the tool guides practitioners to record their observations about narratives or behaviours that may indicate a person is engaging in domestic or family violence. This information may also be relevant to mapping known risk factors for DFV, and then sharing information with other organisations and services to determine risk.

How to use Part A:

The following instructions apply to all tiers (organisations and workers):

- You **should** use this section to record your professional observations about someone who you suspect may be using violence.
- You **must not** ask these questions directly of the person you suspect may be using violence under any circumstances.
- Where certain risks are identified in Section 2 (with a red asterisk), this may indicate an increased risk of serious harm or lethality. If these risks are identified, action is generally required. This may include information sharing with other key agencies to determine the appropriate response.

Introduction to identifying narratives and behaviours

Observing a person's narratives and behaviours is the first step towards identifying whether evidence-based risk factors are present. All practitioners have a role to play in identifying signs of domestic or family violence. In the course of your work, you may encounter service users who present with beliefs, attitudes or behaviours that indicate they may be using domestic or family violence. The person's use of violence may be known, suspected or not yet identified by you or another professional or service.

Some service users' narratives and behaviours will be a direct disclosure of their use of domestic or family violence (intentionally or unintentionally). However, it is more common for their narratives and behaviours to only indicate the presence of risk factors. This can be further informed by risk assessment with a victim-survivor and information sharing with other agencies, if within the scope of your role. Applying a victim-centred lens when listening to a person's narratives or observing their behaviours will assist you to think about the victim-survivor's experience of these attitudes and behaviours.

This section will guide you through identifying and recording narratives and behaviours you might observe in the context of domestic or family violence across all relationship types. **See the ACT RAMF for guidance on recognising beliefs or attitudes in narratives or behaviours.**

Consider what information you record in this form, as there are risks when compiling information about victim-survivors and people using violence in the same document.

Section 1: Beliefs or attitudes

Observed narratives or behaviours	Response	Comment
Makes statements that indicate sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, ableist, ageist or racist beliefs (putting down a person or group based on their identity)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Makes statements that indicate entitlement to power, control and decision making (e.g., "she's my wife, she should be looking after the kids", "women are crap at managing money")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Makes statements that indicate belief in ownership over the victim-survivor (e.g., "she's mine", "if I can't have her", "she'll always come back")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Makes statements that indicate they have developed a grievance against the victim-survivor, where they blame the victim for everything that is wrong in their lives	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Comments negatively on victim-survivor's decisions and actions (e.g., "she can't manage money to save her life", "she's so embarrassing")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Pathologises victim-survivor (describing their behaviour or presentation as a behavioural disorder, mental illness or addiction) (e.g., "she's crazy")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Displays limited empathy or desire to understand experiences of victim-survivor (e.g., "she's such a winger", "she doesn't understand how good she has it")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Complains that the victim-survivor does not show them 'respect'	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Openly dismisses the victim-survivor's viewpoints and/or needs, particularly if it conflicts with their own	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
[Adult victim-survivor only] Makes decisions for adult victim-survivor	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
[If applicable] Displays indicators of ownership and entitlement, in relation to children and rights to access and/or custody (e.g., "They're my kids, she has no right to try and keep them away from me")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
[If applicable] Threatens to report partner/ex-partner to authorities about their 'poor parenting' (e.g., "she's lucky I haven't called the cops on her")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
[If applicable] Criticises ex/partner's parenting (put downs, devaluing worth) (e.g., "she's a crap mum", "she doesn't do anything for the kids")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Further details:		

Section 2: Physical and verbal abuse

Observed narratives and behaviours	Response	Comment
Displays controlling behaviour(s)*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Displays indicators of jealousy and/or possessiveness	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Displays indicators of fixation with victim's actions and whereabouts (monitoring, rumination and intent focus)*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Controls adult victim's finances and/or access to employment*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Demonstrates threatening non-verbal behaviour (physical stand over, intrusion into personal space)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Hostile language and attitudes towards authority figures and systems	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Talks about victim in emotionally abusive or degrading ways	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Interrupts, corrects and/or dominates victim in conversation	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Raises voice and/or yells	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Is violent and/or controlling towards victim before, during or after the session*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Insists on sitting in on appointments with victim	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Discloses any harm or threat to harm animals or pets*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Physical signs of violent altercation (on victim or PUV)*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Expresses feelings of excessive anger that is 'outside their control'	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Expresses feelings of fear and distress at the thought of their partner leaving them	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Targeted and/or damaged victim-survivor's property*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Choked/strangled/placed pressure on the victim-survivor's neck*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Threatened the victim-survivor with a weapon*	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Sexually assaults the victim-survivor.* **Consider whether this information should be safeguarded from the PUV**	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Uses coercion to manipulate the victim into having sex or to engage in sex acts.* **Consider whether this information should be safeguarded from the PUV**	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Further details:		

