

POSITION TITLE:	Specialist Family Violence Advisor – Child Protection
POSITION LOCATION:	Warrnambool – travel throughout the Wimmera South-West DFFH region and to Melbourne may be required
CLASSIFICATION:	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Industry Award 2010. Level 6 Pay Point dependent on skills and experience
TEAM:	Case Management
EMPLOYMENT:	0.5 EFT

OUR ORGANISATION

Emma House Domestic Violence Services Incorporated (EHDVSI) was established in 1979 and provides support and assistance to women and children who are experiencing, or who have experienced domestic violence / family violence. It is the primary specialist family violence service for South-West Victoria. Our range of services can include crisis response, accommodation and/or outreach services, all of which are high quality and contemporary best practice models of service delivery.

EHDVSI is a feminist organisation, and our aim is to provide an empowering, respectful and culturally sensitive service committed to best practice. The EHDVSI hope is for a society where women and children live free from family, domestic or intimate partner violence in all its forms, and we work towards this each day.

EHDVSI acknowledges **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** as the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate. We commit to working respectfully to honour their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the country.

EHDVSI actively values and **promotes diversity and is committed to being inclusive and respectful to all**. We welcome applications from women and people who identify as women who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women of all abilities and is a Child Safe Organisation.

As a specialist family violence agency providing services to women and children victim survivors of family violence, Emma House holds an exemption under section 89 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 to only employ people who identify as female.

ROLE CONTEXT

The 2015-16 State Budget committed \$17.27 million in funding over five years to the Child Protection Flexible Responses Initiative. This initiative, now known as the Family Violence Child Protection Partnership, co-locates 17 Specialist Family Violence workers in Child Protection offices across the state and aims to strengthen Child Protection practice, enable joint assessments, assist Child Protection to navigate the family violence system and strengthen opportunities to divert children away from statutory responses.

Services for victims and perpetrators of family violence operate in the context of the Family Violence Act 2008. The Family Violence Protection Partnership co-locates a specialist experienced family violence worker within Child Protection investigation teams in each of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Services 17 areas. Through this co-location arrangement, the Partnership aims to strengthen and improve responses to families primarily subject to a Child Protection investigation.

The Specialist Family Violence Advisor – Child Protection Partnership, is a senior practitioner with

extensive knowledge of family violence. The position is responsible for providing operational and strategic advice to Child Protection practitioners and their managers who undertake investigations of families where a child is, or may be, in need of protection due to family violence.

PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The target group for the Family Violence Child Protection Partnership are families who are subject to Child Protection involvement where family violence is, or is suspected to be, present with a primary focus on families subject to a Child Protection investigation.

The position will assist Child Protection in the planning and conduct of investigations, and support the development of plans that aim to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The Specialist Family Violence Worker works collaboratively with the Child Protection senior managers and practitioners to provide effective service delivery and support.

The Specialist Family Violence Advisor's client is Child Protection. This reflects the intention of the Partnership to promote Child Protection's improved understanding of the dynamics of family violence, including the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and behaviours.

The aim of the Family Violence Protection Partnership is to:

- support and promote improved understanding of the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent
- restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and
- use this knowledge to assist Child Protection achieve the following improved outcomes for the service system and for the families reported to Child Protection.

Child Protection Client Outcomes

To improve assessment, planning and intervention in Child Protection investigation where family violence is, or is suspected to be, present in order to:

- Increase safety and stability for families
- Reduce the risk of harm to children
- Safely reduce the incidence of re-reports to Child Protection and the number of children placed in out of home care
- Strengthen the engagement of victims and perpetrators with support services: and
- Contribute to improved engagement with perpetrators towards changes in perpetrator behaviour and improved child centred parenting capacity

Service System Outcomes

To contribute to an integrated and collaborative child centred, family focused service system.

