



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE GUIDANCE

(Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Statutory Guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1089015/Domestic_Abuse_Act_2021_Statutory_Guidance.pdf

Introduction

This guidance aims to provide the framework of a consistent and effective response to tackling domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is a serious crime that has a major impact on the victim and potentially on all the members of the family, including extended family. It has long lasting effects on the mental and physical health of all victims including children and adults who reside in households where domestic abuse occurs.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), The Care Act (2014) and the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) provide the legal requirements in relation to domestic abuse. The Care Act (2014), Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) and the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) recognise domestic abuse as a type of abuse for adults at risk and places a duty on professionals to report domestic abuse as a crime as well as safeguarding the adult at risk. Although domestic abuse is most commonly thought of as violence between intimate partners, this guidance acknowledges that domestic abuse can affect men, women, those in same sex relationships and by young people towards other family members, as well as the abuse of older people in families. Domestic abuse occurs irrespective of age, social class, racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, or sexual relationships or identity.

Domestic abuse and safeguarding overlap and it is important that connections are made between both as understanding the definitions of each will inform how the victim is supported.

What are the mental health impacts of domestic abuse?

Not all adults with mental health issues will suffer from domestic abuse, however adults with mental health issues are considered more vulnerable to domestic abuse and require multi agency support to safeguard them from further harm.

Definition of domestic abuse

The official Government definition of domestic abuse is:

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other, and
- (b) the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

- (a) physical or sexual abuse
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour

- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour
- (d) economic abuse
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to —

- (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- (b) obtain goods or services.

For the purposes of this Act, A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child)

Types of Domestic Abuse

Intimate partner abuse

Domestic abuse most commonly takes place in intimate partner relationships, including same sex relationships. 15 Intimate relationships can take different forms, partners do not need to be married or in a civil partnership and abuse can occur between non-cohabiting intimate partners. As with all forms of abuse, abuse in intimate relationships can vary in severity and frequency, ranging from a one-off occurrence to a continued pattern of behaviour.

Teenage relationship abuse

Young people can experience domestic abuse within their relationships. Teenagers may not self-identify as victims. They may perceive their relationships to be ‘casual’, for example engaging in multiple romantic and sexual partners through dating apps. Those who engage in abusive behaviour may seek to minimise or deny the abuse by stating that they were not in a relationship. 23. Teenage relationship abuse is not a term that is defined by the 2021 Act, or elsewhere in law. However, if the victim and perpetrator are at least 16 years old, abuse in their relationship can fall under the statutory definition of domestic abuse.

Due to the stigma attached to LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) identities, young people from the LGBT community may lack relevant and accurate information on healthy relationships, which may inform behaviour and decision making. LGBT young people may face unique obstacles to seeking help, especially in a context of a first relationship or when first coming out as they may be unable to confide in their peers or family, owing to the reaction they might receive due to their sexuality or gender identity.

Abuse by family members

Domestic abuse may also be perpetrated by a family member: by children, grandchildren, parents, those with “parental responsibility”, siblings, or extended families including in-laws. Abuse within a family set up can encompass a number of different harmful behaviours. Abuse may be perpetrated as a perceived means to protect or defend the ‘honour’ of an individual, family or community against alleged or perceived breaches of the family or community’s code of behaviour. It can therefore include ‘honour’-based abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and other harmful practices such as reproductive coercion.

Young people may be at an increased risk of abuse perpetrated by family members. Young people may be inherently more vulnerable because it is harder for them to distinguish between normal and abusive behaviours, and this may especially be the case where the perpetrator is a trusted family member. A young person may find it more difficult to report or disclose abuse by an adult.

Child to parent abuse

Abuse within the family includes child-to-parent abuse, also commonly referred to as Adolescent to Parent Violence/Abuse (APV/A) and Child and Adolescent to Parental Violence and Abuse (CAPVA). Child-to-parent abuse can involve children of all ages, including adult children, and abuse toward siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles as well as other family members such as those acting as kinship

carers. If the child is 16 years of age or over, the abuse falls under the statutory definition of domestic abuse in the 2021 Act.

