


Digital Services & Remote Work: Harnessing Technology During this Pandemic


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National Network to End Domestic Violence

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Communicating with Survivors

- Text or chat hotlines
- Video calls
- Video or web chat for support groups
- Email or text (caution)
- Phone calls




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Considerations for Digital Services

- Survivor’s accessibility needs and barriers.
- Agency’s capacity to provide & secure tech.
- Advocates' capacity: time, tech access, tech knowledge.
- Privacy, confidentiality, and security risks.


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Digital Services are Different

- Text & chat conversations tend to be longer in duration.
- Text & chat tend to have more numerous and graphic disclosures.
- A survivor may abruptly stop communicating.
- Video may be done from their home, meaning we may be in their home.

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Stay True to Core Values

- Just because the tech makes something possible, doesn’t mean we should do it.
- Tech that is OK for our families or workplace is not necessarily OK for survivors.
- Use any new digital service temporarily – reassess once the pandemic has passed.

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HOME TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT RESOURCES TECH SAFETY APP NNEEDV.ORG QUICK EXIT



Technology Safety

www.TechSafety.org - Safetynet@nneedv.org



- Digital Services Toolkit
- Agency Use of Tech Toolkit
- COVID-19 Specific Resources

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Covid-19 Resources

WESNET

<https://techsafety.org.au>

PULL DOWN THE RESOURCES MENU
Choose:
Tech Safety for Agencies

Or go straight to: <https://techsafety.org.au/resources/technology-safety-agencies/>

How to operate as a remote workplace | Best practices in mobile devices service delivery | Using Tech to Communicate with survivors in a health crisis

Communicating with survivors

In person | Phone | Email | Texting | Online Chat | Video Call

Think about interception by:
Abusers / Family Members
Technology Platforms
Hackers

Best Practice Guide: Texting with Survivors

Best Practice Guide: Video calls with survivors

Best Practice Guide: Employee Smartphones & Tablets

Best Practice Guide: Email Privacy and Safety

Best Practice Guide: Social Communications with survivors

Best Practice Guide: Phone Communications with survivors

Key Risks

Personal Safety

- Communication via text, email and online chat leaves a trail
- For example video call software may store call history
- Some platforms are known to have vulnerabilities, e.g Zoom

Loss of Privacy

- Survivor privacy is compromised by message threads being seen by others without survivor's consent
- For example by a family member or child of the worker over hearing or viewing

Privacy

- When staff use mobile devices to communicate with survivors, conversation threads and other related records include personally identifying information.
- What are the privacy policies of the platforms. Is it secure?

More resources

Communicating with Survivors

<https://techsafety.org.au>

Best practice Guide: video calling coming soon

Best Practices: using tech 7

- 1 Talk to survivors about risks
- 2 Plan for safety and privacy
- 3 Check in each time
- 4 If the survivor suspects monitoring, offer options, but if they still want to continue, respect that wish

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Best Practices : texting/phones 8

- 5 Workers should not use personal phones to message with survivors
- 6 Delete messages immediately or regularly
- 7 Don't save numbers in contacts
- 8 Review and delete personal information in billing records and backups

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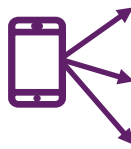
- Demand for Safe Phones has gone up during past 2-3 weeks as Services start working remotely.
- More requests from agencies trying to join the program
- Requests for larger numbers of phones.
- Moving Aboriginal Women back on to Country so they can isolate.
- Lack of access to free Wi-Fi in public spaces now means huge need for credit and data top ups.



SAFE PHONES PROGRAM

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How someone can obtain info from a phone 10



Device	• Directly accessing your device
Telco	• Accessing your telco account
Apps & services	• Accessing your apps that are online accounts

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Australia Update 11

-  Google reports 75 per cent spike in searches for help with domestic violence (in Australia)
-  Family violence calls drop amid fears victims can't safely seek help while in lockdown
-  WESNET and Women's Refuges NZ will be surveying sector to find out what's happening – Results Webinar #6

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GNWS COVID-19 Webinar #4:

Using Technology to Support Victims During a Public Health Crisis: Singapore

Malathi Das ©
malathi@joylaw.com



Asian Network of Women's Shelters
15 April 2020

Lawyers Who Lead

Overview

- Some undesirable of social isolation as a result of COVID-19:
 - Xi'an, China: increase in divorces filed
 - China, US, Singapore: reporting spike in no. of victims reaching out to hotlines and agencies
- In Singapore: NGO AWARE's Women's Hotline saw 33% increase in calls in February 2020 over same period last year.
- Increased number of family violence cases being reported by social workers
- 60 per cent of recent daily referrals had been family violence related, up from 30 per cent last year for same period

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Reasons for Increased Family Violence

- 3 reasons closely associated with family violence's roots in power and control:

1. Pandemics: situations in which people's lives may seem out of control. Trigger abusers to lash out against their victims, to regain semblance of control. Unemployment and economic hardship at the household level often positively related to abusive behaviour.
2. Social support – from family, friends or other sympathetic allies – is critical in helping family violence victims heal and build hope. Containment measures (WFH or enforced leave) increase social isolation. Victims may feel they can no longer seek refuge at the home of a friend or relative, especially those with elderly residents or children, for fear of exposing families to the virus.
3. Coronavirus crisis: likely going to push the world economy into recession, more difficult for victims to leave abusive relationships. Leaving an abusive partner often involves establishing financial independence – for example, by keeping a secret savings account that the abuser cannot access – but this will be more difficult if victims begin to lose jobs. Low income families more vulnerable.

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Source: Isolated with your abuser? Why COVID-19 outbreak has seen uptick in family violence, AWARE, Shalee Hingorani, 26 March 2020

Social Services

- Singapore currently under a partial lock-down or "Circuit breaker" with restrictions on movement and enforced safe distancing for the period between 7 April 2020 and 5 May 2020.
- Increased time spent at home
 - increase the incidence of family violence, as abusers and victims find themselves in close proximity 24/7.
 - impact a victim's help-seeking behaviour (victims call helplines and services when they are away from their abusers, such as at work, whilst on an errand.
 - Home-based learning (HBL) and closures of child-care facilities mean children are home.
 - With more people spending time indoors, victims may be afraid to reach out for help, assessing that their abusers have a higher chance of finding out.
 - Services impacted as a result of COVID-19, e.g., crisis shelters and divorce support service agencies taking necessary precautions to close their doors if they deem the risk of infection to be high.
 - General strain on helplines and social services

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Legal and Judicial Remedies

- Partial lock-down: Family Justice Courts will only hear essential and urgent cases
- Matters which are time-sensitive, constitute a threat to life and liberty and/or involve urgent needs of the family. Conducted by video conferencing to the maximum extent possible, including for cases involving litigants-in-person ("LIPs").
- Family violence proceedings:
 - (a) Proceedings will be adjourned for at least 4 weeks and where an expedited order ("EO") has been granted, the EO will be extended without the need for an application.
 - (b) Matters involving a higher risk of imminent danger will continue to be heard. Hearings will be conducted by video conferencing as far as possible.
 - (c) Reviews for Mandatory Counselling Orders and show cause hearings for bailors will be adjourned for at least 4 weeks.

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PROTECT WHAT'S YOURS.

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