

Domestic and Family Violence Policy

Anglican Parish of Bulli

The primary focus of this Policy is to respond to abusive or intimidating behaviour inflicted against a current or former spouse or intimate partner within Bulli Anglican Church (BAC) membership. BAC also recognises that children are victim/ survivors in their own right and are significantly impacted by domestic violence situations. Please refer to the Safe Ministry for Children policy.

We acknowledge domestic and family violence exists and affirm that all forms of domestic violence are harmful. Domestic violence is one person's consistent misuse of power over another. While domestic violence is predominantly perpetrated by male to female* we recognise that both male and female can perpetrate domestic abuse. At the centre of oppressive and violent relationships is an abuse of power. Domestic and family violence impacts our community, and our church.

- 1. Domestic and family violence involves a repeated pattern of behaviour** that seeks to coerce, control, intimidate, hurt or frighten a person in an intimate-partner, or familial, relationship. This includes relationships between spouses, parents, children, siblings, carers, and extended family members.

Domestic and family violence may include, but is not limited to emotional, verbal, financial, psychological, spiritual, cultural, physical and sexual abuse. It can also include social isolation, stalking, image-based or technology facilitated abuse, and threats to harm other people including children, property or pets.

- 2. We are committed to safe environments which:**

- recognise equality among all people
- promote a culture of healthy relationships in all circumstances, including families, couples, and other relationships within our congregation
- ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from domestic violence and abuse
- strive to follow good practice in protecting those experiencing domestic violence
- enable concerns to be raised and responded to with compassion and consistent with legislative requirements.

- 3. BAC acknowledges that domestic and family violence requires a serious and realistic response and recognise that:**

- all forms of domestic and family violence cause harm to the victim
- domestic and family violence can occur in all communities, including churches
- children who are exposed to domestic and family violence in any way are impacted, and this is a form of child abuse
- statutory authorities and specialist agencies are essential in promoting the welfare of any adult or child suffering the impacts of domestic and family violence
- where there is a threat to safety from a domestic and/or family violence matter, clergy and lay ministers will respond in accordance with the *Anglican Church Good Practice Guidelines** and consistent with regulatory and legal requirements.

- 4. We respect people who come to us for help by:**

- valuing, respecting and listening to victims of domestic and family violence
- refusing to condone the perpetration or continuation of any form of abuse – holding the perpetrators to account

5. We uphold Scripture and its abhorrence of abuse in our words and public statements by:

- clearly teaching that domestic abuse is wrong and that the Bible should never be interpreted to justify or excuse any form of abuse. Rather, a relationship between a couple is to be characterised by love, care and kindness
- consistently teaching that the Bible does not condone abuse and should not be interpreted to demand a partner tolerate or submit to domestic violence.

6. We ensure safety first by:

- taking a disclosure seriously – ensuring that any information regarding violence and abuse are taken earnestly and not dismissed
- keeping it confidential – respecting the need for confidentiality within the bounds of good Safe Ministry practice and legal requirements
- coming alongside victim survivors and working with the appropriate statutory authorities during an investigation into domestic violence.

BAC is committed to ensuring that all members are supported when impacted by domestic and family violence. To maximise safety and support, the following numbers are provided for your wellbeing:

Agency	Contact Details
1800 Respect – 24-hour national helpline for sexual assault and family and domestic violence counselling and advice	1800 737 732
Lifeline – 24-hour telephone crisis line	131 114
NSW Domestic Violence Line 24-hour comprehensive information and referrals to nearby support services, for all categories of domestic violence	1800 65 64 63
Men's Referral Service Telephone counselling, information and referral service for men using violence in families or male victims	1300 766 491

Date Adopted by Parish Council: 22nd June, 2026

Date to be Reviewed: March, 2027

* **Refer:** dvnsw.org.au, safeministry.org.au/domestic-family-abuse