



DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

Name of Record	Domestic Abuse Policy
Author	HR & HSCP
Owner	Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships
Status	Approved
Approved by	Corporate Management Team and Trade Unions
Date of Publication	November 2023
Review Date	In line with best practice guidance

Version	Notes	Author	Date
1.0	Creation of a new policy and revised guidance notes	HR - P Cameron & HSCP - J Thomson, K McKinnon	Nov 2023



1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Domestic abuse can destroy lives, leaving physical and emotional scars. Those experiencing domestic abuse can find themselves isolated from friends and family and lose their independence. It can take many forms, not just physical abuse; it can also be financial, emotional and psychological.
- 1.2. Most victims are women with a male perpetrator, statistics indicate that on average, in four out of every five incidents of domestic abuse, the victim is a woman and the accused is a man. It is important to remember that men can also be subject to abuse, and domestic abuse can happen in same-sex relationships.
- 1.3. Domestic abuse has an impact at work. Research shows that a high proportion of those enduring domestic abuse are targeted at work. Domestic abuse can negatively affect those abused as well as their workplace colleagues. However, importantly, in some cases the workplace can often be one of the few places that a person experiencing abuse can be separate from their abuser, and therefore can be the place where people are able to ask for and access support.
- 1.4. East Renfrewshire Council are committed to developing a workplace culture that recognises that some employees will be experiencing domestic abuse and that the workplace should be a place of safety and one that recognises that perpetrators of domestic abuse are responsible for their behaviour and for addressing this.
- 1.5. Through this Domestic Abuse Policy and associated learning options we aim to create a safer workplace and send out a strong message that domestic abuse is never acceptable and that perpetrators will be held accountable and responsible for their actions either within or out with work.
- 1.6. This policy and supporting guidance has been developed in line with the recommendations outlined in 'Equally Safe - Scotland's Strategy and supporting Good Practice Standards and Guidance for Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls' provided by the Scottish Government, COSLA and its partners, and the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) guide for employers on Managing and Supporting Employees Experiencing Domestic Abuse.

2 PURPOSE & AIMS

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy and supporting guidance is to
 - demonstrate the Council's commitment to supporting employees who have been impacted by domestic abuse;
 - encourage a supportive culture where employees feel confident to seek support and assistance in a confidential setting;
 - outline roles and responsibilities
 - raise awareness of the support provisions available through the Council and its partners;
 - provide managers and employees with advice and guidance to ensure the confidential handling of situations arising from domestic abuse;
 - set out the Council's position in relation to addressing the behaviour of employees who are perpetrators of domestic abuse.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1** The principles of this policy apply to all Council, Health and Social Care Partnership and East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure employees.

4 WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE/VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

4.1 Domestic Abuse

- 4.1.1** East Renfrewshire Council, COSLA, The Scottish Government, and the United Nations define domestic abuse as:

'Domestic abuse (as Gender-Based abuse) can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family or friends).

- 4.1.2** Domestic abuse forms a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour. It is rarely confined to a one-off incident, and it usually escalates in frequency and severity over time, particularly if the victim tries to exercise their independence, leave and/or challenge the perpetrator's control. Women are at the greatest risk of murder when they leave or attempt to leave their abusive partner. Over two women a week are murdered in the UK by their current or ex-partner. Domestic Abuse is under reported and the number of incidents is likely to greatly exceed the number of reports made to the police.
- 4.1.3** The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 came into force on 1 April 2019. The new Act covers not only spouses, civil partners and cohabitants but also people in intimate personal relationships who do not live together, and as well as physical abuse, it covers other forms of psychological abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. This includes current and ex-partners.
- 4.1.4** Under the Act, domestic abuse constitutes behaviour that is violent, threatening or intimidating against a partner, ex-partner, child or other person and which has one of the following effects on the victim:
- Making a partner dependent or subordinate, such as denying them access to money or bank cards;
 - Isolating a partner from friends, family or other support, such as forcing them to cancel plans or make excuses not to attend family events;
 - Controlling, regulating or monitoring a partner's day to day activities, such as accessing their bank statements or calling them excessively to find out where they are and punishing them for not answering;
 - Depriving or restricting a partner's freedom of action, for example, not allowing them to have keys to the house so they cannot leave or preventing them from having a job;
 - Frightening, humiliating, degrading or punishing a partner, for example insulting them on a regular basis or fabricating stories, such as false illness, to cause them alarm.

4.1.5 Domestic Abuse is a form of **Gender Based Violence**. This does not exclude men, but rather recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected by particular forms of violence that they experience because they are women and girls. Men can be victims of many of the types of violence being discussed here, including domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, harassment and childhood sexual abuse. Men who have experienced these forms of violence should have access to the same high quality of support and services as women and children.

