# Explanatory notes - Courtlink

Data source

The Magistrates' and Children's Courts data included in this report was extracted from the Courtlink database. The data includes all finalised applications for Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIO) in which the final hearing took place between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2018. This includes original applications as well as applications for variation, extension and revocation.

The analysis of the courts data looks at the number of applications heard in the Magistrates' and Children's Courts, the affected family members (AFM) on the application and the person responding to the order. On each application there is one associated respondent however, there can be multiple affected family members.

The following diagram shows how the data for each application, respondent and affected family member is stored.
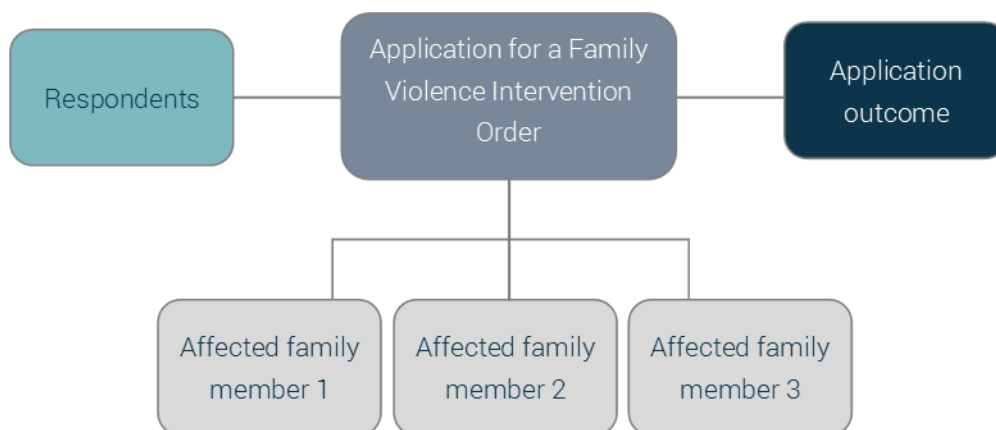
In the above scenario, an application for a Family Violence Intervention Order has been made against the Respondent. There are three Applicants/Affected family members applying for the FVIO. If the court grants the application then an intervention order is made, otherwise another outcome may be recorded.

Reference period

The data extracted from Courtlink covers finalised applications for Family Violence Intervention Orders recorded between the five years starting 1 July 2013 and ending the June 2018. This reference period is based on the date of the final hearing.

Geographical classifications

The residential postcode of the affected family member and respondent is recorded on the application for a Family Violence Intervention Order.

In order to identify and display the geographic areas where AFMs and respondents come from, the postcode

data has been mapped to Local Government Area boundaries for the purposes of mapping and creating rates per 100,000 population.

The residential postcode has been mapped to the related Local Government Area using the Australian Bureau of Statistics Postcode 2011 to Local Government Area 2011 file in the catalogue 1270.0.55.006 – Australian Statistical Geography (ASGS): Correspondences, July 2011.

Calculating rates per 100,000 population

The rate of affected family members per 100,000 population is calculated using the count of AFMs on original applications in a Local Government Area and the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of that LGA. The rate is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Affected family member rate} = (\text{Number of AFMs}/\text{ERP count}) \times 100{,}000$$

ERP figures for the Local Government Areas are based on populations provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The data is extracted from the release titled Regional Population Group (3218.0).

For more information about the ABS estimated resident population, please refer to the ABS website.

Using the Courtlink data for analysis

Demographic information of affected family members and respondents

For the purposes of analysing the demographic characteristics of affected family members and respondents, the report focuses on those on original applications for family violence intervention orders. This ensures that affected family members and respondents are not double counted if subsequent applications for variation, extension or revocation were made.

Relationship between affected family members and respondents

The relationship between an affected family member and the related respondent is taken from the primary affected family member on an application. This means that where there are multiple affected family members on an application, the primary affected family member's relationship with the respondent will be represented.

Use of interpreters

Due to data quality issues in Courtlink, figures regarding the use of interpreters have been under-recorded.

Changes in this release

Due to improvements made in data processing since the previous database release (data ending 30 June 2017), there are slight changes with the number of recorded FVIO outcomes and the number of AFMs.

Terminology and abbreviations

Family Violence Intervention Order (FVIO)

An application for a Family Violence Intervention Order is a civil matter between the parties on the application.

The purpose of a family violence intervention order is to:
- ensure the safety of the affected family member; or
- preserve any property of the affected family member; or
- protect a child who has been subjected to family violence committed by the respondent.

Applicant/Affected Family Member (AFM)

An applicant or affected family member is the person/people who have applied for a family violence intervention order. There can be multiple affected family members on the one application.

Respondent

A respondent is the person responding to the application for a family violence intervention order. There is only one respondent on each application.

Type of application

An original application is the first application made against a respondent. Where an order has then been granted, applications to extend the intervention order, or vary the conditions on the order can be made. In addition, where an AFM wishes to revoke the order an application for revocation can be made to the court.

Outcome of application

Revoked - Where an order is made by a court on an application to revoke a previous order of the court. This order vacates the previous order.

Struck out - An application can be struck out if the Applicant does not attend Court on the hearing day, or if the Magistrate believes there is not enough evidence for the Intervention Order to be made.

Withdrawn - An application can also be withdrawn if the Applicant no longer wants to pursue it.

Dismissed - Where the Magistrate has dismissed the application for a Family Violence Intervention Order.

Reinstate - Where a respondent and affected family member have agreed to an undertaking, but the respondent subsequently breaks this undertaking, the affected family member can bring the application back before the court. This is known as a 'right of reinstatement'.

IVO made - Where the Magistrate has heard all the evidence presented to the Court and believes an order should be in place.

Complainant

The complainant on an application for a Family Violence Intervention Order is the person making the application for an intervention order.

Primary applicant

On applications where there is more than one AFM there is a flag to indicate which person is the primary applicant. For example, where there is a parent on an application with two children, the parent would be the primary applicant and children would be non-primary applicants.