



DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

January 2020



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Domestic abuse does not discriminate. It can affect the morale, health, well-being, self-confidence and sense of dignity of those suffering abuse and this can result in a detrimental effect on their ability to carry out their job and to attend work regularly.
- 1.2 Research shows that the risk of serious harm to victims escalates at the point of leaving their home or workplace. An estimated 2 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in 2018 (1.3 million women, 695,000 men). Even if someone has only been abused once, it is still domestic abuse.
- 1.3 This policy supports the council's vision to be a borough where we can all feel safe from harm.
- 1.4 The aim of this policy is to signpost employees to the support available in respect of their health and wellbeing and to provide advice and guidance to managers on the implications of domestic abuse in the workplace.
- 1.5 The council will take all reasonable steps possible to combat the impact of domestic abuse on those being abused and to challenge the behaviour of perpetrators.
- 1.6 Domestic abuse will not be condoned under any circumstance. All employees must adhere to the standards of professional conduct.
- 1.7 As part of our commitment to be a supportive employer the council has signed up to the GMB Union's 'Work to Stop Domestic Abuse' Charter.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees of the council, and includes agency workers and contractors with the exception of schools based employees who operate their own policies and guidance.

3. Legal Context

- 3.1 The Domestic Abuse policy takes into account the following legislation, and employees are encouraged to refer to this legislation where cases require.

- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Family Law Act 1996
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Housing Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Domestic Abuse Bill 2019

4. Definition of Domestic Abuse

- 4.1 Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening, degrading and violent behaviour between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners, family members or carers regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

- 4.2 Domestic abuse can be experienced by a parent at the hands of a child. It can also be experienced by people outside the family unit who may become victims or perpetrators.
- 4.3 Domestic abuse takes many forms of controlling behaviour and can include harassment, emotional, economic, sexual and physical abuse.
- 4.4 *Controlling behaviour* is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- 4.5 *Coercive behaviour* is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

5. Policy Statement

- 5.1 Everyone has the right to live their life free from violence, fear and abuse and be protected from harm or exploitation.
 - 5.2 This policy aims to ensure that employees who may be suffering domestic abuse:
 - a. Feel as safe and secure as possible whilst at work;
 - b. Feel able to raise the issue with their Manager, Human Resources, Union representative or a Domestic Abuse Champion;
 - c. Are readily able to access information on sources of advice and assistance;
 - d. Have their requests for special leave to resolve issues arising from the domestic abuse dealt with sympathetically.
 - 5.3 The council will ensure that there is a network of trained Domestic Abuse Champions across the council to raise awareness of the local resources and support available to ensure early intervention.
 - 5.4 Managers or those in a safeguarding role should complete the Domestic Abuse Awareness Training to improve their understanding on domestic abuse this will help awareness for potential victims and potential abusers. Employees should be vigilant when they carry out their roles, as their colleagues may need their help and support. [learning hub](#).
 - 5.5 It is not always easy to detect when an individual is experiencing domestic abuse. Abuse is often associated with physical violence, but it may also be emotional or psychological. Managers should be aware and be proactive. Further information on the indication of domestic abuse can be found in Appendix 1.
- ## **6. Confidentiality**
- 6.1 The council will maintain appropriate confidentiality and respect for the rights of the employee involved.
 - 6.2 The person who is experiencing domestic abuse is the person who determines who may know about their situation. If they disclose information to their manager, the manager is bound by their wishes. It may be the first time that they discuss this issue with another individual and it should be their choice who knows about their situation.
 - 6.3 However, there may be circumstances where the council has a duty to disclose information without the express permission of the employee e.g. where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is at risk – this must be reported to Children's Services or where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a person has committed a serious offence – this must be reported to the police.

- 6.4 In addition, the victim of domestic abuse should be made aware that if there is a perceived safety risk to their work colleagues it may not be possible for the manager to maintain confidentiality, as those employees would need to be informed so that they could take appropriate precautions.
- 6.5 Where a manager feels information does need to be divulged, they will discuss with the victim of domestic abuse the reasons for doing so and seek their agreement before disclosing any information. The manager may also seek advice from a member of Human Resources team. Agreement will not apply in all cases for example where a child is at risk see paragraph 6.3.
Further information on safeguarding can be found in paragraph 8.2, and section 9 'Duty to report to other authorities.'
- 6.6 Care should be taken in how the situation is handled as there may be employees who become aware of a domestic abuse situation by means other than direct involvement. Where this cannot be avoided the confidentiality aspect should be brought to the attention of the employee involved.
- 6.7 It may be that the employee does wish their work colleagues to know something about their situation and it would then be for the manager to agree with them the best way to approach this. Even where a victim wants their immediate colleagues to know of their situation the information should be contained within this group.
- 6.8 It is important that all meetings take place in a private area to maintain confidentiality.