Section 3: Minimising or justifying their actions

Observed narratives or behaviours	Response	Comments
Minimising physical harm and/or neglectful behaviour	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Direct comments or euphemisms that could indicate use of violence	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Presents or talks about themselves as being the "real" victim (victim stance) (e.g., "she's taken everything from me")	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Presents as having difficulty with emotional and/or behavioural regulation	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Uses impulsivity as a justification of violent and abusive behaviours (may relate to presenting needs such as mental health, use of alcohol/drugs)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Further details:		

Section 4: Practitioner experience engaging with the person

Observed narratives or behaviours	Response	Comments
Tries to get you **[professional]** to agree with their negative views about partner or family member **[invitation to collude]** throughout service engagement	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Practitioner observes or feels intimidated, manipulated and/or controlled during sessions	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Further details:		

Section 5: Disclosures indicating immediate risk

In the course of your work, you may hear disclosures that cause you serious concern for the safety of the service user, others, the community or yourself as a practitioner. It is important that you recognise and act on immediate risk disclosures (see **Part C**).

Immediate risk	Response	Comments
Has the person disclosed a direct or targeted threat against any person (adult or child victim-survivor, third party or a professional) including to self? Examples of disclosures indicating immediate risk may include: • Explicit threats about killing or seriously harming someone • Any past or recent non-fatal strangulation that is disclosed to you • Discloses suicidal ideation, self-harm or has made threats to suicide (note this is a risk factor for homicide, including homicide-suicide) • Displaying, accessing or threatening to use a weapon or other dangerous objects • Discussing plans to 'take' the children These are critical factors that may indicate an imminent threat of serious physical harm, lethality or psychological trauma, and requires an immediate service response.	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not known	
Further details:		

Part B – Presenting Needs and Circumstances

IMPORTANT: All organisations and practitioners must understand when it is safe to ask about presenting needs and circumstances of a person they suspect may be using violence. Please follow the instructions below.

Part B of the tool guides practitioners to record their understanding about the personal needs and circumstances of a service user they suspect may be using domestic and family violence. While this information may not help you decide whether DFV risk is indicated, it may be relevant to your service provision as well as sharing information with other organisations to support improved identification and assessment of DFV risk.

How to use Part B:

The following instructions apply to all tiers (organisations and workers):

- If it is not within the scope of your role or service to usually ask questions about the needs and circumstances of a service user, you must not ask these questions directly of the service user you suspect may be using violence under any circumstances.
- Instead, you should only use this section to record your professional observations about someone who you suspect may be using violence.
- If this information is not available to you and it is not safe and appropriate to seek this information, you can proceed to Part C to record a decision on whether DFV risk is indicated based on your other observations.
- Remember that the PUV Risk Identification Tool is designed to record your observation of indicators or disclosures of risk only.

Identifying presenting needs and circumstances

Identifying the person's presenting needs and circumstances can help identify and manage DFV risk behaviours. Information about needs and circumstances is risk-relevant information for the purposes of information sharing to support understanding of the person suspected of using violence in context, and the risk they may pose to others.

Some needs and circumstances may function as protective factors, in that they may help promote stability and mitigate escalation of risk behaviours. However, protective factors alone do not reduce risk.

The table below will guide you as a practitioner to record your understanding of the service user in their personal context. For additional guidance on identifying presenting needs and circumstances that may contribute to DFV risk, please see the **ACT RAMF**.

Identifying the service user's personal needs and circumstances

Some identified circumstances may identify the presence of a serious-risk factor for serious harm or lethality. This has been indicated in the table below to help practitioners map needs and circumstances against evidence-based risk factors.

Consider the person's context:	Notes (including consideration of risk factors)
Personal identity, status of relationships/dynamics	
Personal identity, attributes and experiences	
Partner (current)	
Ex-Partner (note if recent separation [RF])	
Children	
Other family members	
Social and community connections[1]	
Connection to friends or extended family network	
Connection/sense of belonging to community, cultural groups, networks, social media, clubs	
Presence of systems interventions [RF]	
Child Protection	
Court (recent, pending, orders)	
Corrections	
Other system interventions	
Practical or environmental circumstances	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or other cultural community support services	
Employment (Centrelink, employment services)	
Communication (e.g., access to telephone, social media[2])	
Counselling services (e.g., alcohol or other drugs [RF], gambling, financial counselling, therapeutic supports or counselling)	
Medical or mental health [RF]	
Disability services or supports	
Financial security (including Centrelink or income support)	
Housing circumstances (housing security, tenancy, private rental, homeowner)	
Legal services	
Migration services	
Transport	

[RF] Risk factors, based on the evidence-based risk factors in the ACT Risk Assessment and Management Framework.