To achieve this outcome, the Specialist Family Violence Advisor will work with Child Protection to:

- Contribute to an integrated and collaborative child centred, family focused service system
- Recognise the protective parent as victim / survivor
- Recognise and respond appropriately to perpetrator behaviour and perpetrator-driven risk
- Identify and address systemic barriers to joint practice by family violence and Child Protection
- Strengthen referral pathways between Child Protection and specialist family violence services
- Encourage joint family violence risk assessments, safety plans and enhanced information sharing
- Create a better understanding of each organisation's process
- Identify, consistently document and respond to the risk from perpetrators to each child
- Support cultural safety – keeping Aboriginal people and other groups connected to their culture
- Improve the quality and depth of information sharing and documentation, including material that may be relevant for legal processes.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The position directly reports to the Manager Client Services but is expected to work collaboratively across the entire service delivery team.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Focus

The strategic focus involves supporting the development of a more integrated service response by Child Protection and family violence services through:

- Identifying emerging trends, needs and gaps in service delivery and practice issues, particularly in the investigation phase, and use this knowledge to generate changes in systems and approaches
- Facilitating engagement between, and promoting, joint work by Child Protection and family violence services in the South West
- Improving the quality and consistency of family violence related information, assessment and intervention case notes.
- Identifying the need for, participate in, and / or deliver Child Protection training and professional development activities
- At the local level, supporting the implementation of the government's responses to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence

Operational Focus

The operational focus will occur through direct engagement with activities and tasks associated with Child Protection investigations:

- To jointly identify and document, with Child Protection, issues in responses to family violence and develop solutions to system gaps and practice issues
- Provide specialist advice to Child Protection practitioners undertaking investigations where family violence is present
- Where permitted, facilitate client information sharing, and where appropriate, support joint work between Child Protection and family violence services to achieve better engagement with services for victims and perpetrators of family violence
- Where permitted, provide information about the client's history from the Specialist Family Violence Agency and other family men's and women's services operating in the South West
- Support Child Protection to understand the dynamics of perpetrator behaviour and use this information to:
 - improve engagement with perpetrators and to create stronger feedback loops between men's services and Child Protection; and
 - enhance understanding and work with the non-offending parent.
- Initiate exceptions conferences, contribute to the rationale for substantiation, and participate in secondary consultation with Child Protection to enable more informed assessments of safety and risk to victims and perpetrator behaviour
- Assisting Child Protection practitioners to understand and navigate the family violence system
- Making outward referrals (where possible, supported referrals) in collaboration with Child Protection practitioners to understand and navigate the family violence system
- Maintain an in-depth knowledge of the family violence support services in the area and the eligibility requirements for such services
- Keeping up to date information on waitlists and alternatives for family violence support services in the area
- Assisting Child Protection to secure placement for clients in refuge or crisis accommodation
- Coordinating other family violence workers in the area to attend joint home visits with Child Protection
- Targeting the use of funding and resources in responding to clients that experience and / or use family violence; and
- Building the capacity of Child Protection through consultation and provision of education

Personal and Professional

- Understanding of the value of professional supervision and a willingness to participate in reflective practice
- Willingness to participate in the annual performance management processes
- Willingness to attend all mandatory professional development relevant at both and agency level and relevant to the role
- Willingness and commitment to attend training and educational opportunities as identified in the annual individual professional development plan as negotiated with the Chief Executive Officer

Administration, Documentation and Reporting

- Knowledge of documentation of records within a compliance framework
- Knowledge of contemporary case recording principles and the application to service related documentation
- Possession of a variety of strategies to accomplish the completion of administrative tasks within nominated timelines
- Willingness to undertake associated administrative work
- To collect and collate data as required
- Skills to digitally record client information in accordance with agency and funding body requirements.

Communication and Teamwork

- Commitment to effective communication and information sharing with colleagues, Chief Executive Officer, Managers and the EHDVSI Board
- Willingness to represent the organisation professionally and promote services appropriately
- Ability to work in a well-organised manner, both independently and with team members and to contribute to a harmonious and team-based working environment
- Understanding of the principles of effective decision-making and dispute resolution processes
- Commitment to constructive networking with other agencies, businesses and services

Continuous Quality Improvement

- To participate in the organisation's CQI processes
- To participate in the quality improvement practices and outcomes in accordance with the relevant industry standards
- To participate in the Accreditation process and continuous improvement plan
- Contribute to monitoring of service provision to ensure outcomes are in line with internal and external standards, service philosophy and goals
- Participation in the development and review of organisational policies, procedures and work instructions as appropriate
- Understand the importance of encouraging service users to offer input and feedback about the service via the various channels available.

Workplace Health and Safety

- Demonstrate an understanding of the shared responsibility for a safe workplace
- Understanding of the core responsibilities of an employee in relation to occupational health and safety
- Participation in the monitoring of occupational health and safety practices within the workplace, and the addressing of any concerns via the appropriate channels, in a timely manner

On-Call Roster

- Participate in the rostered after-hours family violence face to face response to program, and the roster to support the organisation's transitional and refuge housing.

