



Information booklet



Beryl Women Inc.

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W beryl.org.au

A PO Box 355 Dickson ACT 2602



Information current at September 2021



Beryl works on Ngunnawal land

We wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the land we work on.

We pay our respects to the Elders both past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia. We remember that the land we work on, was and always will be traditional Aboriginal land.



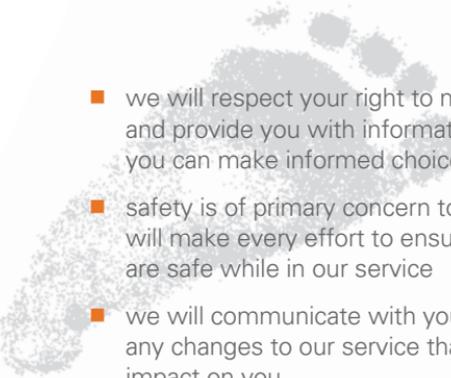
Welcome

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Welcome to Beryl Women Inc. Our service supports the ACT Homelessness Charter, which affirms the human rights of homeless people and outlines their rights to inclusion, dignity, respect, non-discrimination, safety and freedom. A copy of the Charter is displayed in our properties or we can provide you with one.

To show our support for the Charter and our respect for your rights, we make the following service guarantee to all adults, young people and children seeking our support:

- we will explain to you how our service works, what you can expect from us and what your rights and responsibilities are
- we will respect your cultural values and aim to provide a culturally sensitive service
- we work with everyone using our service according to their needs and the urgency in meeting those needs
- we will work with you to identify your needs and goals and develop a plan to assist you to work towards having them met
- where we can't meet your needs we will support you to try to have them met by other services
- we will work to maintain good relationships with other services to make sure that your needs can be met and you can achieve your goals
- we will support your ongoing relationships with the important people in your life and to develop or maintain connections to your community, family or friends and to participate in school and community activities
- we will work with housing providers to identify your housing options
- we will only ask you the information that is relevant to the support that we provide you
- we will respect your privacy and not share information with any other services unless you give us your consent, or unless we have serious concerns about your safety or the safety of anyone else

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- we will respect your right to make choices and provide you with information so that you can make informed choices
 - safety is of primary concern to us and we will make every effort to ensure that you are safe while in our service
 - we will communicate with you about any changes to our service that will impact on you
 - we will listen to your feedback about our service and commit ourselves to trying to make our service as good as possible. We will respond to any complaints
 - all workers will maintain clear boundaries about their roles and responsibilities
 - where accommodation is provided by our service you will be issued with a occupancy agreement that protects your rights as an occupant or a tenant under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (ACT)
 - we will work for social justice and to change the things in our society that lead people into homelessness.

If you have a dispute to make, you can follow the service's complaints procedure (a copy will be provided to you upon entering the service) and it can also be found on page **20**.

Beryl house rules



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Artwork created by children clients at the Refuge.

Confidentiality and safety

1. No men are to be within one kilometre (1km) of any of Beryl Women Inc. premises. All transport pick-ups by males MUST take place at least one kilometre from the property.
2. For safety reasons, the street address of the property is confidential. You MUST NOT disclose the address to any alleged or actual perpetrators of violence (male or female). You can only disclose the street address of the property to emergency services when calling 000 and you must notify Beryl Women Inc. if you have done so. You may disclose to female persons who agree to keep the address confidential. Where a postal address is required, you must give:

PO Box 355 Dickson ACT 2602

When you are asked for a street address (e.g. schools, ACT Transport, ACTEW AGL, or police), you must contact Beryl Women Inc before you disclose the street address.

3. All information concerning Beryl Women Inc support staff, other occupants and their families is regarded as confidential and must not be disclosed.
4. Violence of any form is unacceptable. Any verbal, psychological, physical, or sexual violence committed against another person whilst you are a resident will not be tolerated.
5. The premises are not to be used for any illegal purposes.
6. All doors and windows to the property must be locked and secure when you're leaving the house for any length of time.

Children

- 7.** You are responsible for the care and conduct of their children. Under no circumstances is a child to be left unattended in any area of the Refuge, including inside houses.
- 8.** Children are not to be cared for or babysat by other residents.
- 9.** Beryl also has a *non-violent parenting policy* that all occupants must follow.

Discrimination

- 10.** Any form of discrimination or racism on the basis of age, disability, culture, birth place, socio-economic status, colour, religion, sexual preference or gender of children will not be tolerated. A breach of this rule is an immediate exit.

Drug and alcohol

- 11.** You must not use or bring into the Refuge any alcohol or illegal substance whilst on the Beryl premises.

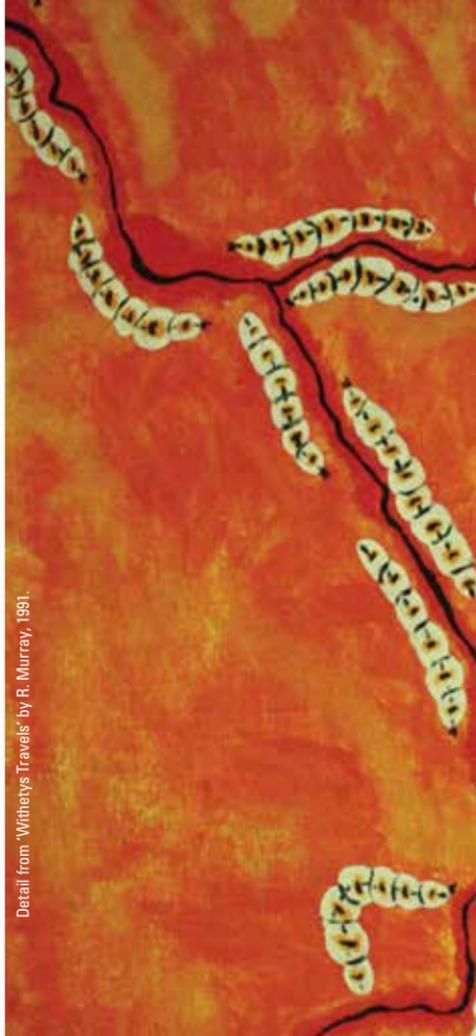
Participation in the program

- 12.** All women must attend and participate in regular case plan support meetings (at least weekly) with a Beryl Women Inc. support worker and discuss their efforts to achieve the goals that they have set for themselves in their case plan.
- 13.** A worker must be advised if you are going to be absent from the property for a period of 24 hours or more. Any long or unexplained absences from the property will be treated as an abandonment of the property. The premises are not to be used by other persons without the permission of Beryl Women Inc.



Photo showing part of the purpose-built layout of the Refuge.

- 14.** You may be required to move from one house to another within the refuge properties. When this occurs, workers of Beryl Women Inc. will offer assistance as best they can with moving belongings to the other house.
- 15.** You may be required at any time to share the house with other occupants.
- 16.** Cigarettes must not be smoked inside any properties that are part of the refuge.
- 17.** Beryl Women Inc. will conduct quarterly (every three months) house inspections; you will be given one week's notice of intention to inspect.
- 18.** You are required to park your cars behind the gates at all times.
- 19.** When using the communal areas, the needs of other families must be considered.
- 20.** The premises are not to be used for any illegal purposes.



Rights and responsibilities



Yours

- You have the right to participate in decisions about your life.
 - You have a right to information about this service and its rules and about other services you may need.
 - You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
 - You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
 - You have the right to be free from physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse.
 - You have the right to make a complaint and to have your complaint dealt with fairly and promptly.
 - You have the right not to be discriminated against in any shape or form.
- You are responsible for your own decisions.
 - It is your responsibility to follow the rules of Beryl Women Inc. once you know about them.
 - You have responsibility to respect the rights of others, including their rights to privacy and confidentiality.
 - You have the responsibility to respect everyone involved with this service.
 - Everyone has the responsibility to help make this service a safe place.
 - Everyone involved has the responsibility to seek a fair resolution to a complaint.



Detail from 'Withetys Travels' by R. Murray, 1991.

Ours

- Whilst a client of Beryl Women Inc. you will be encouraged to make your own decisions and supported to follow them through. The workers are here to assist and support you.
- You will be given a copy of the rules to be followed and a worker will explain why they are necessary. You will also be given information about Beryl Women Inc. and about other services that be able to help you.
- Beryl Women Inc. will treat your personal information in a confidential manner. The workers will assist you in ways that respect your privacy, however, where there is a safety issue, confidentiality may be breached.
- Whilst at Beryl Women Inc. you will be treated as an individual. The workers will take your individual needs into account when providing support, including such things as your cultural background, your sexuality, your religion or any disability you may have.
- Beryl Women Inc. has rules to help make it a safe environment for you whilst you are a client of the service.
- Beryl Women Inc. will deal with all complaints fairly and quickly. Making a complaint will not be held against you now or in the future. The workers will explain how to make a complaint and how you can use an advocate to help you, if you wish.
- Complaints form part of your occupancy agreement. This is included as part of your intake, where you will be provided with dispute resolution processes.



General information

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Workers

While you are staying at Beryl, the workers will assist, support and encourage you to make goals for you and your family including finding permanent accommodation. This is called your Case Plan. Each person will be given a main support person who will work with you and your family during your stay. Your worker will discuss with you the case management process and supports available to you. Your case plan will include your children's goals, with support from our child and youth worker. The Child Support Worker will also provide quality and age appropriate services for your child.



Files

In order to keep track of any plans made to assist you we will keep a file with relevant information in it. You are free to ask to read your file.