7. Managers Responses and Responsibilities

- 7.1 Managers have a crucial role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help. HR can also provide advice and guidance.
- 7.2 A manager who becomes aware of a domestic abuse situation should, in the first instance, reassure the employee that the situation will be dealt with in complete confidence unless there is a reason it cannot (see 5 above).
- 7.3 A manager should be aware that this may be the first time the employee has discussed the situation with anyone and they may well be feeling a number of very strong emotions, e.g. embarrassment, anger, vulnerability, fright, anxiety etc.
- 7.4 Whilst the manager's role is to support the employee during this time, the manager should maintain an appropriate working relationship at all times. The manager should ensure that they are able to:
- identify if an employee is experiencing difficulties because of domestic abuse;
 - respond to disclosure in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner;
 - be clear about available workplace support;
 - signpost to other organisations and sources of support;
 - respond appropriately to perpetrators;
 - link with the council policies in a supportive way;
 - understand that they are not counsellors.
- 7.5 If an employee discloses that they are stressed due to domestic abuse (or any other matter) the manager has a responsibility to consider what steps could be taken to make sure that the employee is not overloaded at work. Advice may be sought from the Occupational Health Service.

7.6 Managers must consider the implications where both the victim and abuser are employed at Brent Council and particularly where they work at the same work site. Physical or verbal abuse or harassment of any employee by another will not be tolerated and will be the subject of disciplinary action. Consideration may be given to potential relocation for one or both of them. Changing working patterns e.g. compressed working week/'shift' hours. Advice may be sought from HR.

7.7 The manager should adopt a non-judgemental attitude and reassure the employee of his/her willingness to support them as appropriate. There may be reasons why they do not want to leave their domestic abuse situation some examples are listed below this is not an exhaustive list of the potential reasons. Abusive relationships are extremely complex and there are many barriers which make leaving both difficult and dangerous.

- Financial considerations
- Fear of being required to leave the UK if a marriage breaks down
- Betrayal of a partner or child
- Fear of institutionalisation for disabled employees
- Perceived lack of sympathy and understanding for gay or lesbian people who experience domestic abuse from their partner
- Fear of losing job or being unable to attend work regularly
- Women from certain communities can fear isolation by their communities if they expose a violent partner.
- Fear of reprisals by their partners.

7.8 Managers should be aware of these factors when offering support. Refer to **Appendix 1** for the Domestic Abuse discussion checklist.

7.9 Managers should contact IT if requested by the employee to put in place measures to screen calls/block calls from the perpetrator where possible and to divert the email away from the employee to a third party monitored account in order to assist in any future legal proceedings.

8. HR Policies

8.1 There are various policies available on the [intranet](#) to support wellbeing for example:
[Flexible Working Policy](#)
[Time Off Policy - Special Paid Leave Scheme](#)

8.2 Other information:
[Safeguarding Children](#)
[Safeguarding Adults](#)

9. Duty to Report to other authorities

- 9.1 Where an employee discloses that they are a perpetrator of domestic abuse and the manager knows they have children, then the council has a safeguarding duty. In the first instance, the manager must escalate to their relevant HR departmental representative, who must in turn immediately request assistance from the Adults and Children's directorates.
- 9.2 The council is signed up to the London Child Protection Procedures <http://www.londoncp.co.uk>.
- 9.3 If an employee becomes aware that a child has been exposed to or witnessed domestic abuse, the council has a duty to make a referral to the local authority in which the child is residing.

10. Work Performance

- 10.1 Domestic abuse can impact on an employee's attendance, performance and wellbeing at work. It is important that employee wellbeing is discussed at one to ones and performance reviews.
- 10.2 Managers should be aware that job performance can be affected and that matrimonial issues, concerns over homelessness, childcare issues, welfare rights, debts and mental health concerns can also affect performance.
- 10.3 The council recognises that those experiencing domestic abuse may need to be absent from work at times and the arrangements for this will be managed on a case by case basis. There will be no adverse effect on the employee's employment record where the absence is related to domestic abuse.

