



Strategic Plan

2020–2023

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Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee acknowledges the traditional custodians, the Wadawurrung, DjaDja Wurrung and Djab Wurrong peoples. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in the Central Highlands, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

We are particularly grateful to those members of First Nations who contribute to the work of CHIFVC. We would also like to acknowledge the strength and wisdom of victim-survivors, especially as they entrust us with their experiences as we work to end family violence.



Who we are

Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee (CHIFVC) provides leadership, advocacy and specialist expertise to strengthen, integrate and improve the family violence system and help end family violence across Victoria's Central Highlands. The Central Highlands is defined by the Department of Health and Human Services, and comprises six municipalities located in central Victoria. These are Rural City of Ararat, Pyrenees Shire, Hepburn Shire, City of Ballarat, Moorabool Shire, and Golden Plains Shire.

CHIFVC has representation from specialist family violence services as well as broader cross-sector organisations and alliances whose work intersects with family violence response, early intervention and prevention. Committee members, including the Senior Executive Team, are all leaders involved in strengthening the family violence system and ending family violence in the Central Highlands.

CHIFVC currently has representation from

- Specialist Family Violence & Sexual Assault Services
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
- Adolescent family violence services
- Organisations representing or providing services to culturally & linguistically diverse communities
- Men's specialist family violence services
- Victim assistance services
- Housing & homelessness services
- Dhelk Dja Regional Action Group
- Magistrates Court
- Hospital & health services
- Women's health services
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Education & Training
- Family Safety Victoria
- Victoria Police

Victorian policy and legislation that frame our strategic planning context

- Ending Family Violence: Victoria's plan for change (2016) and its three-year rolling action plans
- Family Violence Protection Act 2008 and Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018, which have enabled the creation of the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and facilitated a revised common risk management and assessment framework known as MARAM, both currently being implemented across Victoria
- Dhelk Dja Safe Our Way: Strong cultures, strong peoples, strong families (Family Violence Agreement 2018–2028)
- Building from Strength: 10-year industry plan for family violence prevention and response (2017) and its three-year rolling action plans
- Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women (2017)
- Safe and Strong: A Victorian gender equality strategy (2016)
- Roadmap for Reform: Strong families, safe children (2016)
- Prevention of Family Violence Act 2018, and the establishment of Respect Victoria as an independent statutory authority focused on primary prevention
- Gender Equality Bill (2020) with the Gender Equality Act expected to take effect in 2021

National policy context for CHIFVC's strategic planning

- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2012–2022 (2011) and its Fourth Action Plan 2019–2022

Our planning context

CHIFVC is one of 13 regional family violence committees or partnerships that exist across Victoria. As local system governance structures, these committees or partnerships are integral to the success of the Victorian Government's current agenda to transform family violence under Ending Family Violence: Victoria's plan for change.

Ending Family Violence is the Victorian Government's plan to deliver on all the recommendations of the historic Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, which concluded in 2016.

Since its release, Ending Family Violence has seen an unprecedented breadth and pace of family violence reform and transformation across Victoria, with initiatives set to continue over several years.

CHIFVC is well placed to inform, influence and shape the priorities and directions of the statewide family violence reform agenda as the Victorian Government implements initiatives of Ending Family Violence across Victoria, including in the Central Highlands.

Our unique value proposition to the Victorian Government and Ending Family Violence is three-fold.

- **Local system focus.** We have an unwavering focus on the family violence system as it exists and is understood in the specific geographic and system contexts of Central Highlands.
- **Family violence lens.** We maintain resolute focus on evidence-based understandings of family violence, in our accountability to the experiences, choices, safety and long-term recovery of victim survivors, and by keeping perpetrators squarely in view through an integrated system-level approach
- **Across all workforces.** We are strongly focused on reaching into, and building the capacity and capability of, all workforces in sectors that comprise the family violence system in Central Highlands, especially in achieving consistency in family violence risk literacy

Our vision

Our vision for Central Highlands is that all people are safe, respected and valued, and live free from family violence.

Our purpose

CHIFVC exists to strengthen, integrate and improve the family violence system in Central Highlands, and to help end family violence. We do this through harnessing system leadership and expertise, creating value for the family violence system, advocating for Central Highlands and with Central Highlands, and addressing family violence in our communities.

