

# What do I need to think about: work and income?

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Thinking about finding work, staying in your job and keeping a regular income are all important whilst you think about leaving, as you leave and in the long term.

## Staying at work

Violent relationships can impact on your performance, safety and wellbeing at work. It is important to know that there is support and advice available out there for you.

### Telling your employer if you need to

Many women leaving violence find it difficult to juggle work and commitments, like applying for a DVO, attending court hearings and managing childcare. Not only is taking the time off stressful but telling your employer can be difficult. Fortunately, awareness of violence against women has become more widespread and better protections are in place through Australian unions and legislation.

If violence is directly impacting your work it is a good idea to be upfront about your situation. This means if your safety is at risk at work or you have to take significant time off for commitments related to the violence.

Attitudes to violence vary and some employers will be incredibly supportive others may be less so.<sup>1</sup> For information you can share with your employer to help them understand go to

[http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/information\\_for\\_employers\\_and\\_unions.pdf](http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/information_for_employers_and_unions.pdf).

If you are worried about telling your employer you could also contact the union related to your industry for specific strategies and advice.<sup>2</sup>

The Safe at Home, Safe at Work project run by the University of New South Wales and funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations has some great information guides on helping you to stay safe. Here you will also find information about confidentiality and your rights at work. For more information visit:

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[http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/keeping\\_you\\_and\\_your\\_job\\_safe\\_bklt\\_22\\_may\\_2013\\_final.pdf](http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/keeping_you_and_your_job_safe_bklt_22_may_2013_final.pdf)

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[http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/keeping\\_you\\_and\\_your\\_job\\_safe\\_bklt\\_22\\_may\\_2013\\_final.pdf](http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/keeping_you_and_your_job_safe_bklt_22_may_2013_final.pdf)

- <http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/how-guides-model-policies-procedures-and-safety-plans>
- <http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/what-you-need-know>.

### **Being treated unfairly by employer**

If you think you have been treated unfairly by an employer because of your experience with violence, you may be able to claim compensation or get your job back.<sup>3</sup>

For information and advice regarding this contact:

#### **Fair Work Ombudsman**

Phone: 13 13 94

8:00am-6:00pm

Monday to Friday

#### **Women's Legal Service (ACT & Region)**

Phone: (02) 6257 4499 (Inside Canberra)

1800 634 669 (Outside Canberra)

9.30am to 12.00 noon

Monday to Friday

### **Looking for work**

There are several programs and places in Canberra that can help support you to find work or training courses that meet your needs and availability. Below is a list of ways to find a job in the ACT with assistance and without.

#### **Job Services Australia (JSA)**

Some Centrelink payments, like Newstart Allowance, require that you look for work and attend Job Services Australia appointments. These appointments are designed to help you find employment opportunities.

Through this scheme you will be required to attend appointments at a recruitment agency that is a registered JSA provider. They will help you find a job that takes into

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[http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/keeping\\_you\\_and\\_your\\_job\\_safe\\_bklt\\_22\\_may\\_2013\\_final.pdf](http://www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au/files/imce/keeping_you_and_your_job_safe_bklt_22_may_2013_final.pdf)

account your skills, experience, availability and your needs. They will also help you to build an up-to-date resume or CV.

It is important that you follow the instructions of Centrelink and your JSA provider. If you do not attend an appointment you will be penalised with a participation failure. A participation failure or penalty happens when you do not satisfy the requirements of your Centrelink payment. This means not doing things like attending organised appointments or not reporting. If you do not have a reasonable excuse, like you had work or could not get child care, your payments may be affected.

If you cannot make an appointment always try to notify your Job Services Australia provider in advance if possible. They will help reschedule a new appointment to meet your needs.

If you are finding it stressful and difficult to keep up with the requirements of the JSA and Newstart program you should talk with Centrelink as soon as possible. Call your JSA provider or visit your local Centrelink Service Centre.

### **Recruitment Agencies**

Recruitment agencies are businesses which match jobseekers with vacant jobs. They can help you to find a job that takes into account your skills, experience, availability and your needs. They can also help you get your resume or CV in shape. Their services are generally free to jobseekers because they make their money from businesses advertising jobs. Look online or in the Yellow Pages for local recruitment agencies.

### **Job advertisements**

Newspapers, like The Canberra Times, and websites, like <http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/> or <http://www.seek.com.au/>, advertise job vacancies in the ACT and surrounding region.

To apply for jobs you will need an up-to-date resume or CV. If you are having difficulties putting together your resume you can talk with a recruitment agency, look online for a resume building guide or contact Centrelink to refer you to a Job Services Australia provider.

### **Assistance with clothes for a job interview**

There are ACT services which may help you look your best at job interviews, work experience, special occasions and work. This can be especially helpful if you are struggling financially and you have had to leave your home without any of your clothes and it is not safe for you to go back.

The role of these services is to help you choose suitable clothing, shoes and accessories for the job you are applying for or you are working in. These services are free for eligible women.

### **WOW Working Wonders (Communities@Work)**

Make an appointment by calling (02) 6239 6500, (02) 6228 9200 or 04516681188

### **The Salvation Army**

Phone: 02 6247 3635

### **St Vincent de Pauls**

Phone: 02 6282 2722

## **What support can I get with work costs?**

### **Return to Work Grants**

The ACT Government Office for Women offers ACT women Return to Work Grants of up to \$1000 to help them get back into the workforce.

The grants have criteria and you will need to fill out an application form to apply.

Even if you don't think you'll get one, it's worth giving it a go!

For more information about the grants, eligibility and how to apply visit [http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/women/grants\\_and\\_scholarships](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/women/grants_and_scholarships) or call the ACT Office for Women on 02 6205 0515.