4.2 Violence Against Women (VAW)

4.2.1 VAW is a violation of women's human rights and an enduring social problem that undermines workplaces and communities. The term VAW refers to violence and/or abusive behaviour that is predominately carried out by men and directed at women because of their gender. Behaviour that stems from systemic, deep-rooted women's inequality, and which includes domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation (including prostitution), and so called 'honour based' violence like female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

4.2.2 Violence against women and girls encompasses (but is not limited to):

- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family (including children and young people), within the general community or in institutions, including domestic abuse, rape, and incest;
- sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation in any public or private space, including work;
- commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking;
- child sexual abuse, including familial sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and online abuse;
- 'honour based' violence, including dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and 'honour' crimes

5 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **East Renfrewshire Council**, recognises that domestic abuse is a serious issue within our society and affects many people's lives. It is likely that some of our employees will have experienced or live with the threat of domestic abuse. The Council is committed to reducing inequality and promoting dignity at work, and as part of this undertakes to work cooperatively with other agencies to help employees experiencing domestic abuse. The Council will create a culture of anti-domestic abuse through policy development, training and capacity building, as well as responding appropriately to employees, on a case-by-case basis who are alleged or convicted perpetrators of domestic abuse.

5.2 **Individual Line Managers**, in consultation with staff in HR, can play a key role in supporting staff that are being subjected to, or have experienced domestic abuse. Managers will be expected to advise employees of the support and help available, where appropriate carry out the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) risk assessment and put in place safety plans and provide contacts to ensure that employees who wish to seek assistance have access to the most appropriate professional help available as outlined in Section 9 of the Guidance Notes. They also have responsibility for formally recording disclosures and notifying the HR Case Management Team or Education HRBP Team for school based employees either with

the consent of employees on a need to know basis or on an anonymous basis.

- 5.3 **Supportive and Empathetic Employee/Co-Workers**, play a vital role too. If an employee confides in them, or they suspect someone is experiencing domestic abuse or are worried about someone, then they should encourage the employee to reach out for help or to highlight their concerns to their line manager. Line managers need to be mindful of the impact of a disclosure on a co-worker and be able to provide appropriate support.
- 5.4 **Human Resources**, has the central responsibility of developing a policy and procedures that advises both employees and managers on the support and help available for employees experiencing domestic abuse. They will also review and update other policies, procedures and practices which are linked and could affect the implementation of this policy to ensure that awareness and support mechanisms are instigated and applied. The HR Case Management Team and Education HRBP Team are also responsible for maintaining a secure and confidential recording system to monitor the level of Domestic Abuse incidents across the Council. If required this will be undertaken on an anonymous basis if the employee does not give consent for sharing on a need to know basis.
- 5.5 **HSCP**, to provide professional/specialist advice and support to Human Resources, line managers and employees, in particular supporting any possible Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) referrals and to provide/deliver appropriate training to employees and managers.

6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 6.1 The recommended guiding principles for an effective policy and framework consists of four key steps:-

Recognise the problem
Respond appropriately to disclosure
Provide support
Refer to the appropriate help.

- 6.2 Note that some measures should only be used with the authorisation of the individual concerned. All support options should be survivor-oriented, and the person's wishes, safety and wellbeing should take priority in all matters and procedures.

7 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1 – RECOGNISE THE PROBLEM

- 7.1 Employees experiencing domestic abuse usually don't disclose their experience to anyone at work or out with the workplace because of a fear of not being believed, being judged, being treated as a "victim", or believing that nothing will change. They may feel embarrassed or humiliated and not want to share such personal details with their colleagues or their employer.
- 7.2. Understanding the issues and knowing the signs of domestic abuse are the foundations to establishing an effective policy and culture. The Council will have in place an appropriate communication strategy to launch the new policy and revised guidance for managers, and a range of initiatives/events to develop awareness of domestic abuse in society and the council's policies outlining support for employees and members of the community. This will include the requirement for all employees to complete an e-learning

course on Domestic Abuse Awareness. Local operational managers of employees who are genuinely unable to access the e-learning module should contact the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator- HSCP, to plan and organise short workshops.

- 7.3 Thereafter, awareness raising will be included as part of the induction programme for all new employees and an annual campaign will be established to regularly remind employees of the policy and support available e.g. during 16 Days of Action. These initiatives will allow the Council to work towards creating a safe and supportive anti-domestic abuse culture.

8 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2 – RESPOND APPROPRIATELY TO DISCLOSURE

- 8.1 If an employee experiencing domestic abuse reaches out to their manager, it is crucially important that managers show empathy and compassion when responding to an employee's disclosure and are aware of the procedures to follow. The council will develop and offer a range of specific training and guidance on this issue and it is a requirement that all managers undertake this training. Training will be promoted and offered as part of the corporate training calendar.
- 8.2 All advice, information and support should remain confidential. No information should be disclosed without the express written consent of the employee. However, Managers need to explain to the employee that where issues regarding the protection of children or vulnerable adults, then adult/child protection services will need to become involved without consent.

9. GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3 – PROVIDE SUPPORT

- 9.1 When an employee discloses the need for help or assistance a safety plan outlining the range of support will be discussed and agreed with the employee following a DASH risk assessment. The welfare of both the person experiencing the domestic abuse and their colleagues may be at risk from the possibility of the perpetrator accessing the workplace or seeking information.
- 9.2 The provision of paid special leave (safe leave) can be granted to employees experiencing domestic abuse to enable them to attend medical appointments/counselling or to make necessary arrangements such as housing, schooling or to visit solicitors and other agencies. It is expected that line managers will be sympathetic to the situation faced by the employee. In this connection the provisions do not specify a minimum or a maximum amount of leave which may be allowed, it being expected that managers will liaise and agree with the employee 'reasonable time off as necessary' having regard to all the circumstances and the agreed safety plan.
- 9.3 If it comes to light during an absence review, performance improvement or disciplinary meeting that an employee reveals that a contributory factor is due to experiencing domestic abuse then the meeting/process should be adjourned to allow the issue to be managed under the domestic abuse policy until all options and measures of support have been exhausted. A supportive meeting with the completion of a DASH risk assessment should be arranged to discuss and agree a safety plan and measures of support.
- 9.4 Absences which are attributable to domestic abuse should be classified as "special/safe leave" for a reasonable period of time on a case by case basis before being classified as sickness absence and managed under the Maximising Attendance Policy.

- 9.5 In line with the Council's Data Protection Policy and HR Privacy Notice, if an employee has given written consent for sharing information on a need to know basis, the line manager should complete the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Form and send to the HR Case Management or Education HRBP Team for school based employees. This will allow the HR team to provide any additional support and to maintain restricted and confidential statistics on the level of domestic abuse incidents across the Council. If consent has not been given then anonymous advice and information will be recorded.

10 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4 – REFER TO THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES FOR HELP

- 10.1 It is important to be clear on the role and responsibilities of both HR and managers. Managers and HR must not feel that they are responsible for resolving any issues or being a counsellor. What they are responsible for is signposting employees to specialist help.
- 10.2 Human Resources and HSCP will work in partnership with local agencies to develop a list of support services available within our local area that is easily accessible to allow referral of employees to appropriate organisations.

11 MANAGING AND ENGAGING WITH ALLEGED PERPETRATORS

- 11.1 Any form of domestic abuse perpetrated by an employee is unacceptable. Through the Code of Conduct and Domestic Abuse Policy, we aim to create an anti-domestic abuse culture. Under the disciplinary procedure therefore, any offence, behaviour, or incident as defined under the Domestic Abuse policy, will be treated as alleged gross misconduct and this could lead to a sanction up to and including dismissal. If through either the Council's internal or external recruitment processes evidence of domestic abuse is identified e.g. through a criminal convictions form or PVG we reserve the right to reject the person's application or withdraw an offer of appointment.
- 11.2 Confidential records of a disclosure and any actions/decisions taken will be recorded. These records may subsequently be used in any legal proceedings or disciplinary hearing involving you as a perpetrator or alleged perpetrator.
- 11.3 Where the victim and the perpetrator are both employees of the Council and work in the same location or near each other, consideration must be given to redeployment to ensure the safety and well-being of the victim. There may also be occasions where bail restrictions placed on the perpetrator, such as a restraining order, requires them to be moved to a different location. Before any such action is taken, managers **MUST** discuss this with their HR Case Team or the Education HRBP Team for school based employees.
- 11.4 We have a duty of care to all our employees including alleged perpetrators of domestic abuse who, through their actions, are damaging their own lives as well as the lives of their partner, ex-partner, and children. If there is an allegation that a colleague has perpetrated domestic abuse against a current or previous partner, then similar to 11.3, advice **MUST** be sought from the HR Case Team or Education HRBP Team for school based employees before any action is taken.
- 11.5 Responding to perpetrators sends an important and positive message to victims and survivors and also to the public who use our services. Engaging with perpetrators of abuse in a positive, respectful way does not mean excusing the abuse and can help to increase safety and save lives. Perpetrators who want to address their behaviour will be supported to do this via the appropriate agencies. Training will be available for managers in how to engage appropriately with perpetrators.

11.6 By engaging appropriately with perpetrators, we aim to:-

- promote respectful relationships
- provide interventions which challenge, support and encourage perpetrators of domestic abuse to engage in respectful relationships and seek help to prevent abuse happening or escalating
- promote the principle that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity
- work with other professionals to ensure that employees who perpetrate domestic abuse are treated as responsible and accountable for their behaviour and for changing it
- promote an active corporate social responsibility approach



**DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY
GUIDANCE NOTES**

Contents

1	Introduction
2	Impact on the Workplace
3	Guiding Principle 1
4	Guiding Principle 2
5	Guiding Principle 3
6	Guiding Principle 4
7	Managing and Engaging with Alleged Perpetrators
8	Summary/Top Tips
9	Support Services
10	Case Studies: Safety Planning
Appendix 1	Guidance on Engaging with Possible Perpetrators

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This guidance supports the Domestic Abuse policy by providing advice and guidance to line managers on how to support employees who are experiencing any form of violence or domestic abuse. It aims to build capacity and confidence in line managers on domestic abuse issues which is a core part of meeting the standards of Equally Safe - Scotland's Strategy for Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls'.

2. IMPACT ON THE WORKPLACE

- 2.1 An employee can experience domestic abuse in a number of ways relating to work:

- threatening phone calls and emails;
- when they travel to and from work;
- the abuser might call the victim or colleagues to check up on the victim (e.g. pretending to care);
- the abuser might interfere with the victim's ability to work at home;
- their performance, attendance, career prospects and job security might be affected;
- colleagues may experience threatening or intimidating behaviour from the perpetrator.

- 2.2 Domestic abuse affects people who are in the victim/survivor's life on a regular basis, this can include work colleagues, and the wider council. It can have an adverse impact on staff morale, as well as on the council's reputation. The impact on colleagues can include:-

- Having to fill in for absent colleagues, or colleagues who are underperforming;
- Reduced productivity or being distracted from their own work;
- Increased stress or anxiety from being followed to or from work, or being subject to questioning by the perpetrator about the victim-survivor;
- Trying to protect the victim-survivor from attention, unwanted phone calls or visits;
- Witnessing a form of violence or domestic abuse and feeling helpless and unsure about how to intervene to support a colleague;
- A negative impact on their own mental and emotional health, especially if they may also be experiencing abuse themselves; and
- Increased staff absence or turnover of key people.

3 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1 - RECOGNISING THE SIGNS

This section provides advice and guidance on some of the signs that may indicate that an employee is experiencing domestic abuse.

3.1 Performance Signs.

- Changes in the quality of their work for unexplained reasons, despite a previously strong record;
- Suddenly starting to miss deadlines;
- Turning down professional development or training opportunities;
- Receiving repeated upsetting calls, texts or emails; and
- Constantly checking their mobile phone.

3.2 Attendance Signs

- Being persistently late without explanation or needing to leave work early;
- Needing to leave work while it's still light out;
- Having more frequent, sporadic absences without explanation;
- Increased hours being worked for no apparent reason i.e. very early arrival at work and/or working late;
- Needing regular time off for appointments;
- Their partner or family exerts an unusual amount of control and demand over their work schedule, for example, they may be dropped off and picked up from work

3.3 Behaviour Signs

- Avoiding lunch breaks or socialising at the end of the working day;
- Changes in their behaviour such as becoming quiet, avoiding speaking to colleagues;
- A loss of confidence and self-esteem;
- Avoiding male colleagues or being visibly uncomfortable around male colleagues;
- Isolating themselves from friends and family;
- Feeling depressed, anxious, distracted, or having problems with concentration;
- Increased stress or being easily overwhelmed;
- Being withdrawn or detached;
- Obsessing about time;
- Exhibiting fearful behaviour such as being easily startled;
- Expressing a fear of their partner;
- Expressing fears about leaving children with their partner; and
- Being secretive about their home life.

3.4 Physical State Signs

- Having repeated injuries and/or an explanation for injuries that doesn't fit the injuries they have;
- Frequent and/or sudden and/or unexpected medical problems and/or sickness absences;
- A change in their appearance such as the amount of make-up worn, the clothes they're wearing and/or becoming unkempt or dishevelled;
- Fatigue or exhaustion;
- Increased physical tension;
- Panic attacks, sleeping and/or eating disorders;
- Substance use and/or dependence; and
- Depression and/or suicide attempts.

3.5 Other Signs

- Excessive amounts of flowers or gifts sent to them by their partner for no apparent reason, sometimes known as “love bombing”;
- Seeming to have less money than previously; and being a victim of vandalism or threats.

4 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2 - RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY

4.1 Ongoing stigma around domestic abuse means that most victim-survivors don't report it to their line managers. It is more likely that you'll become aware of a situation through noticing an increase in the number of absences they have, a change in behaviour or a dip in work performance. Victim-survivors may not discuss their experience because they're not aware that support is available for them. Victim-survivors often report that they wish that someone had asked them about it. If you suspect that one of your team is affected by domestic abuse, you should facilitate a conversation to discuss and identify appropriate support. It's important to be supportive and non-judgemental. This could be at a return to work meeting or a 121 meeting as part of the Quality Conversation process or as and when required. There may be cases where you try to start a conversation and the employee chooses not to disclose. If this happens, it's important to respect their decision. Respecting their decision can show that you're approachable and non-judgemental which, in turn, can encourage the employee to disclose at a later date.

4.2 It is good practice to respond to disclosures in a non-judgemental and sensitive way. You may also be the first person that they have told. The way you respond can affect whether they will access support, formally report their experience, or come forward again in the future. It's therefore important that the victim-survivor feels believed and not to blame.

4.3 Simple steps you can take to respond appropriately include:-

- Listen to the staff member and take their disclosure seriously;
- Reassure them that you understand how it may be affecting their work performance and what can be done to support them;
- Reassure them that their disclosure will be treated confidentially and shared on a need to know basis and only with their consent;
- Respect and accept their thoughts and ideas;
- Reassure them that their needs are a priority;
- Provide information about specialist support services
- Offer practical support, such as a risk assessment and/or safety planning, flexible working, special/safe leave, employee assistance programme or mental health support, as far as possible;
- Review of case and work load (particularly where caseload relates to domestic abuse)
- Provide ongoing support to ensure their safety and wellbeing is monitored;
- Inform them of what the next steps are, this includes whether there will an investigation or if they need to make a formal report; and
- Organise a time to check in in the future.

4.4 No matter what the circumstances are, it's important to support the victim survivor. Well-meaning comments and opinions intended to be supportive and sympathetic may sometimes have the opposite effect. This may result in a victim survivor feeling not believed, judged, isolated and reluctant to share further information. Some tips on what NOT to say or suggest:-

- Don't blame the employee for what happened;
- Don't ask why they don't just leave
- Avoid making comments about their emotional response to what happened, such as "You don't seem very upset about it" or "I thought you would've been angrier";
- Don't give advice to the staff member – for example, don't pressure them into leaving, or going to the police;
- Don't minimise the experience or try to make them feel better by saying things such as "It's not that bad", "It could be worse", "Other people have had it much worse" or "At least they didn't hit you";
- Don't comment on their behaviour in previous relationships; and
- Don't assume that they want you to take action, they may just want to tell you what's happening and for you to listen

4.5 Some suggestions to help start a conversation :-

- I've noticed that you're not yourself lately, is everything okay?
- Are there any problems that may be contributing to your frequent sickness absence ?
- Is everything alright at home?
- Is everything alright at work?
- Is there anything happening at work that's concerning you?
- What support do you think might help?

5 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3 – PROVIDE SUPPORT

5.1 In responding to a disclosure or report, you should ensure the employee is safe in the workplace and is receiving support, if they want it. Risk assessments and safety planning are important mechanisms for responding to domestic abuse. A risk assessment allows you to identify the level of risk an employee may be experiencing in the workplace. It can reduce the chance of continued abuse or violence and enables you to ensure that the risk to the employee, colleagues and the council is minimised. It's good practice to undertake a risk assessment and this should be completed with the employee, if they are happy to do so, as they will be most aware of the risks.

5.2 The recommended approach is to complete the DASH Risk Assessment <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Dash%20without%20guidance.pdf>

5.3 Following completion of the DASH risk assessment, if there is any concern then contact should be made with the HSCP Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator at ermarac@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk for consideration of a possible referral to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). MARACs are monthly multi-agency meetings that aim to increase the protection of high risk victims of domestic abuse through a broad range of supportive interventions. You should dial 999 if there is immediate risk and/or harm to the victim of abuse.

5.4 In addition to completing to completing the DASH risk assessment, and if an employee gives consent for sharing on a need to know basis, managers should produce a safety plan and complete the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Form which will record key information and actions as well as being a useful checklist. The forms should be emailed securely to HR Case Management Team or the Education HRBP team for school based employees who will review the information, provide any further advice and securely file the forms within Info @ Work on a highly restricted basis. If the employee does not give consent, the manager

should still contact information for anonymous advice and to allow the collation of anonymised statistics on the level of domestic abuse incidents across the Council. A safety plan is a way to ensure the safety of victim-survivors in the workplace and to prevent domestic abuse from being perpetrated. A safety plan can include making small changes in the workplace to support victim-survivors and prevent further victimisation.

5.5 The following are examples of what could be included in a safety plan and this guidance provides three case studies.

- Creating a plan for arriving at and leaving the workplace. This could include changing start and finishing times and using different entrances or exits.
- Offering a different or rotating location(s)
- Agreeing with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if the perpetrator telephones or visits the workplace.
- Diverting phone calls and email messages to block the perpetrator from contacting the employee.
- Agreeing in advance when and who to contact if the employee does not come into work, for example, a friend, their family, a neighbour, or the police.
- Issuing instructions to all staff not to reveal the employee's personal details to anyone. For example, if the employee moves to a new house make sure that their new address is limited to key staff.
- Ensuring that the employee doesn't work alone in isolated areas, wherever possible.
- Providing the employee with a panic button/alarm.
- Providing them with an escort to their car.
- Moving the employee into or out of public view, if they think that would be helpful, and where possible,
- Alerting reception and security staff if the perpetrator is on work premises without authorisation.
- Have a list of local specialist support services that is easily accessible and signpost to appropriate organisations such as the local Women's Aid service and Rape Crisis centre.

5.6 The DASH Risk Assessment form is confidentially destroyed after completion. Only the safety plan and disclosure form (which records the score from the DASH Risk Assessment) is filed securely with restricted access by the line manager and certain officers within HR.

6 GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4 – REFER TO APPROPRIATE AGENCIES

6.1 As outlined in our policy - it is important to be clear on the role and responsibilities of both HR and people managers and set boundaries. Managers and HR must not feel that they are responsible for resolving any issues or being a counsellor. What they are responsible for is signposting employees to specialist help.

6.2 When agreement has been reached with the employee concerned, line managers and HR professionals should refer to the range of support agencies to contact.

7 MANAGING AND ENGAGING WITH ALLEGED PERPETRATORS

7.1 When the alleged perpetrator works in the same place as the victim-survivor, it is best practice to prioritise the needs of the victim-survivor and identify how best to support them through the process. It's important to support the victim-survivor once they have reported or disclosed to ensure they are not disadvantaged or unfairly treated. It also builds trust in the reporting process.

- 7.2 If the alleged perpetrator is an employee it is important to take the report or disclosure seriously. The risk assessment you conduct with the victim-survivor should also identify if the alleged perpetrator poses a risk to other colleagues and the wider workplace. This should then inform how you manage the alleged perpetrator in the workplace. Ensuring the safety of your employees should be a priority.
- 7.3 It is also important to remember that you have a duty of care to both the victim-survivor and alleged perpetrator. You should contact the HR Case Management team immediately for advice and guidance on how to proceed. Alleged perpetrators of domestic abuse should be managed in a fair way. It will be necessary for an employer to carry out an investigation of the facts before deciding to proceed with a disciplinary hearing and it may be necessary to consider redeployment or suspension of the alleged perpetrator pending a disciplinary investigation. If the perpetrator has been charged /convicted, the matter should be treated confidentially. It may also be appropriate to support a perpetrator who is seeking help to address their abusive behaviour. See paragraph 7.11.
- 7.4 The key points that should be considered are whether the employee's misconduct was linked to work in any way, or if conduct outside work has destroyed the employer's trust in the employee to perform their role. Some abuse may undermine the employee's suitability to perform their role, has rendered the employee unable to perform their role (for example due to a custodial sentence), or it has brought the employer into disrepute.
- 7.5 Confidential records of a disclosure and any actions or decisions must be stored securely and kept for 25 years. Records must be kept from the time that concern, allegation, or disclosure is made. These records may subsequently be used in any legal proceedings or disciplinary hearing involving a perpetrator or alleged perpetrator.
- 7.6 Employees who have any convictions, cautions, or pending court appearances regarding domestic abuse must be disclosed to their line manager in a timely manner. This obligation is also part of our Code of Conduct.
- 7.7 If an employee regularly threatens another (whether they are in a relationship or not) and the employer does not take action to prevent the abuse, this would constitute a breach of contract and may result in many potential claims, including a constructive unfair dismissal or even a personal injury claim.
- 7.8 There are many legal duties that must be taken into account surrounding an employee who has perpetrated domestic abuse as well as the survivors of it. In addition, some aspects of the law affecting employees convicted of violence/domestic abuse offences may mean in some situations that it is necessary to report an incident to a regulator or professional body e.g. Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), General Teaching Council (GTC) and Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). Employers also need to be aware of strict data protection requirements when processing sensitive personal data.
- 7.9 The majority of perpetrators will have little or no contact with the police, the courts or receive a referral to a perpetrators programme. It is far more likely that they will reveal information about their violence and abuse to people they know. Perpetrators of domestic abuse are unlikely to describe their behaviour as 'domestic abuse' but may describe their behaviour in terms of 'being angry' or 'losing it'.
- 7.10 If you are suspicious that an employee may be displaying possible perpetrator behaviour then it is good practice to apply the same/similar guiding principles as outlined in this guidance, in particular recognising the signs and offering support and help. There will

be opportunities to ask employees sensitively about their relationships and ask about their behaviour. See Appendix 1 for further guidance. If you are concerned that an employee may be a perpetrator then it is essential to contact your HR Case Management Team of Education HRBP Team for school based employees for further advice as there may be a potential risk to others, breach of code of conduct or a criminal offence has been committed which must be recorded and investigated.

7.11 Support will be provided to potential/alleged perpetrators to help them address their behaviour and change, in particular wellbeing support, during any period of disciplinary investigation. The Council will

- provide advice, information and support to help them change;
- allow appropriate time-off to attend counselling appointments e.g. Respect
- make workplace adjustments (where required);

8 SUMMARY/TOP TIPS

- If you think an employee may be affected by domestic abuse, it is good practice to start a conversation.
- Be supportive and non-judgemental if one of your team discloses or reports.
- Go at the employee's pace and if they are finding it difficult to speak or are becoming distressed, suggest taking a break.
- Work with the employee to identify their support needs and the simple changes that can be made in the workplace.
- Identify whether other workplace policies could be used to support them. This could include identifying whether they would like to work flexibly, adjust working hours, workload and/or work location, wherever necessary and possible.
- Protect their confidentiality and communicate to them how you will do that.
- Provide information on the workplace reporting and investigation procedure and make sure the employee is kept up to date.
- Organise regular meetings to check in and review their support needs.
- Agree a safety plan with the employee which is in line with their needs.
- Signpost staff to specialist support services such as the local Women's Aid group or Rape Crisis centre.
- Prioritise the victim-survivor's needs when managing a perpetrator in the workplace.

9 SUPPORT AGENCIES

9.1 National - Scottish Women's Aid

www.womensaid.scot

<https://womensaid.scot/find-nearest-wa-group/>

[24 hour helpline – 0800 027 1234](tel:08000271234)

Local – Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire (WASLER)

Drop in Mon – Friday 9am – 5pm. No appointment required. The Foundry Barrhead.

Tel 0141 404 0015

<https://wasler.org.uk>

9.2 Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

Support for anyone experiencing domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as their family members, friends, colleagues and professionals who support them.

24hr service: 0800 027 1234

www.sdafmh.org.uk

9.3 National - Rape Crisis Scotland

Scotland's national rape crisis organisation providing helpline and email support for anyone affected by sexual violence.

Helpline from 6pm-midnight:

08088 01 0302

www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk

Rape Crisis Scotland local service finder:

www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/find-asevice-near-you/

9.4 Local - Rape Crisis Glasgow and Clyde

East Renfrewshire Drop In Service – no appointment necessary

Provides free and confidential support to women and girls aged 13 and over who have experienced rape, sexual assault or sexual abuse at any point in their lives, friends and family members of survivors and workers with a service user or colleague who has experienced sexual violence.

Barrhead Health and Care Centre – 9.30am -12.30pm. First Wednesday every month

Eastwood Health and Care Centre – 1.30pm -4.30pm. First Wednesday every month

Helpline: Freephone 08088 00 00 14 Monday to Friday 11am-2pm

<https://www.glasgowclyderapecrisis.org.uk/>

9.5 Scottish Women's Rights Centre

Free legal information and advice for women experiencing gender based violence.

Freephone: 08088 010 789

www.scottishwomensrightscentre.org.uk

9.6 Shakti Women's Aid

Support and information for Black and minority ethnic women, children and young people experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse.

0131 475 2399

www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk

9.7 Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre

Culturally sensitive signposting and support service for Muslim and ethnic minority women.

Helpline from Mon-Fri 10am-4pm:

0808 801 0301

www.mwrc.org.uk

9.8 Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

Support to Asian, Black and minority ethnic women, children and young people.
Helpline (24hrs): 0141 353 0859
www.hematgryffe.org.uk

9.9 LGBT Helpline Scotland

Information and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
Helpline: 0300 123 2523

9.10 FearFree

Support for people experiencing domestic abuse in Scotland who identify as a man or the LGBT+ community. Online Referral form can be obtained at <http://fearfree.scot>. You can also call 0131 624 7270 or email fearfreeinfo@sacro.org.uk

9.11 Mankind Initiatives

Support for male victims of domestic abuse and violence from across the whole of the UK.
Helpline 01823 334 244.
<https://www.mankind.org.uk>

9.12 Respect – Support for male victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse

Respect Men's Advice Line provides confidential help for men experiencing domestic abuse and frontline workers supporting male victims.

Phone 0808 8010327 free from landlines and mobile phones within the UK. Call will not appear on itemised bills. You can also call free from BT pay phones.

Email: info@mensadviceline.org.uk
Web: <https://mensadviceline.org.uk/>

Respect Phonenumber is a confidential helpline, email and webchat service for domestic abuse perpetrators and those supporting them. We support men and women who are using abuse, in same-sex or heterosexual relationships. Our team of friendly Advisors will listen to you without judgement and offer you honest advice to help you stop being violent. We also offer advice to concerned friends and family members, as well as frontline workers who work with perpetrators.

Phone 0808 8024040 Monday to Friday 10-5pm
Email: info@respectphonenumber.org.uk Monday to Friday 9-5pm
Web: <https://respectphonenumber.org.uk/>

9.13 Survivors UK

Survivors UK – a confidential helpline for men who have experienced rape or sexual abuse Tel 0845 122 1201 or www.survivorsuk.org;

9.14 Archway Glasgow

Rape and Sexual Assault Support for anyone aged 13+ who has been raped or sexually assaulted in the last seven days. In addition to counselling and support there is medical help from specially trained female doctors and nurses who carry out forensic examinations

<http://archway.sandyford.org>

Tel: 0141 211 8175

9.15 East Renfrewshire Emergency Housing

Tel: 0141 577 3003 or 0808 052 0180 (emergency out of hours number)

9.16 East Renfrewshire Children & Families Social Work

Tel: 0141 577 8300 or out of hours Social Work Standby 0300 343 1505

9.17 East Renfrewshire Adult Social Work

Tel: 0141 800 7850 or out of hours Social Work Standby 0300 343 1505

If there is immediate risk and or harm to the victim of abuse then contact Police Scotland by dialling 999

10 CASE STUDIES – Supportive Approach

Maggie's story

Regardless of the time of year, Maggie always dressed in heavy clothing, dark tights and tops with long sleeves. She also wore heavy make-up, but sometimes the bruising was so bad it would show through.

Maggie worked in a customer service call centre. Her manager had become concerned that Maggie was hiding domestic abuse and decided to raise the subject with her. She told Maggie that the company would support her, but that they respected that she needed to make up her own mind about what to do. Maggie agreed to complete the DASH Risk Assessment with her manager. Maggie was given information that could help her. Her manager told Maggie that she could always approach her if she wanted support or to talk about it. Maggie admitted that she was concerned about her two young children and worried that she wouldn't be able to cope on her own if she left her husband. A few months later, when the bruises began to appear more regularly, Maggie accepted help and made contact with a local domestic abuse agency.

"In the end I left because I realised that I had to protect myself as well as the kids. My boss was brilliant. She helped me look at childcare options and told me about the range of work life balance policies, so I didn't have to give up work. She transferred me to an office in a different part of town and arranged with the payroll section for my salary to go into another bank account that my husband could not access. She also told me about the credit union so I could save straight from my wages. My workplace protected me by putting in place safety measures that meant my husband couldn't find me."

Recording: Following completion of the DASH risk assessment and safety plan, and with the consent from Maggie, Maggie's manager completed the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Form which recorded key information and all relevant actions taken. HR Case Management Team were notified according to the Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures.

John's story

John had never hidden his sexuality at work but he did not talk about his personal life as he knew that some people would be judgmental or undermining. When he started to experience abuse in his relationship, work was the last place he wanted to know about it. John's partner was jealous and would question him endlessly about where he had been and who he was speaking too. After John decided to end the relationship, this behaviour escalated with him being accused of having an affair with someone at work and putting his partner at risk of HIV.

John was scared that his ex-partner would turn up at work and cause a scene, as this was something he often threatened. After the workplace launch of a domestic abuse policy which included clear messages about same sex relationships, he decided to inform his manager.

John agreed to complete the DASH Risk Assessment with his manager. The manager identified a safety plan including a referral to MARAC and informing security as well as reception (with John's consent) of the situation so that they knew not to let John's ex-partner onto the premises. John's manager organised, with John's permission, for a member of staff to give him a lift home in the evening. John's manager referred him to a range of relevant external agencies; who supported John in getting a protection order and keeping safe outside of the work place.

Recording: Following completion of the DASH risk assessment, MARAC referral and safety plan, with the consent from John, John's manager completed the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Form which recorded key information and all relevant actions taken. The HR Case Management Team were notified according to the Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures.

Malcolm's Story

Malcolm had separated from his wife and it was very clear that the marriage was all over, but he often seemed angry or depressed. To colleagues he seemed to be going through a difficult divorce with lots of disputes about money and the children. He portrayed his ex-wife as mean and vengeful, and was always complaining that the court was against him or his lawyers were no good.

He often needed time off to go to the solicitors or to court. Malcolm's manager became uncomfortable about the level of hostility he displayed when talking about his ex-partner. One of the features of domestic abuse is the way the perpetrator blames and runs down their partner, making them the one at fault all the time. The manager was also concerned about the atmosphere this created in the workplace and how Malcolm would seek collusion with his point of view from other members of staff, and he felt there was a misogynistic element to this.

Malcolm's manager decided to talk to him about this as his line manager, and asked Malcolm what his ex-partner's objections to his contact with the children were. Malcolm said that his ex had made up allegations that he was abusive to her but these allegations were unfounded and she was using the system and the children to get back at him. This left Malcolm's manager with a number of concerns:

Following the Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures, Malcolm's Manager contacted HR Case Management Team for advice and guidance as there may be a potential risk to others, breach of code of conduct or a criminal offence has been committed which must be recorded and investigated. In line with the Domestic Abuse Policy, Malcolm's manager offered support to help address and change his behaviour with referral to appropriate agencies.

Recording: Records must be kept from the time that a concern, allegation, or disclosure is made. A confidential record of any actions or decisions taken will be completed by the investigating officer and are highly restricted. These records may subsequently be used in any legal proceedings or disciplinary hearing involving Malcolm as a perpetrator or alleged perpetrator.

1 There may be signs that an employee is perpetrating domestic abuse and may be indicative of other concerns such as

- Uncharacteristic late/absent behaviour with no explanation
- Repeated injuries/scratches/bite marks/bruised knuckles/injuries to wrists and forearms
- Uncharacteristic moods and depression
- An obsession with time and an avoidance of socialising
- Constant text messaging or telephoning a partner
- Sexual jealousy or possessiveness
- Recent mental ill-health relating to violence
- Increase in substance use/dependence
- Negative comments made by the abuser about their partner
- The employee who is angry, depressed and blaming of their partner about child contact arrangements

2 Be alert to the possibility of domestic abuse if you hear the following

- I've got a problem with drink
- I need an anger management course
- I'm not handling stress at work
- My partner says I need help
- My partner and I are fighting a lot
- My partner and I need counselling
- My partner is not coping and is taking it out on me
- The kids are out of control and my partner is not firm enough
- I'm depressed/anxious/stressed/not sleeping/not coping/not myself
- I feel suicidal (or have threatened or attempted suicide)
- I'm worried about my rage at work, in the car, in the street, when out socialising

3 It is important to ask about abusive behaviour in order to understand risk and to make referrals to specialist services.

Domestic abuse is a serious issue and all staff members involved have a role in providing responses which hold perpetrators responsible and accountable for their behaviour. How we respond to a perpetrator and any disclosures could affect the extent to which they accept responsibility for their behaviour and, therefore, the need to change. If a perpetrator presents with a problem such as drinking, stress or depression, for example, but does not refer to their abusive behaviour, these are useful questions to ask:

- How is this drinking/stress at work/depression affecting how you are with your family?
- Do you find yourself getting angry with your partner?
- When you feel like that, how do you behave?
- Do you find yourself shouting/smashing things?
- Have these arguments ever become physical?
- Have you ever pushed or hit your partner?

- You must be worried about the effect this is having on you, your relationship with your partner and your children?
- It sounds like you want to make some changes for your benefit and for your partner/children. What choices do you have? What can you do about it? What help would you like to assist you to make these changes?

4 Providing advice, information and support to change

The most simple and straightforward way of providing information and help is to signpost the employee to Respect and seek further advice and guidance from the HR Case Management Team and from the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator.