

Employee domestic abuse policy

Author: HR Strategy & Policy

Contact: [LBC HR Strategy](#)

Version: 2.1 (published)

Last updated: January 2026

Document History

Version	Date	Notes	Prepared by
1.0	February 2020	Introduction of Policy agreed by Admin & Regulation Committee	Kathy Williams
1.1	July 2022	Made accessible	Jayne Toye
2.0	March 2024	Renamed and reviewed for DAHA accreditation	Kathy Williams
2.1	January 2026	Reviewed in line with DAHA feedback with input from Jenny Bull Domestic Abuse Public Health Officer	Kathy Williams

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Purpose and Scope	3
3.	Domestic abuse – definition	3
4.	Recognising Domestic Abuse in the Workplace	4
5.	Confidentiality and right to privacy	4
6.	Internal support for employees experiencing domestic abuse.....	5
7.	External support services	6
8.	Perpetrators of domestic abuse	6
9.	Related legislation and policies	7

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We believe that no person should live in fear of violence or abuse. This policy sets out our approach to supporting employees who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. The policy also covers the approach we'll take if there are concerns that an employee may be the perpetrator of domestic abuse.
- 1.2 We commit to treating all reports of domestic abuse seriously. We'll create a safe workplace and send out a strong message that domestic abuse is unacceptable.
- 1.3 We understand that there are many barriers to reporting domestic abuse, but encourage employees affected to raise the issue in the knowledge that we'll treat the matter empathetically and confidentially. You can report domestic abuse or seek support from your line manager, a colleague, a member of the Human Resources team or a union representative.
- 1.4 Please read the Domestic Abuse guidelines and toolkit which provides a range of practical and procedural advice for managers and employees.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 Domestic abuse has a devastating impact on individuals and their families. Being a great place to work includes supporting employees who may be going through or recovering from this. We also have a responsibility to provide all employees with a safe work environment.
- 2.2 We commit to treating all reports of domestic abuse seriously. This policy sets out how we'll support employees experiencing domestic abuse. It outlines how we'll create a safer workplace and sends out a strong message that domestic abuse is unacceptable.
- 2.3 This policy applies to domestic abuse experienced by or perpetrated by our employees and workers excluding those employed by schools. Schools based employees and workers can obtain a copy of the relevant policy through their school. We will also offer support to agency and contract workers; volunteers and interns as far as is reasonably possible.
- 2.4 Domestic abuse is a serious crime. We'll provide sympathetic, supportive and non-judgemental support and help to any employee we know is experiencing or recovering from domestic abuse.
- 2.5 We have a separate Domestic Abuse policy for customers experiencing domestic abuse.

3. Domestic abuse – definition

- 3.1 Within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, domestic abuse is defined as any of the following:
 - physical or sexual abuse
 - violent or threatening behaviour
 - controlling or coercive behaviour
 - economic abuse
 - psychological, emotional or other abuse
- 3.2 Within this definition, economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to do either of the following.
 - Acquire, use or maintain money or other property
 - Obtain goods or services.

- 3.3 It doesn't matter if the behaviour consists of a single incident or part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour.
- 3.4 For the definition and policy to apply, both people must be aged 16 or over and personally connected. Personally connected is defined in the Act as people who:
- are married to each other
 - are civil partners of each other
 - have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement is still in place)
 - have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement is still in place)
 - are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
 - are, or have been, parents of the same child or children
 - are relatives
- 3.5 This definition includes modern day slavery, coercive control, honour-based violence or abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- 3.6 It is important to recognise that both females and males can be subjected to domestic abuse from and by a current/ex-partner, their children (aged 16+) or a member of their family or people that they live with.
- 3.7 Whilst perpetrators can be either male or female it is also important to acknowledge that women are more likely (one in four) to experience domestic abuse than men (one in six), and in most cases, it is men who are perpetrating the abuse.

4. Recognising Domestic Abuse in the Workplace

4.1 There are ways in which a manager or fellow member of staff may become aware that an individual is being subject to domestic abuse. These may include:

- the member of staff may confide in their colleagues/manager
- they may tell their manager or colleague something which makes them concerned for their safety
- staff may inform their manager that a colleague is suffering from domestic abuse
- there may be obvious effects of physical abuse, or injuries that don't match the explanation given (it is important not to make assumptions)
- it may come to light because of one-to-one/check in/return to work discussions
- increased contact from a partner, ex-partner or family member to the employee during working hours

5. Confidentiality and right to privacy

- 5.1 We are responsible for the safety and security of all employees at work, including those affected by domestic abuse and their colleagues.
- 5.2 We encourage employees at risk from domestic abuse to disclose this so that they can receive support. We will seek to enable employees to disclose such facts by generating a supportive and open management culture.
- 5.3 We recognise the employee's right to privacy. Whilst we strongly encourage victims/survivors of domestic abuse to disclose domestic abuse for the safety of themselves, their family members and all those in the workplace, we won't force them to share this information if they do not want to.

- 5.4 When working with partners we may need to share some information about the case and the individual. We'll only share information with your permission, unless there is a risk to the safeguarding of children or a vulnerable adult and it's a duty of care.
- 5.6 In circumstances where we must breach confidentiality, we will seek specialist advice before doing so, informing you of the reasons why and seeking your agreement where possible.
- 5.7 All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential. No local records will be kept of absences related to domestic abuse and there will be no adverse impact on the employment records of victims/survivors of domestic abuse.
- 5.8 We'll inform employees of the importance of confidentiality in the workplace. This might include not divulging personal details of other employees, such as addresses, telephone numbers or shift patterns.
- 5.9 Employees may prefer to disclose their situation and seek advice direct from a third party, such as a national helpline or a local provider. See paragraph 7 or the Domestic Abuse guidelines and toolkit.

6. Internal support for employees experiencing domestic abuse

- 6.1 We'll respond empathetically and confidentially if you disclose that you're experiencing domestic abuse. You don't need to provide evidence for us to provide support.
- 6.2 The person offering support won't counsel you but will provide information, workplace support and signpost you to relevant employees and/or other organisations. You can also seek advice from our free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).
- 6.3 You are not alone. We'll prioritise your safety if we know that you're experiencing domestic abuse. We'll support you to contact a specialist support agency (see section 7 below) or you can access domestic advice and guidance on the Luton Council employees sharepoint site.
- 6.4 Any specialist service may ask you to complete a risk assessment. The DASH (domestic abuse, stalking and honour-based violence risk assessment) identifies your current risk level and helps you to find the type of support that is right for you (and your family.)
- 6.5 With your consent, they'll work with you, your manager and other agencies to identify what actions we can take to increase your personal safety. They'll also address any risks there may be to other colleagues. This may include discussions around safeguarding in line with the council's safeguarding policy.
- 6.6 Your line manager will consider incidents such as violence in the workplace, abusive phone calls, intimidation or harassment by the alleged perpetrator, and will address this in any safety planning. Safety planning could involve a broad range of support, which may include but is not limited to:
 - temporary or permanent changes to your working times and patterns
 - changes to specific duties, for example, to avoid potential contact with an abuser
 - agreeing with you what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if the perpetrator makes contact
 - contacting you regularly if you're working from home
 - redeployment

- measures to ensure a safe working environment, for example, changing your telephone number to avoid harassing phone calls
- using other existing policies, including flexible working and reasonable special paid or unpaid leave for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare, and for court appointments
- allowing access to occupational health or counselling/support services in paid time.

7. External support services

7.1 We can signpost you to external sources of help and support or you may prefer to disclose your situation and seek advice direct from a third party, such as a national helpline or a local provider including:

- the 24 hour [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#), which provides advice for those experiencing domestic abuse, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. Telephone number 0808 2000 247
- [Bedfordshire Victim Care Service \(BVCS\)](#) can provide free and confidential support for all aspects of domestic abuse. For support and help, call them on 0800 0282 887 for free local support Mon-Fri 8am-6pm.
- [Victim Support](#) provide 24 hour support on 0808 16 89 111 including Live Chat. If you're in a relationship and being abused, or have experienced domestic abuse in the past, they can help you move forward with free and confidential support.
- The [Bedfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership \(BDAP\)](#) providing links to local and national agencies who can help you.
- [Respect](#), which provides practical information and advice on domestic abuse for perpetrators, victims/survivors, health and social care professionals and family and friends. Freephone 0808 802 4040.

7.2 Further details of these, and other agencies including website and contact details can be found in the Domestic Abuse Guidance and Toolkit.

8. Perpetrators of domestic abuse

8.1 We don't condone domestic abuse perpetrated by employees under any circumstances.

8.2 We'll treat any allegation, disclosure or conviction of a domestic-abuse-related offence on a case-by-case basis, aiming to reduce risk and support change.

8.3 We encourage and support employees to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds. If you approach us about your abusive behaviour, we'll provide information about the services and support available to you.

8.4 We view the use of violence and abusive behaviour by an employee, wherever this occurs, as a breach of the Code of Conduct for disciplinary purposes.

8.5 We'll inform employees about how to report any concerns confidently and sensitively, such as through our Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting) policy.

8.6 This policy can be applicable in cases where an employee has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or threatened their partner, an ex-partner or a family member
- possibly committed a criminal offence against their partner, an ex-partner or a family member

- had an allegation of domestic abuse made against them
- presented concerns about their behaviour within a current or a historic intimate relationship or with a family member

8.7 We are committed to ensuring that:

- allegations will be dealt with fairly and proactively with employees who use abusive behaviours
- all employees will receive guidance and support
- confidentiality will be maintained, and information restricted only to those who have a need to know
- investigations will be thorough and independent
- all cases will be dealt with quickly avoiding unnecessary delays
- all efforts will be made to addressing the matter and putting support in place

8.8 Any employee who is responsible for giving advice, or who comes into contact with or supports those vulnerable people or children experiencing domestic abuse needs to be aware of the potential consequences if they are found to be perpetrators. In these circumstances managers have a responsibility to inform the relevant safeguarding team of the concern. Where the employee's responsibilities relate to children the matter should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Where the employee's responsibilities relate to vulnerable adults, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults team should be informed.

8.9 Perpetrators can be manipulative and will attempt to enlist support from others for their abuse, for example by asking a colleague to keep an eye on someone for them or ask them to share with them another person's personal or sensitive information that should be protected. If an employee has concerns about a colleague's behaviours, or their own response to them, we'll inform employees about how to report any concerns confidently and sensitively, such as through our Whistleblowing (confidential reporting) policy.

9. Related legislation and policies

9.1 This policy supports the following legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Domestic Abuse Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Housing Act 1996
- Local Government Act 1972
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992
- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Consumer Standards Regulations for Housing Providers

This policy is linked to the following documents

- Code of Conduct
- Data Protection policy
- Disciplinary procedure
- Domestic Abuse guidelines and toolkit
- Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting) policy