

# Court Advocacy & Support Program (CASP)

Helping you through Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault court appearances

## What is CASP?

Going to court can be a stressful and confusing experience, but help is available through Gladstone Women's Health Centre's free Court Advocacy and Support Program (CASP). CASP is available at Gladstone and Biloela Magistrates Courts on days when domestic violence and/or sexual assault matters are heard.

## Domestic Violence Court Support

CASP is a government-funded program to support eligible people with their court appearances for matters relating to domestic violence and sexual assault. Our staff do not provide legal help, but are there to support you navigate the court process and support you in court or when seeking legal counsel at court. If you have concerns about your safety when attending court, please discuss these with our staff prior to court day if possible, or upon arrival at court, so we can put increased safety measures in place.

## Definitions:

- Aggrieved: The person who was impacted/affected by domestic violence.
- Respondent: The person who is accused of committing domestic violence.

## Eligibility:

CASP is free of charge and is NOT based on an income assessment. It is available as follows:

Magistrates Court	Matters relating to	Eligibility
Gladstone	Domestic violence	Aggrieved females & males
	Sexual assault	Aggrieved females and males Respondent females and males (with preference to aggrieved persons)
Biloela	Domestic violence	Aggrieved females and males Respondent females and males (preference to aggrieved persons)

## Our Support

CASP provides the following support free of charge for people involved in domestic and family violence matters. We also offer support for Aggrieved people in sexual assault matters. Please ask if there are specific supports you are after because we link with other agencies.

### Support for Aggrieved people

A safe and secure space to wait	Post-court debriefing and information
Information about court and the procedures	Referral to other agencies
Help applying for a new protection order or to seek changes to an existing order	Providing specialist domestic violence knowledge and information
Pre-court visits/orientations if needed	Liaising on your behalf with court staff, police, duty lawyers and others as needed
Safety planning	Helping you understand orders of the court
Support in court room (physical presence but not legal support)	Providing ongoing support (counselling and other) between court appearances

### Support for Respondents (DV matters only)

Information about court and proceedings	Information about domestic violence orders
Post-court debriefing and information	Information about conditions contained in orders of the court
Referral to other agencies	

### Domestic Violence Orders (DVOs)

A DVO is also known as a protection order and is made by a Magistrate in court to protect the Aggrieved and others listed in the order from the person committing violence (The Respondent). A DVO contains conditions, such as making it illegal for the violent person (The Respondent) to come within a certain distance of where you live. If the Respondent breaches those conditions and it is reported to police, he or she could face a Magistrate where penalties can include a fine or imprisonment.

### Applying for a DVO

Applying for a DVO is not difficult. You can ask the police to apply to the court for you, apply directly to the court yourself, or ask a lawyer, community worker or family or friend to do it for you. When the DVO is in place, it lasts for minimum of five years, unless a court is satisfied a shorter order can be made. It can also be extended where necessary. You can apply to the court to have certain conditions added or removed, but there are no guarantees that these will be approved. Your safety will be the key consideration of a Magistrate when making this decision.

### Temporary Protection Orders

If you need protection urgently, you can ask the court for a temporary protection order to be considered by a Magistrate when you file your application. Police can also apply for you.

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**Contact Us:** Please ask our staff for a CASP brochure which contains more information about this service or your specific needs during your court appearance. Phone (07) 4979 1456 / 1800 749 222 or visit us at 65 Central Lane, Gladstone, Qld 4680.