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, escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Recognising Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours. It can but does not have to involve physical acts of violence and can include threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, psychological, sexual and/or economic abuse. Domestic abuse can involve abuse facilitated and perpetrated online or offline.

Physical abuse, violent or threatening behaviour

Physical abuse and violent or threatening behaviour can involve but is not limited to:

- Being, or threatened to be, kicked, punched, pinched, pushed, dragged, shoved, slapped, scratched, strangled, spat on and bitten.
- Use, or threats of use, of weapons including knives and irons.
- Being, or threatened to be, burned, scalded, poisoned, or drowned.
- Objects being thrown at or in the direction of the victim.
- Violence, or threats of physical abuse or violence, against family members.
- Causing harm by damaging or denying access to medical aids or equipment – for example a deaf person may be prevented from communicating in sign language or may have their hearing aids removed and
- Harming someone whilst performing ‘caring’ duties, which are often performed by relatives. This is especially relevant for individuals who are heavily dependent on others, such as disabled and older people and may involve force feeding, over-medication, withdrawal of medicine or denying access to medical care.
- Use of not-fatal strangulation. Non-fatal strangulation can be used as a form of assault in domestic abuse and a history of strangulation can increase the risk of an eventual fatality.

Sexual Abuse

Victims of domestic abuse may experience behaviour that is sexually abusive. This abuse can involve:

- Rape and sexual assaults;
- Being pressured into sex, or sexual acts, including with other people;
- Being forced to take part in sexual acts because of threats to others, including children; • Unwanted sexual contact or demands;
- ‘Corrective’ rape (the practice of raping someone with the aim of ‘curing’ them of being LGBT);
- Intentional exposure to HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) or sexually transmitted infections;
- Being pressurised or being tricked into having unsafe sex, including deception over the use of birth control;
- Forced involvement in making or watching pornography; and
- Hurting a victim during sex including non-fatal strangulation.

Controlling or Coercive behaviour

This 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. Some examples include:

- Victims are made to account for their time, or have restrictions on access to money and/or their movements
- Preventing victim from accessing medication or accessing care (especially relevant for those with disabilities)

- Threats of suicide/homicide/familicide
- Using children to control partner
- Constant criticism of victim's role as a partner, spouse or parent

Harassment or Stalking

There is no statutory definition of harassment, but it includes repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a victim, in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear. It is generally acknowledged that harassment involves behaviour that is intended to cause a person alarm or distress or to cause them to fear violence when the perpetrator knows or ought to know that their conduct amounts to harassment.

Similarly, there is no statutory definition of stalking. Examples of the type of behaviour considered are:

- Following a person.
- Contacting, or attempting to contact, a person by any means.
- Publishing any statement or other material — relating or purporting to relate to a person, or purporting to originate from a person.
- Monitoring the use by a person of the internet, email, or any other form of electronic communication;
- Loitering in any place (whether public or private).
- Interfering with any property in the possession of a person; and
- Watching or spying on a person.

Economic Abuse

Economic abuse refers to behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect³⁵ on an individual's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or to obtain goods or services. ³⁶ This can include an individual's ability to acquire food or clothes, or access transportation or utilities. These behaviours can include an attempt to control through restriction, exploitation and/or sabotage.

The impact of domestic abuse.

Emotional or psychological abuse

Domestic abuse often involves emotional or psychological abuse. Some of these behaviours will also be controlling or coercive behaviour. Emotional or psychological abuse can include:

- Manipulating a person's anxieties or beliefs or abusing a position of trust.
- Hostile behaviours or silent treatment as part of a pattern of behaviour to make the victim feel fearful.
- Being insulted, including in front of others. This includes insulting someone about their race, sex or gender identity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, disability, age, faith or belief or undermining an individual's ability to parent or ability to work.
- Repeatedly being belittled.
- Keeping a victim awake/preventing them from sleeping.
- Using violence or threats towards assistance dogs and pets to intimidate the victim and cause distress, including threatening to harm the animal as well as controlling how the owner is able to care for the animal.
- Threatening to harm third parties (for example family, friends or colleagues).
- Using social media sites to intimidate the victim; and
- Persuading a victim to doubt their own sanity or mind (including 'gaslighting').

Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse may amount to emotional or psychological abuse, threatening behaviour, or controlling or coercive behaviour.