Our principles

- Collectively, we can change the family violence system so it can better prevent family violence, intervene earlier, respond more effectively, and facilitate recovery from family violence.
- Family violence is predominantly gendered in its contexts and dynamics, and is derived from, and maintained by, structural inequities and hierarchies that perpetuate gender inequality. Additionally, all family violence occurs in the context of power imbalances that derive from, and are maintained by, intersecting structures of privilege and oppression. These structures shape the manifestations of family violence that impact the lives of victim survivors and perpetrators, across all facets of society.
- Family violence against Aboriginal people derives from, and is maintained by, the history of colonisation and the ongoing disempowering impacts of systemic racism, marginalisation and exclusion. Family violence against Aboriginal people encompasses physical, sexual, emotional, economic, social, spiritual and cultural dimensions of perpetration by non-Aboriginal people against Aboriginal partners, children, young people and extended family members; the abuse of Elders; and lateral violence within Aboriginal communities.
- The structural causes of all family violence are historically constructed, not inevitable. Action on the structural causes of family violence is both possible and necessary if we are to end family violence once and for all.
- Ending family violence is everyone's business; it's the collective responsibility of all levels of government, the non-government sector, justice and legal sectors, business sector, community, education and media.
- We can be free of family violence.

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Our role and function

- Provide **expertise** and **leadership** on all matters relating to family violence and the family violence system in Central Highlands. Draw on our unique and valuable position as system leaders to **influence** change.
- **Collaborate** and act as one, accountable to each other, with complementary strengths, to progress family violence system integration and improvement. **Partner** with purpose as we work towards realising our vision of an end to family violence.
- **Advocate** on behalf of our family violence system and its unique contexts. **Influence** system designers and decision makers so that statewide initiatives coming to Central Highlands are articulated and delivered in a way that maximises benefits for our community.
- **Communicate** to stakeholders and communities the inherent value articulation of our role in system integration and improvement, and in facilitating the statewide reform agenda as initiatives roll through Central Highlands.
- Undertake evidence-informed **design** and client-focused **planning** to strengthen, integrate and improve Central Highland's family violence system.
- **Innovate** and **evaluate** so we can contribute to the evidence base. **Share** our achievements and lessons learned as we build our evidence base for Central Highlands.
- **Enable** improved knowledge of the structural causes of all family violence and their intersecting dimensions. **Facilitate** more consistency in family violence literacy across Central Highlands (i.e. the system and the community).

Our values

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are accountable to the experiences, safety, choices and long-term recovery of victim survivors of family violence in everything we do. We value their strengths, healing and survivorship. We take an integrated system-level approach to keep those who use family violence firmly in view so their actions, and the impacts of their actions, cannot be justified, minimised, trivialised or excused, and blame cannot be shifted. We hold each other accountable to the improvement and change we seek in family violence in Central Highlands.

ACTION FOCUSED

We are committed to action more than discussion. We identify, resource and take responsibility to act upon opportunities and problems, not deflect them elsewhere.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Our family violence system must have the capacity and capability – especially around family violence risk – to respond equitably and inclusively to anyone seeking assistance and support. We seek to respond holistically, inclusively, respectfully and safely to all those with lived experiences of family violence.

INTEGRITY

We use evidence-based understandings of family violence to make decisions and take action on family violence and system integration and improvement. We understand that family violence is predominantly gendered in its contexts and dynamics; however, intersecting structures of privilege and oppression operate in different (not fixed) contexts to shape unique and diverse power imbalances and manifestations of family violence. We are committed to a future where gender equality and all forms of equality are the norm.

CENTRAL HIGHLAND'S UNIQUENESS

We value the diverse mix of larger regional centres, tourist towns, smaller townships, and rural and remote communities that comprise Central Highlands. We see our geographic and socio-demographic diversity as opportunities for (not barriers to) system integration.

CULTURAL SAFETY

We maintain cultural safety for Aboriginal organisations and communities partnering with us, and uphold their knowledge, self-determination and leadership in Aboriginal family violence response, early intervention and prevention.

RESPECT AND TRANSPARENCY

We are respectful, transparent and open in our relationships, collaborations and communications with one another and those with whom we work.

COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We work collaboratively and with shared purpose to realise systemic and enduring changes in the family violence system, and to create conditions on multiple levels (individual, community and organisational) for an equal and just society. We know we have to contribute collectively and through purposeful partnerships to make an impact on the structural causes of family violence, to end family violence once and for all.

INNOVATION AND LEARNING

We look to new ways of doing things, with a spirit of 'targeted curiosity'. We are an innovative, reflective and learning committee.