Additional Duties

- Undertake regular tasks as per requirements
- Work within the required financial parameters of the service
- Willingness to undertake additional duties as directed and / or negotiated with the Chief Executive Officer
- Arrange and provide coverage for those staff supervised during times of absence or leave
- Other administrative duties as required

Pre-Employment Screening

EHDVSI has an obligation to offer a safe environment for children and is required to ensure all employees are appropriately screened before commencing employment. Screening occurs in accordance with the Worker Screening Act (2020) and the DFFH Safety Screening Policy and consists of a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (Police Check), International Police Check (if required), Working With Children Check (or valid exemption), Referee checks and a robust interview process where an applicant's personal and professional interest in working with children may be explored, and the referee check process, whereby information will be sought regarding an applicant's history regarding working with children.

Where the Key Selection Criteria outlines mandatory qualifications an original of these must be sighted by the line manager or Corporate Services manager and retained

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent, or a willingness to upgrade from a Diploma of Community Services (Welfare Studies) to a degree qualification relevant to the field*
- Current Victorian Drivers Licence
- Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (Police Check)
- Current Working with Children Check or valid exemption
- International Police Record Check (only required where staff have lived overseas for 12 months or longer in one country in the last 10 years)

Experience, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate will have the best combination of the following characteristics:

- Commitment to the vision, philosophy and objectives of EHDVSI
- Well developed and demonstrated understanding of the causes and complexities of family violence
- Knowledge of the family violence service system and relevant Government policy, particularly as it relates to child protection.
- Comprehensive understanding of the impact of family violence on women and children focusing on the mother-child relationship and holding perpetrators accountable
- Demonstrated understanding of risk assessment using the MARAM Framework
- Well developed leadership, collaborative partnership and stakeholder engagement skills
- High level oral and written communication skills, including skills in engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders and communicating complex information as simply as possible
- Willingness and ability to engage directly with perpetrators, or with services working with perpetrators of family violence for the purpose of service linkage and referral
- Demonstrated experience in developing and maintaining relationships with other stakeholders in a multi-disciplinary environment including capacity to problem solve and negotiate with other professionals
- Ability to lead professional development activities with Child Protection and the home family violence agency
- Ability to demonstrate initiative and highly developed organisational skills
- Demonstrated skills in managing conflict, competing demands and prioritising work

- Ability to work autonomously as well as part of a team
- Advanced computer skills
- Understanding of the principles of empowerment for individuals, and women in particular
- Understanding of, and a commitment to advocating against structural inequality as it relates to women and their children
- Ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively with service users, colleagues and other service providers
- Participation in the delivery of public awareness / community education activities regarding domestic violence issues and the community impact of domestic violence
- Understanding of, and a commitment to maintaining professional practice and boundaries
- Completion of Domestic and Family Violence specific training, particularly in risk assessment
- A comprehensive understanding of the complex issues and systems that impact upon women and children who have experienced family violence, including the social, political, emotional, legal, medical and economic contexts
- An awareness of key agency stakeholders
- Knowledge of the principles of gender inequality and feminist theory
- Current First Aid qualifications at HLTAID011 (Provide First Aid) level or above

***Minimum mandatory qualifications requirements**

As per the minimum mandatory qualifications requirements via <https://www.vic.gov.au/mandatory-minimum-qualifications-specialist-family-violence-practitioners> all candidates wishing to apply for this role must be able to demonstrate that they:

- are considered EXEMPT under the policy
- OR hold a Bachelor of Social Work or other equivalent qualification
- OR have minimum 5 years relevant professional experience, OR a related qualification as per the mandatory minimum qualification requirements.

OR hold significant cultural knowledge and experience or lived experience, and have faced barriers to educational pathways.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

We offer our staff:

- A supportive team environment, working alongside other highly talented professionals and support staff who strive for human rights and excellence in service delivery
- A strong commitment to your professional development, personal development and mental health
- A flexible working environment
- 4 weeks annual leave
- Salary packaging (which can add up to \$15,900 in tax-free pay per year).
- 10 % Superannuation contribution
- Competitive salary
- Salary package and conditions are in accordance with the contract of employment.

AUTHORISED BY:

NAME: Sulaika Dhanapala
 POSITION: Acting Chief Executive Officer
 DATE: 24 July 2022