1 Consider if family, social and community connections indicate they reinforce narratives or behaviours.

2 Note any other identified methods used by person using violence to contact adult or child victim-survivor.

Part C – Decision on whether DFV risk is indicated

Section 1 – Decision and recorded actions

This section is for practitioners to record their decision on whether DFV risk is indicated by the professional observations you have made about a service user. Wherever risk is indicated or you are unsure, refer to the guidance in Section 2 – Response options.

Indications of DFV risk indicators/factors	Decision
Observed narratives or behaviours indicate or disclose use of domestic and family violence risk (to adult or child victim-survivor(s))	☐ Not indicated ☐ Indicated ☐ **Requires immediate intervention**
Risk to self: Disclosed risk of suicide or self-harm • Whether immediate intervention is required will depend on recency of disclosure, imminency of the risk, and previous known history about the person	☐ Not indicated ☐ Indicated ☐ **Requires immediate intervention**
Risk to others: Risk indicated to any other person in community (including victim-survivor, community, and/or professional)	☐ Not indicated ☐ Indicated ☐ **Requires immediate intervention**
Rationale	

Misidentification	Response
Have you used this tool to determine the primary aggressor? (responding to misidentification)	☐ Yes – **if yes, update your records and share information with other professionals** ☐ No
Is further assessment required to determine the primary aggressor? If yes, update your records and share information with other professionals	☐ Yes ☐ No Shared with:

Record of actions

You should record what actions you take arising from an indication of DFV. If DFV risk is indicated and no actions are taken, you should detail the reasons why.

Were actions taken following identification of DFV risk?	☐ Yes ☐ No
If no, detail reasons why:	

If yes, document your actions below.

Actions taken	Response	Details
Information sharing Has the information in this tool been shared under the ACT Domestic and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other	Comment/detail of information shared: Shared with:
Contact Police (if immediate emergency response is needed)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other	
Contact Children, Youth and Families (if mandatory reporting obligations apply)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other	
Risk Assessment TIER 3 ONLY Has the Adult Person Using Violence Risk Assessment been completed?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other	
Other actions		

WARNING: Have you recorded sensitive information about a victim-survivor on this form?

Safe documentation practices are essential when completing the PUV Risk Identification Tool, as there are possible risks when compiling information about victims and people using violence within the same documents. Consider what information is safe to be recorded within this tool, focussing on information you have received from the suspected person using violence.

In particular, prior sexual violence information or disclosures in relation to a victim-survivor should generally not be recorded on documents that relate primarily to the PUV.

Section 2 – Response options

The below table provides guidance on response options. Where a practitioner is unsure about whether DFV risk is indicated, they should seek secondary consultation within their organisation, and/or consider sharing information with a specialist domestic and family violence service.

Outcomes	Tier	Response Options
DFV risk is **not** indicated	All tiers	No immediate action required. If you have an ongoing relationship with the client: • remain alert to domestic and family violence signs/indicators. • seek secondary consultation and share information with specialist services if you suspect or are unsure if violence is occurring but cannot determine risk or behaviour based on the information provided by the client.
DFV risk **is** indicated	Tier 1 & 2	Where DFV risk is indicated, all agencies should: • continue to provide your services to the person you suspect using violence, within the scope of your existing service and role. continue to monitor any change or escalation of behaviour or any need related to risk Seek secondary consultation with specialist DFV services (including perpetrator intervention services) if you are unsure about appropriate responses • consider proactively sharing information about the person using violence to respond to risk for victim-survivors, such as with a specialist DFV service or other service known to be working with the victim-survivor(s)
	Tier 3	Conduct risk assessment using the Adult Person Using Violence Risk Assessment Tool.
DFV risk is indicated and there is **immediate risk**	All tiers	If immediate risk to any person is identified, immediate intervention is required. • contact Triple Zero (000) and ask for police if a crime has been committed or is likely to be committed • contact your local CATT team if acute signs of mental ill health are present • contact Children, Youth and Families where mandatory reporting obligations are present • consider child wellbeing and safety, and share information if needed After providing an immediate intervention response, it is important to consider other necessary multi-agency responses required, in line with the response options above.