11. Safety at Work

- 11.1 The council has a responsibility to provide all employees with a safe and effective working environment. For some employees, the workplace is a safe haven and the only place that offers routes to safety. The council takes extremely seriously the safety of its employees.

12. Incidents at work

- 12.1 Employees are encouraged to report any alleged incidents of domestic abuse they experience or witness at work to their manager so that the council can investigate and resolve the matter. The council will take all such complaints seriously and an employee who makes a complaint of domestic abuse will be protected and not be penalised or victimised in any way. The council will also instigate an investigation if it has grounds to believe that an employee may have been abusing another work colleague, whether or not there has been a formal complaint.
- 12.2 Victims of domestic abuse may continue to be harassed while at work. The safety of the victim's co-workers who may also be affected by on-the-job harassment by the abuser should be ensured.
- 12.3 While individual circumstances and service needs must always be taken into consideration, the presumption is that working arrangements should be adjusted so that the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator are separated. Reporting arrangements may be changed and either one or both people required to work at a different location.
- 12.4 The manager should put in place appropriate workplace safety procedures such as:
- encourage the victim to give colleagues minimum information to ensure the safety of all
 - ensure employees/victim are aware of procedure for alerting security and/or police if necessary

- temporarily relocate the victim to a secure area to work
- arrange an escort for the victim for entry to and exit from the building

13. Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

13.1 Perpetrators may be very reluctant to acknowledge what they are doing and to ask for help. Engaging with perpetrators in a constructive way doesn't mean excusing the abuse and can help to increase safety and even save lives. The council recognise that abusers may need help to change their behaviour, and will support and encourage employees to address violent and abusive behaviours of all kinds. See **Appendix 2** for information on support.

13.2 Employees who perpetrate domestic abuse are expected to notify their employer if they are charged for a domestic abuse offence. The information that the manager gathers will be the basis for its decision about how best to engage with a perpetrator of domestic abuse. The information will help determine what kind of specialist help is required, either for them directly or to manage the risk to other employees, and whether any further action is required. Managers should keep a confidential record of a disclosure and any action decisions that they have taken. Good records may subsequently help in any legal proceedings or disciplinary hearing involving the perpetrator.

Agency workers/contractors are not covered by the HR disciplinary policy, any concerns will be raised with the employing agency

13.3 Employees are also encouraged to seek help, in confidence. However, upon receipt of a disclosure the manager will undertake a risk assessment to determine whether their behaviour brings into question the individual's suitability to the tasks they are asked to carry out in their role. A risk assessment template can be adapted from the Safer Recruitment and Employment policy.

13.4 The council will treat any situation of domestic abuse as potential gross misconduct and employees will therefore be subject to the council's disciplinary procedure. [Examples of Gross Misconduct 2018.pdf \(.pdf\)](#)

14. Support for Victims

14.1 The level of support that a victim may need will vary depending on the circumstances of each case, support is available. The council commissions Advance to support males and females experiencing domestic abuse within Brent. They provide free and confidential information, support and advocacy around domestic abuse. People can self-refer to the service by calling 07398454898, emailing brent.admin@advancecharity.org.uk or filling out the form on their website - <http://advancecharity.org.uk/>. Those residing outside Brent can either contact their local authority to enquire about local support services or they can contact Advance who will help to link them in with the most appropriate service for their needs.

15. Domestic Abuse Champions

15.1 A confidential first point of contact for those experiencing domestic abuse. Employees may wish to approach a trained Domestic Abuse Champion who can offer practical advice and contact information for various support groups. Information can be found on the intranet. **See Appendix 4.**

16. Employee Assistance Programme

16.1 The Employee Assistance Programme is provided by Care First who can support any employee via the counselling service:

16.2 A Care First counsellor is available to victims of domestic abuse 24Hrs a day, 7 days a week via the free phone number – 0808 168 2143. Taking the first step and speaking out is difficult. Care first is an impartial and confidential service. Calls are answered by accredited Counsellors 24Hrs a day, 365 days of the year. The service can offer free advice, support and counselling. The service offers 6 sessions of free telephone or face to face counselling based on individual circumstances.

16.3 In addition, the Care First website is a useful resource. Care First articles around Domestic abuse can be found in the 'relationships' section of the website. The Employee Assistance website can be accessed either via mybrentrewards.co.uk or directly www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk enter username: **Brent** password: **employee**

17. External Organisations

17.1 Details of organisations offering external support is listed in **Appendix 3**.

18. Housing

18.1 Safe alternative accommodation can be provided for example a refuge space or an emergency placement into bed and breakfast. If the employee does not have any alternative arrangement through friends and families and does not wish to apply for a welfare loan.