Our strategic priorities at a glance

System integration and improvement.

We will focus our advocacy and influencing role to achieve an integrated client-centred family violence system for Central Highlands. We will collaborate and innovate for an improved and strengthened system.

Workforces.

We will support and facilitate the statewide reform focus on workforces across Victoria's family violence system, through contributing our system leadership, expertise and intelligence to initiatives in Central Highlands.

Data, outcomes and evidence.

We will collect and use quality meaningful research, lived experience, data and evidence to inform decisions and measure actions and outcomes relating to our efforts for system integration and improvement, workforces development, and sound governance.

Governance.

We will continue to be the expert and leading structure for family violence system integration and improvement in Central Highlands, to support communications, linkages, partnerships and collaborations for system integration and ending family violence.

Priority 1.

System integration and improvement

We will continue to advocate and exert our influence to strategically integrate the family violence system in Central Highlands as it develops and expands through Ending Family Violence: Victoria's plan for change. We will support the implementation of The Orange Door in Central Highlands. We will continue to recognise the unique contexts and conditions of Central Highlands and its family violence system; in particular, through our responses to the effects of climate-related weather, natural disasters, public health emergencies, or other unforeseen large-scale events, on local system integration.

We will:

- use evidence-informed design for system integration and improvement, as well as pilot local innovations (trial, reflect, learn);
- centre client voices in system design and everything we do for the system;
- ensure the entire Central Highlands is represented in our advocacy and influencing work, and considered in all decisions that impact Central Highlands;
- engage and communicate with stakeholders and communities on the role they can all play in achieving an integrated system and ending family violence.

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Priority 2.

Workforces

We will continue to take a system-level approach to workforces capacity and capability development in Central Highlands, and facilitate the statewide Building from Strength: 10-year industry plan for family violence prevention and response. We will establish and deliver an area-based response to Building from Strength, alongside our own workforces development actions, to build consistent family violence literacy (i.e. family violence risk, applications of intersectionality) and grow our workforces.

We will:

- support the roll out of MARAM and other statewide initiatives and ensure their 'fit' for the workforces development needs of Central Highlands;
- empower our workforces to build and embed cultural competence;
- advance our workforces understandings of cultural safety;
- build and cultivate rural and remote pathways to our workforces;
- prioritise the wellbeing of our workforces.

Priority 3.

Data, outcomes and evidence

We will develop our capacity and capability to utilise quality meaningful research, data and evidence for informed decision making, planning, advocacy and communications in relation to family violence in Central Highlands.

We will:

- design and implement a research strategy that harnesses and utilises local knowledges;
- introduce a mechanism to capture the client or service user journey through the family violence system and systems that intersect with it (e.g. homelessness, mental health);
- establish shared measurement towards agreed long-term outcomes and measure our progress towards these;
- enrich our data literacy (contribution, collation, analysis);
- consolidate and expand the Data Press Portal and associated projects.

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Priority 4.

Governance

We will continue to be recognised across Central Highlands and by statewide reform designers and decision makers as the leading structure for family violence system integration, improvement and innovation in Central Highlands.

We will:

- strengthen our governance structures so we can maintain effective strategic leadership and oversight of system integration; in particular, ensure CHIFVC elects members to the Senior Executive Team every two-years (in keeping with its Terms of Reference) for seamless oversight of this CHIFVC Strategic Plan 2020–2023;
- demonstrate our system leadership in, and contribute our system expertise to, all discussions and decisions that impact on family violence and the family violence system in Central Highlands;
- participate in broader strategic governance conversations and mechanisms occurring in Central Highlands.

Monitoring and review

Our strategic priorities and their objectives will inform 12-month operational action plans led by CHIFVC Working Groups. Operational plans will include responsibilities, timeframes and 'progress measures' to monitor our performance as we implement the CHIFVC Strategic Plan 2020–2023. Review and reflection will occur at the end of each 12-month period, with a mid-way point 'refresh' of the CHIFVC Strategic Plan 2020–2023 in early 2022.

At the mid-way point, CHIFVC will also consider options for extending the CHIFVC Strategic Plan 2020–2023 for another year e.g. to bring it into line with the second Rolling Action Plan of Ending Family Violence, if needed.

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For more information about the CHIFVC Strategic Plan 2020–2023, contact Jess Cadwallader, Principal Strategic Advisor, jess@chifvc.org.au