

Purpose and Scope

In Australia, one woman is murdered every week by a current or former partner, and one in three Australian women has experienced physical violence since the age of 15. One in twenty men also experience domestic violence.

Internet access has become increasingly important in our everyday lives. For those who are victims and survivors of domestic and family violence, an internet service can be a lifeline, but also a tool of control, and the financial hardship often facing those escaping a violent situation can impact their ability to pay bills and access telecommunications services.

This policy outlines Buddy Telco's commitment to supporting customers who are experiencing, or have experienced, family & domestic violence.

Are you or is someone you know affected?

Domestic and family violence in the context of our industry – the telecommunications sector – can take many forms. It can be referred to as 'technology facilitated abuse' and can look like the following:

- Monitoring phone calls, social media and emails without the knowledge and approval of someone
- Loading spyware onto a computer or mobile phone so as to monitor a person without their knowledge
- Using technology to track the location of someone, for the purposes of monitoring, control or stalking
- Accessing accounts such as email, social media, or messaging to monitor or impersonate someone
- Logging in (without permission) and closing services, thereby cutting someone off from contacts

We are here to support you.

At Buddy Telco, we take the misuse of our services by domestic violence perpetrators extremely seriously and will provide effective and tailored assistance to customers who need our support. You can choose to communicate with us via the platform you are most comfortable with, with ways to contact us found at the end of this policy and on our website.

You may want to nominate someone to contact us on your behalf. This may include a financial counsellor, social worker or a friend or family member. Just let us know who your support person is when we speak with you and provide consent for them to act on your behalf, then we can work with them in line with our privacy obligations.

You only have to tell your story once

If you are comfortable for us to leave details of your circumstances on your account, you will only have to explain your situation once – the first time you contact us. We will be guided by the information that you provide to us and where possible, no extra proof is required.

You can also choose to have your account handled by a dedicated member of staff who has received specialist training in dealing with cases that involve domestic violence.

All conversations are confidential

Your safety and privacy will be our priority. None of the information you give us will be disclosed to anyone else, even if their name is on the account.

More information on our Privacy Policy [is on our website](#).

Your capacity to pay

We will work with you to find a solution for your individual situation. We provide payment plans or other support, guided by your circumstances. For more information on how we can help, have a look at our [Financial Hardship Policy](#).

We will hear you

Our Customer Service Team have been trained to assist people who are experiencing family violence. We also have a team of Family Violence Specialists that your account can be assigned to should you require additional support.

We will treat you with understanding, empathy and respect, and we will do everything we can to help while also complying with our industry guidelines.

We can put you in touch or refer you to organisations that specialise in working with and supporting people experiencing family violence, for immediate and or more long-term assistance.

Support Services

For Women:

1800RESPECT

National counselling helpline, information and support 24/7

1800 737 732

1800respect.org.au

DAISY APP

Daisy is an app developed by 1800RESPECT to connect people experiencing violence or abuse to services in their local area.

[Download Daisy for Android devices](#)

[Download Daisy for iOS devices](#)

For Men:

MENSLINE

Support for men with family and relationship issues 24/7

1300 789 978

mensline.org.au

For LGBTQI+

QLife

Telephone and online counselling, referrals and support groups for LGBTQI+ people and their families

1800 184 527

qlife.org.au