18.2 The employee will be provided with a rent deposit for alternative accommodation in the private sector. The deposit is usually paid to the landlord or agent letting them the property.

18.3 The Domestic Abuse Housing Team have an arrangement where they will buy basic necessities for domestic abuse victims who had to flee leaving everything behind. This covers things like personal care items, milk, bread etc. for a few days. Funds are not paid to the survivor. The email address is DomesticAbuseHousingReferrals@brent.gov.uk
The employee does not have to be a Brent resident to apply for this.

19. Special leave

19.1 Up to ten days' Special leave with pay is available to deal with personal or other important matters in line with the Time Off Policy.

20. Welfare Loans

20.1 Interest-free Welfare Loans are available to support employees fleeing from a domestic abuse situation. Requests for Welfare Loans are subject to terms and conditions.

- A Welfare Loan application form will need to be completed and supported with a letter from a victim support agency or MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference, where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic violence and abuse between different statutory and voluntary sector agencies).
- The maximum loan to be paid in a domestic abuse situation is the equivalent to one month's net salary up to the sum of £5000.
- The loan will be paid directly to the Housing Provider.
- Same day emergency loans are available, application forms in this circumstance can be approved by Human Resources who will also notify the Head of Service.

Further information on staff loans can be found on the [intranet](#).

21. Staff Wellbeing & Benefits

- 21.1 There are a whole range of employee benefits available which support the wellbeing of everyone working. Further information on staff wellbeing and benefits can be found on the [intranet](#).

22. Support for Perpetrators

- 22.1 People can change if they want to. Most people who are abusive to their partners manage themselves fine with other people (e.g. their manager/friends) they are choosing to do these things to their partner and can therefore choose not to. Perpetrators have to take responsibility for their actions and they have to change their way of thinking/doing.
- 22.2 If Perpetrators are worried about their own behaviour and have decided that they would like to talk to someone or seek help to change, specialist services can help. They are independent to the police and they will not report your behaviour to them unless they believe that someone is at risk of serious harm.
- 22.3 If you are a resident, the council can work with your family to offer holistic support for everyone, to help reduce harm and improve safety. The council also commissions the perpetrator programme through Rise Mutual to provide support to perpetrators of domestic abuse who want to stop being abusive to their partners/ex-partners.
- 22.4 The local service delivers an intense programme of support in the form of 121 and group work.
- 22.5 If you do not live in the borough you will need to contact your council for information on their local perpetrator programme.
- 22.6 There are other services available to support all perpetrators:
- Respect accredit and oversee the perpetrator programmes across the country and provides a national helpline for men and women in heterosexual and same-sex relationships offering information and advice to people who are abusive towards their partners and want help to stop. **See Appendix 2**
 - Relate is the UK's largest provider of relationship support, who can help people of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientations to strengthen their relationships.

Appendix 1 Indications of Domestic Abuse

1. Work Productivity:

- Change in the person's working patterns for example, frequent absence, lateness or needing to leave work early;
- Reduced quality and quantity of work, missing deadlines, a drop in usual performance standards;
- Change in the use of the phone/email for example, a large number of personal calls/texts, avoiding calls or a strong reaction to calls/texts/emails;
- Spending an increased number of hours at work for no reason;
- Frequent visits to work by the employee's partner, which may indicate coercive control.

2. Changes in behaviour:

- Conduct out of character with previous behaviour for example, becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, or depressed;
- Being isolated from colleagues;
- Obsession with leaving work on time;
- Secretive regarding home life;
- Worried about leaving children at home.

3. Physical indicators

- Visible bruising or single or repeated injury with unlikely explanations;
- Change in the pattern or amount of makeup used;
- Change in the manner of dress: for example, clothes that do not suit the climate which may be used to hide injuries;
- Substance use/misuse;
- Fatigue/sleep disorders.

Domestic Abuse Discussion Checklist

This checklist should be used *every* time a manager is presented with a disclosure of domestic abuse from a member of staff. It is important to ensure that the manager has done everything they should have, and considered all angles in which the organisation could support and help the member of staff.

Please note, due to the very nature of domestic abuse, situations and risk can change, develop or escalate very quickly and therefore the Discussion Checklist and the plan of action should be revisited on a regular basis in order to best help the victim and keep them safe.