Your file is confidential, unless Beryl is required by law (subpoenaed) to give this file to the courts. This could happen with legal issues regarding any children you have in your care, or with any serious issues of safety. While this is unlikely to happen, it could be required and we would inform you first.

Data

As part of working with you in our service we would like to collect some information that is forwarded to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. This information is kept completely confidential,

is secure, and cannot identify you as an individual; the government is not even given your name.

We collect this information to make sure that government is aware of the need of housing and the level of homelessness both currently, and in the future. Please note that the support we provide to you will not change regardless of whether you give consent or not, and you can withdraw your consent at any time.

Privacy

Whilst a client of Beryl Women Inc. the service will ensure that your privacy is maintained, however, if an issue concerning your safety and wellbeing and that of your children are deemed at risk, our Duty of Care will take precedence.

Security cameras

For safety and security reasons, security cameras are installed at vantage points at the several of our properties. All locations have a local hard drive which holds recorded footage for 30 days before it writes over previous footage. Unless relevant as evidence to an incident, an investigation (including police), or at client request footage will never be kept beyond the system's 30 day capacity. Where footage must be kept for any of the above reasons, it must be downloaded onto a removable storage device, labelled clearly with time, date and reason and marked 'confidential'.

Infectious diseases

Beryl Women Inc. strives to remove immediate and/or serious risks to the health of the employees and service users, from possible cross-infections, by adopting appropriate procedures for dealing with infectious diseases, whilst respecting the rights of individual privacy.

It is the responsibility of parent/guardians to inform the staff/manager of any infectious disease that their child, or other immediate family members, may be suffering.

Covid-19

See current health advice:

W: www.covid19.act.gov.au

P: 1800 020 080 National Helpline
(02) 6207 7244 ACT helpline

Non-violent parenting

Beryl Women Inc. believes in the right of all people to live in safety and security, in a manner that is free from violence or the fear of violence, which is why Beryl Women Inc. has a *no hitting* policy. This service aims to provide a safe secure environment for women and children. All residents have the right to feel protected and live without the fear of physical retribution for their actions. Women and their accompanying children enter the refuge as a direct result of violence inflicted upon them by someone close to them. Each of them needs an atmosphere of acceptance and nurturing in which to recover and make the best possible decisions in their lives.

Housing refusal policy

The aim of this policy is to define the level of cooperation that Beryl Women Inc. seeks from its clients in finding alternative accommodation. Beryl Women Inc. is a crisis service that provides crisis (13 weeks) accommodation for women and their children escaping domestic/ family violence. Accommodation at Beryl is for a period of three months. During this time, staff will support clients to find alternative independent, long-term accommodation or housing.

Beryl staff are responsible for ensuring referrals to medium term accommodation are completed with client consent/verbal agreement; and that an application has been made for Priority listing on the ACT's public and community housing waiting list.



If accommodation is not found within the time frame (13 weeks), an extension of accommodation at Beryl may be negotiated/ granted, depending on the client's circumstances.

Mail

You can have your mail redirected/ delivered to the Beryl post office box and this will be passed on to you by Beryl workers. You may not use a Beryl property address on any forms or to receive mail—always use the postal address below.

PO BOX 355
Dickson ACT 2602

Beryl—after hours

Workers are available at Beryl during business hours 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday.

If there is an emergency, call the police, ambulance, fire brigade on 000 then call the after hours on-call phone 0427 294 444.

Please note the on-call phone is only for emergency or to inform staff you are not returning for the evening / staying elsewhere.



Beryl's groups

Check with staff for current times and availability. Groups are run depending on need.

Mums n Bub's

This group provides an opportunity for mums and kids to come together and get support through the early years of parenting. The playroom will be open for mums to chat and talk about issues affecting themselves and their children.

Kids Klub

Kids Klub encourages all primary school age children to come along and make friends, have snacks and do fun stuff like games, art, craft and sports activities. Transport from school and to home is provided to kids in the area.

Youth Group

High school kids are welcome to meet together to share food and hangout. Activities are provided such as bowling, movies etc., depending on weather and the interests of the young people.

Holiday Program

Fun, group activities organised for kids during the school holidays. It's a flexible program tailored to participants and guided by the weather.

Women

A weekly women's group (during school term) where guest speakers mingle and information is shared over light refreshments.



Toys in the backyard of the Refuge in Kingston, 4 November 1982.
Source: ACT Heritage Library, Canberra Times Collection,
Photographer: Jane Reid.

Dispute resolution process

For complaints regarding Beryl Women Inc. or a disagreement regarding your Occupancy Agreement:

- If you feel comfortable you can discuss the situation with a staff member who is working with you. This may lead to a quick resolution.
 - If the above is not appropriate or fails to sort out the problem, you can use the Complaints Form and detail your concern in writing.
 - You can give the Complaints Form to any staff member, the Chief Executive Officer or you can post it anonymously if you do not require a response.
 - If the above are unsatisfactory or inappropriate you may seek an appointment with the Chief Executive Officer.
- If the above does not result in a satisfactory resolution of the issue you may request the name and phone number of the Chairperson or a member of the Beryl Women Inc. Board. Alternatively you can write to:

The Board Chairperson
(marked confidential)
PO Box 355
Dickson ACT 2602

The complaint will be dealt with as soon as possible and you will receive a reply within seven days.



External dispute resolution contacts

Conflict Resolution Service

1/32-38 Townshend Street
Phillip ACT 2606
P: (02) 6189 0590

Canberra Community Law

Housing Law
Advice Line: (02) 6218 7077
E: info@canberracommunitylaw.org.au
W: www.canberracommunitylaw.org.au

Human Rights Commission

P: (02) 6205 2222
E: human.rights@act.gov.au
W: www.hrc.act.gov.au

Legal Aid ACT

2 Allsop Street
Canberra City ACT 2601
Helpline: 1300 654 314
P: (02) 6243 3411
E: legalaid@legalaidact.org.au
W: www.legalaidact.org.au/

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT)

ACT Health Building
Level 4, 1 Moore Street
Canberra City ACT
P: (02) 6207 1740
E: tribunal@act.gov.au
W: www.acat.act.gov.au



ACT Government Official Visitor scheme

Who are Official Visitors?

Official Visitors are appointed by the ACT Attorney-General to visit people in institutions owned or funded by ACT Government. They are independent of these institutions and of government and come from a range of professional, cultural and personal backgrounds.

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What do Official Visitors do?

Official Visitors are appointed to safeguard standards of care and treatment and to advocate for your rights and dignity. They make regular visits to facilities, talk to entitled persons, inspect records and registers, report on the standard of the facilities and services, liaise with staff about any issues of concern and seek to resolve your issues.

Contacting an Official Visitor

If you wish to speak to an Official Visitor, please call, write or fill out an online form to make an appointment.

P: 1800 150 036 (9am–5pm)

E: ovs@act.gov.au

W: www.ovs.act.gov.au



contacts

Emergency contacts

EMERGENCY:	000
Ambulance from mobile phone	112
Poisons Information	13 11 26

Contacts non-emergency

Ambulance	(02) 6200 4126 (general enquiries)
Police	131 444 (assistance) or (02) 6256 7777 (general enquiries)
Taxi	13 22 27 or 13 92 87 (wheel chair)

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Accommodation

Beryl Women Inc.	(02) 6230 6900 (9am–5pm) 0427 294 444 (on-call)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	(02) 6284 6222 Winnunga Nimmityjah AHS



Services

Beryl Women Inc.	(02) 6230 6900
Canberra Rape Crisis Centre	(02) 6247 2525
National Coronavirus Helpline COVID-19 Health	1800 029 080 (02) 6207 7244
Domestic Violence Crisis Service	(02) 6280 0900 (24 hours)
DVCS Helpline	1800 737 732
Health Direct Australia	(02) 6207 7777 or 1800 022 222 free call
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Lifeline	13 11 14
Mental Health Crisis Team	1800 629 354 (02) 6205 1065 (triage 24hrs)
Multicultural Women's Advocacy ACT	(02) 6230 4632
Parent Helpline	1800 171 882
Relationships Australia	1300 364 277
Relationships Australia for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders	(02) 6122 7100 (also offers outreach)
Youth line	(02) 6257 2375
Victims Support Services	1800 822 272
Women's Health Centre – Civic	(02) 5124 1787
Women's Legal Centre	(02) 6257 4377



Bulk billing Doctors

Please note that you will generally need to have a health care or pension card to be bulk billed and always ask when making the appointment.

Belconnen Community Health Centre	(02) 6207 9977
Belconnen Medical Centre	(02) 6251 8898
Women's Health Centre	(02) 5124 1787
Dickson Health Centre	(02) 5124 9977
Deakin Medical Centre	(02) 6285 2500
National DV helpline	1800 RESPECT
Ginninderra Medical & Dental Centre	(02) 6112 7111
Mental Health Crisis Team	(02) 6205 1065 or 1800 629 354
Gungahlin Medical Centre	(02) 6255 0888
Winnunga Nummityjah	(02) 6201 5343
Aboriginal Health Service	(02) 6284 6222
headspace Canberra	(02) 6201 5343
Health Direct Australia	(02) 6207 7777 or 1800 022 222
National Home Doctor Service ACT	13 74 25
Phillip Medical & Dental Centre	(02) 6112 7000
Sexual Health and Family Planning	(02) 6247 3077
Women's Centre for Health Matters	(02) 6290 2166
Women's Health Service ACT	(02) 5124 1787



Beryl Women Inc.

