Defence Abuse Counselling Program

**Contact us**

[**ombudsman.gov.au**](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

**1300 395 776**

[**DefenceForce.Ombudsman@Ombudsman.gov.au**](mailto:DefenceForce.Ombudsman@Ombudsman.gov.au)

GPO Box 442  
Canberra ACT 2601

**The Ombudsman has offices in:**

* **Adelaide**
* **Brisbane**
* **Canberra**
* **Melbourne**
* **Perth**
* **Sydney**

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman is also the Defence Force Ombudsman, providing an independent, external and impartial mechanism for people to report historical and contemporary serious abuse in the Australian Defence Force.

Following an assessment of a report, counselling is available to people who meet the jurisdiction for serious abuse. In some circumstances, a referral for counselling may be made prior to the outcome of an assessment if a reportee is in need of urgent support.

# How do I access counselling?

Once your matter has been determined to be within jurisdiction, your Liaison Officer will discuss options to access counselling.

If you agree, your Liaison Officer can facilitate a referral for counselling through the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS). VVCS offers confidential, nation-wide counselling and support. VVCS counsellors and staff have an understanding of veteran and military culture that assists them to deliver specialised support to the Australian veteran and ex-service community.

With your consent, a referral will be sent on your behalf to the local regional VVCS centre. A VVCS representative will then contact you to discuss your support needs and schedule an appointment with a VVCS counsellor.

There is no cost to access counselling under this program.

## Further information/feedback

Please contact your Liaison Officer during business hours (9am to 5pm AEST) on **1300 395 776** or via email at [**DefenceForce.Ombudsman@Ombudsman.gov.au**](mailto:DefenceForce.Ombudsman@Ombudsman.gov.au)**.**

If you are feeling distressed and need to speak to someone urgently, please call one of the 24-hour support services listed below:

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service: **1800 011 046**

Lifeline: **13 11 14**

beyondblue: **1300 224 636**

More information is available at **ombudsman.gov.au/defence**

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman has taken reasonable action to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate and adequately comprehensive for the purpose for which it was created. The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman is not responsible for any damage or loss claimed to arise from any error or omission in this information.