Name of Employee:

Reported to (Name):

Date:

Task	Action/Notes	Date Completed
Ensure that any discussion about the employee's situation takes place in privacy and that their confidentiality is respected as far as possible (unless there are overriding concerns such as child protection)		
What does the employee want to do? What measures do they feel could help them at work? Suggestions – <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary flexibility on start/finish times <input type="checkbox"/> Change of work location <input type="checkbox"/> Screening of external calls/emails from abuser <input type="checkbox"/> Stress risk assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Share brief information with any colleagues as additional form of support <input type="checkbox"/> Prevent lone working <input type="checkbox"/> Manager to create log of contact/incidents they are aware of		
Check that no children are at risk (see ref. 9.1)		
Discuss whether to report the abuse to the police. Highlight the benefits of doing this. <i>Remember; do not pressure them if they do not want to report it!</i>		
Does the employee need to see; Occupational Health, a GP or other professional for medical attention ?		
What methods of support have been discussed and explored regarding the work place? Has work performance or attendance been affected?		
Give the employee information about: <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Support <input type="checkbox"/> Help lines		
If the person completing the checklist is not the employee's line manager, consideration should be given to informing the line manager. Describe to the employee the possible difficulties that could arise from the line manager not knowing, e.g. performance or absence monitoring.		
When will the employee's situation next be reviewed?		

Appendix 2 - Perpetrator Programmes

Perpetrator Domestic Abuse Services in Brent through Rise Mutual

The Council have commissioned Rise Mutual to deliver the perpetrator programme. Rise Mutual will work with the perpetrator individually or in groups to increase motivation.

Preparing Men for Change

These individual sessions are designed for use with men who have perpetrated domestic abuse within heterosexual relationships, and are aimed at those who are assessed as low to medium risk to their children and partner. They aim to increase motivation to change as well as awareness of child-centred fathering. It enables the service user to develop skills to cope with difficult situations, and to communicate more positively with their partner.

Project PIPA through

Project PIPA is a group work programme, consisting of 5 sessions, to help men who have perpetrated abuse towards an intimate partner identify and change their abusive behaviour, and increase motivation to change.

Specified Individual Perpetrator Programmes through Rise Mutual

Female Aggression & Domestic Abuse (FADA)

FADA has been designed for use with women who have been identified as perpetrating domestic abuse within either a same sex relationship or opposite sex. The programme covers anger management, coercive control and safeguarding children, over a maximum of 14 sessions.

Respectful Partnerships (RP)

RP is specifically for men in same sex relationships, and therefore covers areas of abuse (like outing) which would not be covered in the Safe Relationships programme. A minimum of 9 sessions are suggested, however it could be extended to meet the individuals' needs.

For further information contact Rise Mutual: chan.kandola@risemutual.org or elaine.knibbs@risemutual.org

Perpetrator Programmes through Respect

Most domestic violence perpetrator programmes have been designed for men in heterosexual relationships. Some of these programmes also work with women (in heterosexual or same-sex relationships) and with gay/bi men, in a 1-2-1 setting. For more information call the **Respect** **Phoneline** on **0808 802 4040**.

Domestic violence perpetrator programmes

These are behaviour-change programmes run in small groups aiming to help men stop being violent and abusive. They will help them learn how to relate to their partners in a respectful and equal way, show them non-abusive ways of dealing with difficulties in their relationships and cope with their anger and keep their partner safer.

Groupwork perpetrator programmes are only available for men. Some groups are discussion based, but most use a variety of interactive exercises to make the learning realistic, stimulating and relevant to men's own situations. There are many different programmes across the UK, and the content will vary, but on the whole they will cover for example:

- Learning different, non-abusive ways of dealing with difficulties in your relationship.
- Dealing non-abusively with your partner's anger.
- Negotiation and listening- how to build a respectful relationship.

Appendix 3 - External Organisations Contacts

Contact any of the following to get help and advice about domestic abuse.

Note: All the following organisations are separate from the council so we cannot make any recommendations.