Technology-facilitated abuse

Perpetrators can use technology, including social media to abuse victims. Some examples of technology-facilitated abuse include:

- Placing false or malicious information about a victim on their or others' social media.
- Setting up false social media accounts in the name of the victim.
- 'Trolling' with abusive, offensive or deliberately provocative messages via social media platforms or online forums.
- Image-based abuse – for example, the creation of false/digitally altered images and the non-consensual distribution, or threat thereof, of private sexual photographs and films with the intent to cause the person depicted distress ('revenge porn').
- 'Upskirting' which involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge.

Abuse relating to faith

Whilst an individual's faith can be a source of support and comfort to victims, domestic abuse can occur in relation to it, and through using, manipulating, or exploiting it. This abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on victims.

'Honour'-based abuse

'Honour'-based abuse⁴⁵ is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of the family and/or community, or in response to individuals trying to break away from constraining 'norms' of behaviour that their family or community is trying to impose.

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage typically occurs in the context of 'honour'-based abuse, and involves the use of violence, threats or any other form of coercion against a person with the intention or belief that the conduct may cause a person to enter into a marriage without consent. This includes non-binding traditional, or unofficial marriages. Forced marriage is recognised as a form of domestic abuse - if carried out by someone with a personal connection to the victim and where both parties are at least 16 years old.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a form of violence against women and girls which is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality. It typically occurs within the context of 'honour'-based abuse. As FGM is generally inflicted upon children, the Government considers it to be a type of child abuse. However, it is also carried out on women for a variety of reasons such as giving a woman social acceptance before marriage or ensuring her chastity. Whilst FGM may be an isolated incident of abuse within a family, it can be associated with other behaviours that discriminate against, limit or harm women and girls. These may include other forms of 'honour'-based abuse and domestic abuse. A Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order (FGMPO) is a civil order which may be made for the purposes of protecting a girl or woman against the commission of an FGM offence – that is, protecting against the risk of FGM or providing protection where an FGM offence has been committed

Domestic abuse and safeguarding adults

Under Section 14.7 of the Care Act 2014 (amended 2016) adult safeguarding 'means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect' safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) **and**;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; **and**

- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014³ specifies that freedom from abuse and neglect is a key aspect of a person's wellbeing. The Care Act outlines that abuse can take many forms:

- Domestic abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Organisational

People with Learning Disabilities

Research indicates that adults with learning disabilities are more likely to experience domestic abuse than the general population but less likely to report it. Capacity of those with learning disabilities to make informed choices particularly in relation to arranged/forced marriage should be considered, and the appropriate support services must be considered for this group.

Adults who are vulnerable who perpetrate domestic abuse

Harm may be intentional or unintentional and it is important to recognise that adults who may be considered vulnerable can also be perpetrators of domestic abuse and this can often go unrecognised or hidden by family or professionals alike. If the abuse is linked to the person's condition such as dementia or mental illness this does not mean the abuse be minimised or tolerated, it is therefore crucial to identify and manage the risks posed to the victim and others.

Mental capacity, safeguarding and domestic abuse

Some victims of domestic abuse may lack capacity to make certain decisions for themselves and they will require additional support to empower them within a legal framework.

The purpose of the MCA is to protect a person's right to make their own decision and a range of safeguarding and legal approaches can be used to support those experiencing domestic abuse. The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 has five key principles designed to support and protect the person which must be applied.

- Capacity must be presumed unless it can be proven otherwise
- People should be given full support to make their own decision
- If a person makes a decision that you consider unwise this does not necessarily mean the person lacks the capacity to make the decision in question
- Anything done for, or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done in their best interest
- If doubt remains about a person's ability to make a decision a formal capacity assessment may be necessary

A principle under the Act is an adult has full capacity if they have access to all the relevant information and have a full understanding about the decision they are making - they may still make a decision that professionals see as unwise – such as staying with a perpetrator of domestic abuse – we still need to offer support as part of our duty of care or implement protection measures to keep that person safe (see MARAC & Domestic Violence Protection Orders). An apparently unwise decision may be the result of coercion and controlling behaviour.

The Care Act mandates the use of advocates for anyone who has difficulties making decisions. Specialist advocates such as IDVA's for domestic abuse and IMCA's for capacity are additional resources and assist in ensuring the duty to the person that they have access to all the relevant information about the decision they are making.

If there are children in the household safeguarding children procedures will apply and a referral MUST be made to Childrens Social Care via MASH.

If the adult is at high risk of serious injury or death contact 999

A safeguarding referral can be made in the public interest without the victim's consent for adults with care and support needs.

Safe enquiries

Safe enquiries (about domestic abuse) are the cornerstone of good practice, research shows incidence of violence and levels of harm increase when the perpetrator's control is challenged therefore the perpetrator must not be aware of the enquiry or any plans to support the victim.

Principles of safe enquiry include taking protective measures to ensure that any discussions are conducted in a safe manner and safety planning is routinely completed.

Assessing risk at the point of disclosure assists in appropriate interventions and risk management. Assessing risk is about justifiable and defensible decision making and is not taken in isolation as risk can be dynamic in domestic abuse situations.

Victims of domestic abuse may be reluctant to disclose what is happening to them and repeated enquiries also increase the likelihood of disclosure. Even if the victim does not disclose domestic abuse, they should still be routinely offered information. Remember victims of any age will minimise the abuse and the impact on them due to the controlling and coercive control of the perpetrator.

Identify

Who is most at risk - domestic abuse can affect anyone but things you may notice include:

- Injures without adequate explanation
- Someone who appears passive and dominated by their partner
- A partner not allowing you to speak alone to the person you are seeing/visiting
- Anxiety, depression or being withdrawn especially if not previously known

Best practice for undertaking routine/safe enquiry

- Always ensure you are alone with the person before enquiring into possible abuse - never ask in front of a partner, friend or child
- Make sure that you can't be interrupted, and that you – and the person – have sufficient time to talk
- Only use professional interpreters
- Do not pursue an enquiry if the person lacks capacity to consent to the interview unless you have already arranged an advocate
- Document the person's response (but not in client/patient held records or organisational systems to which the perpetrator may have access?)
- Safeguarding plan to reduce any risks identified

Asking key questions

- How are things in your relationship?
- Is anybody hurting you (don't say partner as it could be someone else)?
- Are you or your children scared or upset?
- Do you feel safe in your home?

Asking additional direct questions to adults with care and support needs

- Has anyone prevented you from getting, food, clothes, medication, glasses, hearing aids or medical care?

- Has anyone prevented you from being with the people you want to be with?
- Has anyone tried to force you to sign papers against your will?
- Have you been upset because someone talked to you in a way that made you feel ashamed or threatened?
- Has anyone taken money belonging to you?

When abuse is disclosed or identified – Making Safeguarding Personal

Staff working within college follow the safeguarding procedures and will consult with a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in the first instance. The DSL will proceed with any relevant enquiries and contact external agencies where appropriate.

‘Easy Read Risk and Intervention Guidance’ – (see Appendix 1 - LASGB guidance)

- You must follow local procedures for assessment, referral and safety planning, also remember MCA principles.
- Deal with any immediate needs the person may have.
- Families where there are children and young people present – you must seek advice/refer to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Complete the Safe Lives DASH risk checklist (appendix 2) with the victim (if your role allows for this), the perpetrator must not be present. What risks are identified?
- Does this identify that the adult or another adult is at risk of serious harm, for example threats to kill – contact the adult safeguarding team for advice and raise a safeguarding concern immediately.
- If no high risks present, consider holistic support options such as signposting and referring the victim to domestic abuse support services as appropriate – considering MCA and MSP guidelines. If they refuse support ensure adequate safety planning to include they can call 999, domestic abuse services or other support services
- Explain the limits of confidentiality – especially when the adult is identified as at high risk of abuse and a safeguarding alert must be completed.

All disclosures must be taken seriously, and practitioners must ensure responses do not endanger the victim further or that of a child or other adults at risk in the home.

You must realise that domestic abuse may be minimised and the risk factors due to this may seem less than they really are.

