

Family Violence Policy

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose	4
Scope	4
Policy Statement	4
Definition of family violence.....	4
What is economic abuse in a family violence situation	5
Why it matters	5
Our commitment to customers	5
Account Security	5
Debt management	5
Employee training & awareness	6
Family violence disclosure	6
Support and assistance	6
Our commitment to employees	7

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out Active Utilities approach in dealing with and supporting customers and employees who may be affected by family violence.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to employees and customers identified by themselves, Active or notified to Active by an independent financial counsellor or case worker, as someone who is, or may be, affected by family violence.

POLICY STATEMENT

Active recognises our customers and employees may be exposed to family violence. As an essential service provider, Active is committed to actively supporting customers and employees that may be affected by family violence.

This policy sets out Active's commitment to effectively supporting customers and employees affected by family violence.

A key priority of Active's Family Violence Policy is to ensure all customers and employees affected by family violence are provided safe, supportive and flexible assistance and all interactions are undertaken in a respectful and sensitive manner.

In an emergency or if you're not feeling safe, always call 000.

For immediate support, you can contact:

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

DEFINITION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence, as defined in the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic), is:

- › Behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour is:
 - Physically or sexually abusive; or
 - Emotionally or psychologically abusive; or
 - Economically abusive; or
 - Threatening; or
 - Coercive; or
 - In any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person.
 - Behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of behaviour referred to above.

WHAT IS ECONOMIC ABUSE IN A FAMILY VIOLENCE SITUATION

Economic or financial abuse is a serious form of family violence that occurs when a perpetrator uses money as a means of power, to control their partner or family member. It occurs in many different forms and can affect anyone.

WHY IT MATTERS

Financial abuse is one of the most powerful ways a perpetrator can keep their partner or family member trapped in an abusive relationship and may also impact on that person's ability to stay safe once they leave the relationship. Essential services can be used by perpetrators of family violence to coerce and cause harm as a form of economic abuse, due to the critical function essential services play in daily life.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMERS

ACCOUNT SECURITY

Active respects your safety and privacy. Unless you instruct us otherwise, we will not disclose your information to anyone else, even if their name is on the account. All conversations are confidential and access to confidential information will be provided only with the customer's consent. Only staff who are directly involved will have access to the information you provide.

Active will work with you to identify a safe and practicable method of communicating with or providing information to you.

DEBT MANAGEMENT

Active recognises family violence is a potential cause of payment difficulty.

Active provides support and assistance to customers left with debt because of family violence. We will work with you to find a solution for your individual situation and won't restrict your energy supply.

As part of our commitment to supporting all customers, including those impacted by family violence, Active aims to provide hardship assistance as quickly as possible, where possible. This could include minimising the need for additional documentation or providing longer term assistance with repayments.

You can access Active's hardship policy on our website or by requesting a copy from us.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING & AWARENESS

Active will treat you with understanding and respect, explain how we can assist you in this difficult situation, and give you as much time as you need to consider your options.

We have provided awareness training for all employees who engage with customers and their managers, and employees who are responsible for the systems and processes that guide or define our interactions with customers. This awareness training will support them in:

- > Understanding the nature and consequences of family violence,
- > Identifying and appropriately engaging with customers who may be affected by family violence, and
- > Ensuring they are aware of how this Policy is applied,

so they may engage with affected customers in a respectful and sensitive manner and provide safe, supportive and flexible assistance.

FAMILY VIOLENCE DISCLOSURE

Active has a secure process designed to ensure you only have to explain your situation once. We will be guided by the information you provide to us

SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

Active has identified external support services who can provide assistance to customers affected by family violence. We may refer you to these services for further assistance at a time and in a manner that considers your immediate circumstances.

In an emergency or if you're not feeling safe, always call 000.

For immediate support, you can contact:

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

OUR COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES

Active maintains a supportive work environment for employees who feel comfortable requesting assistance for family violence related concerns. We all have a role to play in creating and maintaining this environment.

The support Active offers to employees affected by family violence will be tailored according to the employee's needs and circumstances, but may include:

- > Assistance in accessing relevant support services
- > Access to flexible working arrangements
- > Support for implementing security and privacy measures at work
- > Support from staff trained in Active's established protocols for confidential management of personal records.

For immediate support, employees can contact:

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) <https://www.1800respect.org.au/> or;

Active's employee assistance program (EAP)