Organisation	Contact Details
Advance	07398454898 brent.admin@advancecharity.org.uk http://advancecharity.org.uk/
Alternatives to Violence Project run regular workshops (Level 1 and Level 2) in London to help people practice non-violent communication.	Email info@avpbritain.org.uk www.avpbritain.org.uk/
Ascent Project (London Violence against women and girls)	020 7431 7227 www.thelondonvawgconsortium.org.uk
Asian Women's Resource Centre	020 8961 5701
Brent Family Front Door – support for Perpetrators	020 8937 4300(internal)
Broken Rainbow National Helpline – LGBT	0300 999 5428 www.broken-rainbow.org.uk
Childline	0800 11 11 www.childline.org.uk
DeafHope - a specialist service for Deaf adults and children who have experienced abuse.	020 8772 3241 www.signhealth.org.uk/deafhope Email: deafhope@signhealth.org.uk SMS: 07970 350 366
Forced Marriage Unit	020 7008 0151 www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage Karma Nirvana support victims of forced marriages and honour crimes 0800 599 9247
Friends, families and travellers	01273 234 777
Galop (for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people)	0800 999 5428 www.galop.org.uk
London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard:	0300 330 0630 www.llgs.org.uk
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327 www.mensadviceline.org.uk
National Centre for Domestic Violence	0800 970 2070 www.ncdv.org.uk
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247 www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
Policing Team	Contact your local neighbourhood policing team
Rape Crisis (England and Wales)	0808 802 9999 www.rapecrisis.org.uk
Refuge - refuges, advocacy, community outreach projects and culturally-specific services, including the Eastern European Advocacy Service and the Vietnamese Outreach Service	020 7395 7700 www.refuge.org.uk
Relate	0330 100 1234
Respect For people who are worried about their own abusive behaviour or for professionals or others looking for help for an abuser.	0808 802 4040 www.respectphone.line.org.uk
Respect Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327 0808 802 4040 www.mensadviceline.org.uk
Rights of women	www.rightsofwomen.org.uk
ROAR (LGBT Domestic Advice helpline service)	07908514748 www.stonewallhousing.org/roar
Victim Support	0845 30 30 900

	www.victimsupport.org.uk
Women and Girls Network	0808 801 0660 www.wgn.org.uk
Women's Aid	0808 2000 247 www.womensaid.org.uk

For more contact details visit the [Brent website](#).

Digital Resources

Personal Safety Alarms

Some organisations, including Victim Support and Advance give out personal alarms. These just make a loud noise when set off, like a traditional rape alarm.

The police can give people panic alarms in their homes and TECSOS phones to carry (<http://www.tecsos.co.uk/AboutTecSOS.html>) which contact the police directly when they are activated however this has to be at the discretion of the police and are not given to all victims.

Bright Sky

Bright Sky is a free to download mobile app, launched in partnership with the Vodafone Foundation, providing support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know. The App provides:

- A UK-wide directory of specialist domestic abuse support services, and the ability to call national helplines;
- A secure tool where incidents of abuse can be logged, without the content being saved on the device;
- Questionnaires to assess the safety of a relationship.

If you have any enquiries about [Bright Sky](#), you can email brightsky@hestia.org.

TecSOS handset

The [TecSOS](#) handset provides an enhanced level of confidence, protection and reassurance for victims of domestic abuse. Users activate the device which initiates a high priority 999 call

Get help from the police Domestic violence disclosure scheme

Under this scheme you can ask the police to check whether a new or existing partner has a violent past. This is called 'right to ask'. If records show that you may be at risk of domestic abuse from a partner, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so.

The "right to ask" also enables a third party, such as a friend or family member, to apply for a disclosure on behalf of someone they know. Again, the police can release information if it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to do so.

In order to make an application under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme please contact the police. You can do this by:

- visiting a police station
- phoning 101
- speaking to a member of the police on the street

If you believe there is an immediate risk of harm to someone, or it is an emergency, you should always call 999.

Often, victims will need time to sort out their financial, childcare or matters related to their situation. Employees should get in touch with their local domestic abuse advocacy service who can provide free, confidential support and advice around housing, finances, civil and/or criminal processes, immigration and more.

Appendix 4 - Domestic Abuse Champions

Recruitment, Selection and Maintenance

The recruitment and selection of the Domestic Abuse Champions will be managed by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Steering Group

The group members are:

- Service Manager for Housing Options
- Domestic Abuse Housing Service Team Leader
- Neighbourhoods Services Manager
- Domestic abuse Housing Officers
- Neighbourhood Housing Manager
- HR representative
- Community Safety representative
- Transformations Services representatives

The members will meet every quarter to ensure the list of champions is maintained.

Application

Information will be published on the intranet.

Domestic Abuse Champions will require a DBS check (Disclosure and Barring – Standard level) as part of the recruitment process.

Training

Domestic Abuse Champions will receive training through Advance, the Domestic Abuse Support specialist.

Appendix 5 - Document Version Control

Name of Policy Author:	Raj Soni-Alagh
Policy version number:	1
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