Consideration of barriers to effective risk management

- Lacking depth of understanding about the nature of domestic abuse such as why it occurs and why victims remain with perpetrators.
- Not being aware of or using the risk assessment tools available which can help identify the level of risk posed and inform victims what factors are placing them at high risk.
- Challenging perpetrators on their behaviour without fully gauging how this can increase the risk for the victim.
- Not asking the victim, other adults at risk or children/young people how the family situation is impacting on them.
- Not involving the adult at risk in all stages of risk assessment and management.
- Unintended collusion with the perpetrator.
- Not undertaking in depth assessments that take full account of static risk factors (where it is part of your professional role.)
- Not recognising or responding to additional key risks posed to BME domestic abuse victims.
- Not increasing support and protection at times of increased risk.

- Not being aware of thresholds for parallel processes e.g. MARAC, Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
- Not having a common understanding of risk factors in domestic abuse cases and the confidence to use professional judgement.
- Not ensuring safe contact arrangements are in place for children.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Referral to the MARAC

A MARAC meeting is where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, probation, health, children and adult safeguarding, housing, substance misuse services, independent violence advocates (IDVAs) and other specialist statutory and voluntary sectors.

If a practitioner identifies that an individual they are, or have been working with, is a victim of domestic abuse they should complete a Dash risk identification checklist with the individual. Where an individual is assessed as being at high risk, the completed Dash checklist should be forwarded to the MARAC Coordinator and domestic abuse support services and discuss any immediate safety actions with the Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVAs).

If a professional has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should use their professional judgement to decide whether to refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly.

MARAC Action Plans and 3rd Party Information

After the meeting the MARAC administrator sends an action plan to attendees.

The representative will communicate the agreed actions to professionals as required and request confirmation of when the actions are complete and update the administrator accordingly.

Information should not be routinely shared or disclosed outside formal protocols and only with due regard to data protection guidance.

Domestic abuse, support and legal action

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is an approach that involves an adult at risk of abuse being supported to make decisions about their safety planning outcomes that will keep them safe particularly if they wish to remain with the perpetrator. They need to be informed of the risks and benefits of those options and how they would reduce the risk to prevent serious harm.

There are specialist support services available and any victim of domestic abuse should be given information about these support services regardless of their assessed level of risk but adults with care and support needs may need assistance to do so and /or an intermediary to help them navigate the services.

The support services for those with care and support needs may assist in protecting someone from abuse such as telecare monitoring systems or visits by care workers. Any services used as part of a safety plan must be specified and those services must be informed.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)

IDVAs are independent trained advisors who give specialist practical and emotional support to victims of domestic abuse. This includes support when the victim is subject to a MARAC referral and through the legal system including support to attend court.

This can include sanctuary schemes, refuge or safe house accommodation as well as being a valuable source of information and advice not only for victims but for professionals as well.

Under the Care Act if an adult with care and support needs has an existing support plan and moves into a new authority area this should be continued by the new local authority until they have carried out an assessment. Where the second local authority has been notified of the adult with care and support needs intends to move to their area, they must provide information and start an assessment of needs. For more information <https://safelives.org.uk/what-is-an-idva>

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ('Clare's Law')

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) (also known as 'Clare's Law') commenced in England and Wales on 8th March 2014. The DVDS gives members of the public a formal mechanism to make enquires about an individual who they are in a relationship with, or who is in a relationship with someone they know, where there is a concern that the individual may be violent towards their partner. This scheme adds a further dimension to the information sharing about children where there are concerns that domestic violence and abuse is impacting on the care and welfare of the children in the family.

Members of the public can make an application for a disclosure, known as the 'right to ask'. Anybody can make an enquiry, but information will only be given to someone at risk or a person in a position to safeguard the victim. The scheme is for anyone in an intimate relationship regardless of gender.

Partner agencies can also request disclosure is made of an offender's past history where it is believed someone is at risk of harm. This is known as 'right to know'.

If a potentially violent individual is identified as having convictions for violent offences, or information is held about their behaviour which reasonably leads the police and other agencies to believe they pose a risk of harm to their partner, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so.

To make a request under Clare's Law, you can do so by calling the police on 101 or [visit your local police station](#).

Criminal Law

There are a number of legal remedies for victims of domestic violence and abuse, including occupation orders, non-molestation orders, restraining orders and, DVPOs.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs)

These provide protection to victims by enabling the police and magistrates to put in place protection in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident.

With DVPOs, a perpetrator can be banned with immediate effect from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim time to consider their options and get the support they need.

Restraining orders

These can be obtained at court in relation to a criminal case whether the case is upheld or not. This is to protect the victim from harassment or conduct by the perpetrator that puts the victim in fear of violence. The order imposes specific restrictions such as exclusion from a specific area or contact with the victim or their family. However, it is preventative and not punitive but it is a crime to breach the restraining order and the perpetrator can be arrested and charged.

Non molestation orders

This is a type of injunction which prohibits the perpetrator or abuser from intimidating, pestering or harassing the victim or children who live with the victim. Physical abuse does not need to have occurred in order to obtain this order and if breached this again is a criminal offence.

Occupation Orders

This is similar to an injunction and establishes who has a right to stay in the home and can order an abuser to move out of the home or keep a certain distance from the home.

Other information on orders can be obtained from:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1089015/Domestic_Abuse_Act_2021_Statutory_Guidance.pdf

How to get help

Below are the contact details of where to get help, advice and support if you, or someone you know, is experiencing domestic abuse.

Police - if you are in fear of being assaulted/you identify an adult at risk of significant harm and requiring immediate protection contact the police on 999.

- Public Protection Unit 01254 353511
- General Enquiries 101

Children and young people

- Childline 0800 1111
- NSPCC 0800 800 500

Adult Safeguarding

- Adult Safeguarding Team 01254 585949 (Monday - Friday, 9am to 5pm) or 01254 587547 (evenings and weekends)
- Lancashire Women's centre - <https://lancashirewomen.org/>
- Emily Davison Centre (free multilingual & confidential helpline) 0330 134 34 34
- Women can call [The Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge](#) on 0808 2000 247 for free at any time, day or night.
- Men can call Men's Advice Line on 0808 8010 327 (Monday to Friday 10am to 8pm) or visit the webchat at [Men's Advice Line](#) (Wednesday 10am to 11.30am and 2.30pm to 4pm)
- If you identify as LGBT+ you can call [Galop](#) on 0800 999 5428 for emotional and practical support
- anyone can call [Karma Nirvana](#) on 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) for forced marriage and honour crimes. You can also call 020 7008 0151 to speak to the [GOV.UK Forced Marriage Unit](#)
- If you are worried that you are abusive, you can contact the free [Respect helpline](#) on 0808 802 4040.

Appendix 1 Easy Read Risk and Intervention Guidance

DOMESTIC ABUSE Can include (but not limited to): physical, sexual, financial, psychological, stalking, coercion and controlling behaviour, honour based abuse/violence, female genital mutilation		
No harm - low risk Not SAFEGUARDING	Possible or some harm - medium risk Possibly SAFEGUARDING	Harm caused - high risk SAFEGUARDING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure or Isolated report of abuse-low level threat • Adult has capacity and no vulnerabilities identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing report/incidents of domestic abuse • Adult is not accessing support services but adequate protective factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult is subjected to controlling/coercive behaviour (this can transverse care givers) e.g. financial/locked in property/withholding of medical treatment/deliberately isolated • Frequent reports of assaults or reports of violent e.g. physical, sexual, rape and FGM • Adult is subjected to stalking/harassment • Adult is assessed as not having capacity • Threats to kill • Honour Based Abuse and/or Forced Marriage
Actions to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If children present, always make a referral to MASH 01254 666400 • Seek advice and support from adult social care, report to police and/or seek advice via 101 or 999 if an emergency. • Refer to Domestic Abuse Services for early intervention and support. • Ensure own internal domestic abuse policy is up to date. • Consider relevance of Clare’s law https://www.lancashire.police.uk/about-us/accessing-information/domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law/ • Ensure staff training to increase awareness of the nature, patterns and complexity of domestic abuse. 		Refer to Adult Safeguarding Team and Domestic Abuse Services Safe Lives DASH - high risk – Referral to MARAC

Appendix 2 Safelives Dash Risk Checklist

Aim of the form

- To help front line practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence.
- To decide which cases should be referred to Marac and what other support might be required. A completed form becomes an active record that can be referred to in future for case management.
- To offer a common tool to agencies that are part of the Marac process and provide a shared understanding of risk in relation to domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence.
- To enable agencies to make defensible decisions based on the evidence from extensive research of cases, including domestic homicides and 'near misses', which underpins most recognised models of risk assessment.

How to use the form

Before completing the form for the first time we recommend that you read the full practice guidance and FAQs. These can be downloaded from:

<https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Dash%20risk%20checklist%20quick%20start%20guidance%20FINAL.pdf>

Risk is dynamic and can change very quickly. It is good practice to review the checklist after a new incident.

Recommended referral criteria to Marac

1. **Professional judgement:** if a professional has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should refer the case to Marac. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. ***This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of 'honour'-based violence.*** This judgement would be based on the professional's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk even if they do not meet criteria 2 and/or 3 below.

2. **'Visible High Risk':** the number of 'ticks' on this checklist. If you have ticked 14 or more 'yes' boxes the case would normally meet the Marac referral criteria.

3. **Potential Escalation:** the number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past 12 months.

Please pay particular attention to a practitioner's professional judgement in all cases. The results from a checklist are not a definitive assessment of risk. They should provide you with a structure to inform your judgement and act as prompts to further questioning, analysis and risk management whether via a Marac or in another way. The responsibility for identifying your local referral threshold rests with your local Marac.

What this form is not

This form will provide valuable information about the risks that children are living with but it is not a full risk assessment for children. The presence of children increases the wider risks of domestic violence and stepchildren are particularly at risk. If risk towards children is highlighted you should consider what referral you need to make to obtain a full assessment of the children's situation.

Safelives Dash risk checklist for use by Idvas and other non-police agencies for identification of risks when domestic abuse, 'honour'- based violence and/or stalking are disclosed.

<p>Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned.</p> <p>Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer.</p> <p>It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is not the case, please indicate in the right-hand column</p>	YES	NO	DONT KNOW	State source of info if not the victim (eg police officer)
<p>1. Has the current incident resulted in injury?</p> <p>Please state what and whether this is the first injury.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>2. Are you very frightened?</p> <p>Comment:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence?</p> <p>Please give an indication of what you think [name of abuser(s)] might do and to whom, including children.</p> <p>Comment:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>4. Do you feel isolated from family/friends?</p> <p>ie, does [name of abuser(s)] try to stop you from seeing friends/family/doctor or others?</p> <p>Comment:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>6. Have you separated or tried to separate from [name of abuser(s)] within the past year?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>7. Is there conflict over child contact?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>8. Does [name of abuser(s)] constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you?</p> <p>Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>9. Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

10. Is the abuse happening more often?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Is the abuse getting worse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Does [name of abuser(s)] try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous? For example: in terms of relationships; who you see; being 'policed' at home; telling you what to wear. Consider 'honour'-based violence (HBV) and specify behaviour.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them? If yes, tick who: You <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever attempted to strangle / choke / suffocate / drown you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer.	YES	NO	DONT KNOW	State source of info
16. Does [name of abuser(s)] do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? If someone else, specify who.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of? If yes, please specify whom and why. Consider extended family if HBV.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has hurt anyone else? Consider HBV. Please specify whom, including the children, siblings, or elderly relatives: Children <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Another family member <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from a previous relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)				
19. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on [name of abuser(s)] for money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
21. Has [name of abuser(s)] had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? If yes, please specify which and give relevant details if known. Drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened or attempted suicide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
23. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever broken bail/an injunction and/or formal agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? You may wish to consider this in relation to an ex-partner of the perpetrator if relevant. Bail conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Molestation/Occupation Order <input type="checkbox"/> Child contact arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> Forced Marriage Protection Order <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>				
24. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history? If yes, please specify: Domestic abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Total 'yes' responses				

For consideration by professional

<p>Is there any relevant information? (from victim or professional) which may increase risk levels? Consider victim's situation in relation to disability, substance misuse, mental health issues, cultural /language barriers, 'honour'-based systems, geographic isolation and minimisation. Are they willing to engage with your service? Describe.</p>			
<p>Consider abuser's occupation / interests. