

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

**GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURE SUMMARY**

Please note this document is a summary of the Force's Domestic Abuse Workplace guidance & procedure. Full copies can be obtained via a Freedom of Information request.

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Domestic Abuse Workplace</b>	
Practice / Business Area:	Welfare	
Department Responsible:	<b>Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team</b>	
First Published:	Sept 2013	
Last Reviewed:	23/05/2019	Last updated: 24/04/2020
Next review date:	May 2022	This document applies to employees of the:
Version Number:	07 (summarised)	Chief Constable
<b>SOUTH WALES POLICE PROCEDURE OBJECTIVE:</b>		
<p>South Wales Police recognises that there are many barriers to disclosing domestic abuse if you are an employee of the police service</p> <p>To take positive action to remove these barriers for reporting Domestic Abuse and to encourage personnel to report domestic abuse, whereby they can then be referred, where appropriate, for support and assistance in overcoming such abuse.</p>		
<b>GUIDANCE:</b>		
<p>South Wales Police has joined the Employers' Initiative which is a network of more than 200 companies, with a number of police forces included. The network helps and supports staff who are enduring domestic abuse or who are perpetrators. The website provides useful resources one of which is the toolkit hyperlinked here:</p> <p>Domestic Abuse toolkit for employers; <a href="https://www.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/bitc_phe_domestic_abuse_toolkit.pdf">https://www.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/bitc_phe_domestic_abuse_toolkit.pdf</a></p>		
<b>GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT:</b>		
Generic risk assessment available.		
<b>PROCEDURE:</b>		
<p>This Procedure applies to all Police Officers and Members of Police Staff irrespective of gender, age sexuality, race, religion, culture or disability.</p> <p>All staff must ensure they have read the Domestic Abuse in the workplace handbook.</p> <p>Police personnel reporting Domestic Abuse, will be afforded all the support and protection provided to the general public and must be aware that positive action will apply in relation to the perpetrator where criminal offences are alleged.</p> <p>Safeguarding will always be a priority following any disclosure of domestic abuse for the victim and any other vulnerable person linked.</p> <p><b>Confidentiality</b></p> <p>South Wales Police recognises that there may be police officers or staff who may be</p>		

victims of sexual or domestic abuse who may choose not to report this to their employer. There are confidential reporting mechanisms in place and below are links to [Local & National Support Agencies](#)

Confidentiality will be afforded at every opportunity, subject to the requirements of child and adult protection.

This is intended to manage the risk posed by the perpetrator and not for sharing information on the victim. It should not be necessary to disclose the victim's identity for this purpose, even when seeking general advice from departments such as HR and PPU.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Public Protection Department:

- will publish, maintain and *post a list of resources relating to domestic abuse in locations* of high visibility within the workplace
- See also SWP Domestic Abuse Guidance & Procedure which PPD will update annually
- all staff deployed within the public protection arena must comply with the South Wales Police Policy on [Health and Safety](#) and attend mandatory annual psychological debriefs.
- Utilise a variety of methods of communication to distribute information about the policy to all members of staff which will include weekly order and force information notices, posters, newsletters, articles on BOB and in Corporate Communications Operational Update, Specialist Crime webpages (PVP quicklink).

### Divisional Commanders/Heads of Department:

- Will work in partnership with other agencies or bodies in the statutory or voluntary sector to combat domestic abuse.
- Will promote the safety of all members of staff within the workplace.
- Ensure that those who commit domestic abuse-related offences are not treated as distinct from any other suspect. They must be investigated and held accountable through the criminal justice system in the same way as any other person.

### Managers and Supervisors:

- Offer staff the opportunity to discuss personal issues in confidence which may be affecting their health, performance at work etc.
- Questions about domestic abuse must be asked routinely during a routine return to work interview following a bout of sickness absence. This must be done during an informal or formal sickness absence interview or at informal/formal managing under-performance meetings etc.
- When suspecting, becoming or being made aware of a case of domestic abuse, the manager may wish to seek help and advice from a Human Resources Advisor/HR Manager, Professional Standards Department, Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Unit or Public Protection Unit.

When dealing with any member of staff who is or has experienced domestic abuse, the manager must:

- Take the member of staff seriously, listen and believe what's being said
- Ensure that any discussion with a member of staff about their circumstances, takes place in privacy.
- respect confidentiality as far as possible (see confidentiality section)
- Understand that the member of staff may not wish to discuss any details with their line manager, and may prefer to involve a third party such as a colleague, another officer, trade union representative or outside agency.
- Not put undue pressure on staff to disclose any personal information that they do not feel comfortable sharing.
- Find out what the member of staff wants and whether a manager, another officer or another agency can help them achieve it.
- Be honest about what can be offered.
- Be aware of any additional issues faced by the member of staff, because of their protected characteristics such as age, gender, sexuality, ethnic background or, disability etc.
- Be sensitive and non-judgemental – the member of staff may need some time to decide what to do.
- Be aware of what support is available, and explore these options with the member of staff including any reasonable adjustments that could be made to ensure the safety of the employee.
- Offer support to employees experiencing domestic abuse, and ensure they are aware of options available to them.
- Encourage personnel to seek advice from relevant agencies that provide specialist services.
- Don't assume the staff member will be familiar with the processes simply because they work for the organisation.
- Discuss specific steps that can be taken to help a person stay safe in the work place and at home

**If a Member of Police Personnel is a Perpetrator of Domestic Abuse**

Domestic Abuse is unacceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated by South Wales Police.

South Wales Police will robustly investigate allegations of Domestic Abuse and perpetrators who are found guilty in subsequent criminal and disciplinary proceedings of such offences may face dismissal from the Service.

When considering disciplinary measures it is essential that the safety of the victim and their children is not compromised

South Wales Police will still consider use of disciplinary proceedings against Officers/Staff who are alleged to have committed domestic abuse. In the absence of a criminal conviction, disciplinary proceedings may still take place, with the full range of disciplinary sanctions being available, including dismissal. Risk assessment measures will be reviewed by the line manager, and in conjunction with the Professional Standards Department.

Under no circumstances will line managers conduct mediation between the victim and perpetrator. Line managers must also bear in mind that they are not required to undertake a role of counsellor; this must be left to trained counsellors or domestic abuse experts.

**Human Resources (H.R.) Business Partners:**

- Human Resources will review and update people management policies, procedures and practices that are linked and could affect the implementation of a workplace domestic abuse policy. For example, domestic abuse incidents often increase during pregnancy so maternity related information will include references to domestic violence and signpost support.

Specialist professional advice may be obtained from the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team but it will be the HR Advisor within the division or department who will provide general advice, help and support to managers. **Occupational Health, Safety and**

**Wellbeing Team:**

- Provide advice on this procedure.
- Advise on risk assessment, where requested by managers.
- Review this procedure as per the review schedule and/or in the light of any relevant changes e.g. change in legislation, reported incidents.
- Utilise a variety of methods of communication to distribute information about the policy to all members of staff which will include weekly order and force information notices, posters, newsletters, articles on BOB and in Corporate Communications Operational Update, Health and Safety and Health and Wellbeing web pages.

**Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team: Counselling and Trauma Services:**

- To provide confidential support and counselling for individuals.
- To advise managers on available support.

**Learning & Development Services:**

- Provide relevant training on domestic abuse at induction to Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers.
- Provide training to managers in identifying domestic abuse and recognising its effects on staff, relevant to the member of staff's working environment.
- Provide scenario based training within the Leadership and People course and the Leadership Pathway together with blended awareness raising tools like "Know-how TV" and NCALT based learning will be used to promote key messages.
- Provide identified refresher training (as above)

**Professional Standards Department:**

- Investigate and hold accountable through the criminal justice system, any South Wales personnel who perpetrate domestic abuse.
- Keep the reporting person fully informed of the progress of any (internal) investigations and (updated on any) misconduct process, where applicable.

**Corporate Communications:**

- Will make available information on domestic abuse and resources through the intranet and how members of staff may obtain this information and resources without having to request it or be seen removing it, such as employee restrooms or lounge areas. Information will include available resources of assistance such as the independent Staff Helpline, CARE FIRST, local domestic abuse service providers, and personnel who are trained and available to serve as sources of information, support and referral. Information shall be made available on electronic bulletin

boards and included in newsletters and briefings.

- Through a relevant communications strategy all police officers and police staff must be given basic information about the nature and prevalence of domestic abuse and the steps that they need to take to provide information, support disclosure and prevent further abuse.

**All Staff:**

- Must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions and co-operate by making full and proper use of any systems of work provided. This includes:
- Follow safe systems of work (including any information, instruction and training) developed to reduce the risk of injury from violence
- Conduct a dynamic risk assessment of a situation as it arises
- Report incidents, in line with this policy

Where staff work in environments not directly controlled by South Wales Police there is an added emphasis to take special care of their own health and safety and that of others.

**LEGISLATION & REGULATION:**

- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.
- [A change to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 : introduction of two new specific offences of stalking \( Home Office Guidance\)](#)