



Priority area

3 Women's safety

Feelings of safety

While the vast majority of females and males in Queensland continued to report they did not experience physical assault or threat, there was a slight increase with 3.1% of females and 3.3% of males aged 15 years and over experiencing physical assault¹ in 2017–18², compared with 2.5% of females and 2.3% of males experiencing physical assault in 2016–17.³

Females (2.5%) were slightly less likely than males (3.1%) to experience threatened physical assault⁴ (both face-to-face⁵ and non-face-to-face incidents⁶ such as SMS, email or over the phone).⁷

Most females aged 15 years and over were less likely than males to feel safe alone after dark at home or in local area in 2014:

- 84.1% of females, compared with 94.1% of males, felt safe or very safe at home alone after dark.⁸
- 32.6% of females reported feeling safe or very safe walking alone in local area after dark, compared with 69.6% of males.⁹

Victims of offences

Females were slightly more likely to be the victims of offences against the person including sexual offences, kidnapping and abduction, stalking and life endangering acts¹⁰ with females making up 53.2% of victims in 2018–19.¹¹

Females aged 15–24 years were more likely to be victims of offences against the person in 2018–19¹²:

- Females aged 15–19 years were the most common victims of offences in all age groups for females with the rate of 1,886.0 victims per 100,000 of the female 15–19 years population,

compared with 1,070.9 victims per 100,000 of the male 15–19 years population.¹³

- Females aged 20–24 years were the second largest cohort of victims of offences in all age groups for both females and males at the rate of 1,458.3 victims per 100,000 of the female 20–24 years population, compared with 993.3 victims per 100,000 of the male 20–24 years population.¹⁴

Sexual offences and stalking

There were 4,849 victims of sexual assault¹⁵ in 2018.¹⁶ Of these victims, females constituted 85.3% – nationally, 84.0%.¹⁷

Of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of sexual assault, 85.3% were women in 2018.¹⁸

Females in all age groups were considerably more likely than males to be victims of sexual offences with females aged 15–19 years being the most likely to be a victim. In this age group, 91.4% of victims were female in 2018–19.¹⁹



In 2018–19, **9 in 10** victims of sexual offences aged 15–19 years were female.

Of total 2,517 offenders for sexual offences in 2018–19, 3.4% (or 86) were female and 96.6% (or 2,431) were male²⁰:

- Offenders for sexual offences were known to almost three in four (71.1%) victims in 2018–19, with 35.7% of victims assaulted by family members (a current/former partner, a child or other family members) and 35.5% by



acquaintances, friends, neighbours or colleagues.²¹

Females of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin comprised 12.9% of total female victims of sexual assault in 2018.²² This compares with 6.7% in New South Wales, 7.6% in South Australia and 48.3% in the Northern Territory.²³

In 2018–19, females made up 77.0% of victims of stalking, with males constituting 84.6% of all stalking offenders.²⁴

Domestic and family violence

Females were less likely than males to breach domestic violence protection orders, with males accounting for 85.3% of offenders for breach of domestic violence protection order offences in 2018–19²⁵:

- Total 28,396 offences were reported to police, equating to a rate of 562.0 offences per 100,000 persons – 6.5% increase from 527.7 offences per 100,000 persons in 2017–18.²⁶
- More than two-thirds (69.0%) of male offenders were aged 18–39 years.²⁷

Females were over three times more likely than males to be killed by a partner, comprising 76.8% of the total 126 victims of intimate partner relationship homicides between 1 July 2006 and 30 June 2019.²⁸ During this period²⁹:

- Almost all females killed within an intimate partner relationship (96.4%) were identified as the primary victim of domestic and family violence.
- In all cases where a male was killed by his female intimate partner (100%), the male deceased was identified as the primary perpetrator of domestic and family violence in the relationship.
- 79.9% of homicide offenders were male in cases of intimate partner homicide involving one homicide victim.
- In one-fifth (20.0%) of all domestic and family homicide cases, the deceased was identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Female victims of domestic and family violence-related homicide and related offences accounted for 47.8% of all female

homicide victims recorded during 2018.³⁰ By contrast, male victims of domestic and family violence-related homicides accounted for 20.0% of all male homicide victims – nationally 59.1% and 26.6% respectively.³¹ Comparable statistics available for other states and territories were 68.0% and 24.3% in New South Wales, 61.1% and 18.4% in Victoria, 41.7% and 31.3% in South Australia, and 65.4% and 52.9% in Western Australia.³²



Females were over **3 times** more likely than males to be killed by a partner.

Of all Queensland clients seeking government-funded specialist homelessness services, due to domestic and family violence as a main reason, 74.7% were female in 2017–18³³ – nationally 81.1%.³⁴

Females accounted for 69.4% of all alleged victims of elder abuse reported to the Elder Abuse Helpline in 2018–19.^{35, 36}

Discrimination and other forms of violence

Of 885 complaints accepted and dealt with by the Human Rights Commission Queensland in 2018–19, illegal discrimination on the basis of pregnancy accounted for 25 (or 2.8%) complaints.³⁷

Most trafficked people³⁸ identified in Australia have been females working in the sex industry, although recently an increasing number of males and females are trafficked into, or exploited within, other industries, or exploited within intimate relationships.³⁹

Australia provides support services for trafficked people through the Support Program. Females comprised⁴⁰:

- 76.3% of total 80 clients who were on the Support Program in 2015–16
- all clients supported through the Support Program due to exploitation in sex industry (in 2014–15 and 2015–16) and forced marriage (in 2014–15).

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- ¹ Includes being beaten, pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, hit with an open hand or fist, kicked, bitten, choked, stabbed, shot, burnt, being hit with something such as a bat or being dragged or hit deliberately by a vehicle. Includes assault that occurred while the person was at work. Excludes incidents that occurred during the course of play on a sporting field or organised sport, verbal abuse, incidents where the person did not encounter the offender face-to-face, and incidents of sexual assault or threatened sexual assault which also involved physical assault.
- ² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Crime victimisation, Australia, 2016–17*, 'Populations, Table 26 Populations, by states and territories', cat. no. 4530.0.
- ³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Crime victimisation, Australia, 2017–18*, 'Populations, Table 28 Populations, by states and territories', cat. no. 4530.0.
- ⁴ Verbal, written and/or physical threat to inflict physical harm where the person being threatened believed the threat was likely and able to be carried out. Threatened assault may occur face-to-face or via non-face-to-face methods (such as SMS, email or over the phone). Includes any threat or attempt to strike the person which could cause pain; situations where a gun or other weapon was left in an obvious place (including fake or toy guns/weapons where the threatened person thought it was real) or if the person knew the perpetrator had access to a gun (including toy guns, starter pistol, etc.). Also includes incidents where the person was threatened in their line of work. Excludes any incident of name calling or swearing which did not involve a physical threat, and threats that resulted in an actual assault.
- ⁵ Any verbal and/or physical threat to inflict physical harm, made face-to-face, where the person being threatened believed the threat was likely and able to be carried out. Excludes any incident where the person being threatened did not encounter the offender in person (e.g. threats made via telephone, text message, e-mail, in writing or through social media).
- ⁶ Any threat to inflict physical harm where the person being threatened believed the threat was likely and able to be carried out, and where the victim did not encounter the offender face-to-face (e.g. via telephone, text message, e-mail, in writing or through social media).
- ⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Crime victimisation, Australia, 2017–18*, 'Populations, Table 28 Populations, by states and territories', cat. no. 4530.0.
- ⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017, *General social survey, summary results, Australia, 2014*, 'Table 03. State and Territory, Table 3.3 All persons, selected personal characteristics – by state and territory', cat. no. 4159.0, customised data.
- ⁹ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰ The Queensland Police Service categorises the following offence subdivisions as 'Offences Against the Person': homicide (murder); other homicide; assault; sexual offences; robbery and other offences against the person.
- ¹¹ Queensland Police Service, data current as at July 2019.
- ¹² *ibid.*
- ¹³ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴ *ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Includes physical contact, or intent of contact, of a sexual nature directed toward another person where that person does not give consent, gives consent as a result of intimidation or deception, or consent is proscribed (i.e. the person is legally deemed incapable of giving consent because of youth, temporary/permanent (mental) incapacity or there is a familial relationship).
- ¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2018*, 'Victims of Crime, Selected offences, states and territories, Table 7 Victims, age by selected offences and sex, 2018', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ¹⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2018*, 'Victims of crime, Australia, Table 2 Victims, sex and age by selected offences, 2010–2018', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ¹⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2018*, 'Victims of crime, Indigenous status, selected states and territories, Table 20 Victims of sexual assault, sex and relationship of offender to victim by Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 2018', cat. no. 4510.0.
- ¹⁹ Queensland Police Service, data current as at July 2019.
- ²⁰ *ibid.*
- ²¹ *ibid.*

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- ²² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2018*, ‘Victims of crime, Indigenous status, selected states and territories’, Table 20 Victims of sexual assault, sex and relationship of offender to victim by Indigenous status, selected states and territories, 2018, cat. no. 4510.0.
- ²³ *ibid.*
- ²⁴ Queensland Police Service, data current as at July 2019.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*
- ²⁶ *ibid.*
- ²⁷ *ibid.*
- ²⁸ Queensland Courts, Queensland domestic and family homicide statistical overview, unpublished data.
- ²⁹ *ibid.*
- ³⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019, *Recorded crime – victims, Australia, 2018*, ‘Victims of FDV Related offences, Table 22 Victims of family and domestic violence-related offences by sex, states and territories, 2014–2018, cat. no. 4510.0.
- ³¹ *ibid.*
- ³² Users should be aware that data about victims of domestic and family violence-related offences may be reflective of changes in reporting behaviour or police detection. As a result, caution should be exercised when interpreting these results, or making comparisons across the states and territories.
- ³³ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019, *Specialist homelessness services 2017–18, Supplementary tables - Queensland*, ‘Table QLD Clients.14: Clients by main reasons for seeking assistance, 2017–18.
- ³⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019, *Specialist homelessness services 2017–18, Supplementary tables - National*, ‘Table Clients.14: Clients by main reasons for seeking assistance, 2017–18.
- ³⁵ This applies to elder abuse in close or intimate relationships (including spouse/partners, family members, friends and informal carers) and does not include abuse in consumer and social relationships.
- ³⁶ Elder Abuse Prevention Unit (EAPU), 2019, *Year in review 2018-19*, unpublished data.
- ³⁷ Human Rights Commission Queensland, 2019, *Annual report 2018–19*, page 28.
- ³⁸ The term ‘trafficked people’ is used as a general term that encompasses all victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices.
- ³⁹ Commonwealth of Australia, 2016, *Trafficking in persons: the Australian government response 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016*, the eighth report of the interdepartmental committee on human trafficking and slavery.
- ⁴⁰ *ibid.*