

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position	Specialist Family Violence Advisor- Child Protection Partnership
Location	DHHS Child Protection (Box Hill) EDVOS offices in Ringwood
Reports to	Team Leader
Direct Reports	Nil
Award/ Classification	SCHADS Level 6
Date	January 2020

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

EDVOS is the specialist family violence service in the Eastern Metropolitan Region and covers the municipalities of Boroondara, Manningham, Whitehorse, Knox, Monash, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges.

We provide an integrated range of support and services to empower women and children who have experienced and are responding to family violence. We focus on ensuring the safety of women and children, and the accountability of perpetrators. We provide support, information, case management, risk assessment, safety planning, community education, programs for pet safety and a strong network of referral pathways to other services.

EDVOS provides equal opportunities to individuals without regard to race, colour, religion, national origin, age, disability, culture or sexual orientation. EDVOS has a Diversity Working Group that is committed to championing best practice in these areas and leads by example to break down the barriers to inclusion. EDVOS fosters a diverse workplace where people are free from discrimination and disadvantage and are afforded dignity and respect.

EDVOS employ women only to most of our positions as per the findings of EEO exemption H327/2017 and by special measure. This is due to the specialist nature of our work and the services that we provide to women and children who have experienced or are responding to family violence in the community.

EDVOS is a child- focused and child safe organisation and we are committed to promoting and protecting the safety and interests of children.

EDVOS Vision

A community free from family violence, where everyone feels safe.

EDVOS Mission

To take a collaborative and evidence-based approach to supporting those experiencing family violence whilst also working to prevent family violence before it occurs.

Document No:	TEM-HR-02	Version No:	3
First approved:	13/11/2003	Next review date:	18/04/2022
Last approved:	18/04/2019	Responsible person:	Human Resources Manager
Authorised by:	GM Corporate	Page	1 of 6

POSITION DESCRIPTION

EDVOS Values

- **Equity:** Prioritising the use of resources to address inequities in our society;
- **Accountability:** Responsible for delivering high quality, evidence based services AND; working to ensure perpetrators of violence are held to account for their actions;
- **Collaboration:** Striving to be a valued partner by working collaboratively with others;
- **Respect:** Concern for human rights as well as the experiences and aspirations of others;
- **Innovation:** Displaying resourcefulness and innovation, focusing on positive and sustainable outcomes;
- **Advocacy:** 'Actively speaking and behaving in a way that advances human rights'

ORGANISATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITIES (applicable to all employees)

Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Wellbeing

Comply with the requirements of Victorian Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004 and related OHS procedures and Safe Operating Procedures developed by EDVOS, including to:

- Work in a manner that considers and enhances the health, safety and wellbeing of self and others.
- Report to work fit for duty and not negatively affected by alcohol, drugs, medication or other substances.
- Ensure that all work areas are maintained in a safe condition.
- Identify, report and record all safety hazards, incidents and injuries.
- Participate in OHS training, consultation and communication meetings where required.
- Actively assess, manage and where possible mitigate workplace risk.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

- Become familiar with and adhere to EDVOS's policies, procedures and Code of Conduct.
- Contribute to or participate in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) activities of EDVOS and implement CQI strategies into work practices.
- Attend supervision, job-specific and organisation-wide training, meetings, working groups and conferences as required.
- Be open to new ways of doing things and respond to challenges with innovative ideas and solutions.
- Strive for and promote continuous quality improvement across the organisation.

Diversity

- Demonstrate respect and acceptance of diversity at all times.
- Interact with EDVOS clients, staff and other stakeholders in a manner that is inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory.

Respectful Relationships

- Facilitate good, respectful working relationships with EDVOS staff, clients and all stakeholders, internal and external through clear communication and a willingness to work towards the prompt resolution of any concerns.

Document No:	TEM-HR-02	Version No:	3
First approved:	13/11/2003	Next review date:	18/04/2022
Last approved:	18/04/2019	Responsible person:	Human Resources Manager
Authorised by:	GM Corporate	Page	2 of 6

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION OBJECTIVE

The 2015-2016 State Budget committed \$17.27 million in funding over five years to the *Child Protection Flexible Responses Initiative*.

This initiative, now known as *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership*, collocates 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.

The Specialist Family Violence Advisor 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.

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.

Through co-location at a Child Protection office, the position aims to strengthen and improve responses to families subject to a Child Protection investigation. The aim of the Family Violence Child 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.

POSITION SPECIFIC ACCOUNTABILITIES

Child Protection Client Outcomes

To improve assessment, planning and intervention in Child Protection investigations 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

Document No:	TEM-HR-02	Version No:	3
First approved:	13/11/2003	Next review date:	18/04/2022
Last approved:	18/04/2019	Responsible person:	Human Resources Manager
Authorised by:	GM Corporate	Page	3 of 6

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Service System Outcomes

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

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

- contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system
- recognise the protective parent as a 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 (CRAF assessments) and safety plans and enhanced information sharing
- create a better understanding of each organisation's processes
- 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

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 perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and behaviours.

The position will operate at both strategic and operational levels.

Strategic Focus

The strategic focus involves supporting the development of 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 to 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 local area.
- Improving the quality and consistency of family violence related information, assessment and interventions in 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.

Document No:	TEM-HR-02	Version No:	3
First approved:	13/11/2003	Next review date:	18/04/2022
Last approved:	18/04/2019	Responsible person:	Human Resources Manager
Authorised by:	GM Corporate	Page	4 of 6

POSITION DESCRIPTION

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 violence men's and women's services operating in the local area.
- 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 warm referrals) in collaboration with Child Protection to specialist family violence services and expediting referrals.
- 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.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- A tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology, Welfare or a related discipline
- Expert knowledge of local family violence support services and approaches in the local area.

Document No:	TEM-HR-02	Version No:	3
First approved:	13/11/2003	Next review date:	18/04/2022
Last approved:	18/04/2019	Responsible person:	Human Resources Manager
Authorised by:	GM Corporate	Page	5 of 6

POSITION DESCRIPTION

- Demonstrated knowledge and high level understanding of:
 - a) the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent;
 - b) mechanisms to restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and
 - c) the capacity to use this knowledge to assist Child Protection achieve improved client and system outcomes
- Capacity and desire to support improved engagement by Child Protection with both victims and perpetrators.
- Demonstrated understanding of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008, the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014, the Health Records Act 2001, the CRAF and Victoria Police Code of Practice.
- 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.
- Highly developed written and oral communication skills including the ability to use a range of IT/Web-based applications to manage workflow in accordance with organizational guidelines and privacy principle and keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with organizational requirements, information security and privacy policies/requirements
- A demonstrated high level of skill in accurately recording data, correspondence and reporting and providing written and oral evidence to the Children's Court of Victoria, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria and other relevant courts and tribunals.
- A valid driver's license is mandatory for this position.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Salary and conditions are in accordance with the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010; plus the current legislated 9.5% Superannuation contribution. While legislation allows, Salary Packaging is offered with this position.

All offers of employment are subject to a six month probationary period.

Performance reviews are linked to criteria in the position description, and individual work plans.

All offers of employment are subject to the following:

- Current National Police Record Check (renewed every 3 years).
- International Police Record Check (where required).
- Current Working with Children Check Assessment notice and card valid for Employment.
- A Current Victorian Drivers Licence (where required).
- Eligibility to work in Australia.

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Authorised by:	GM Corporate	Page	6 of 6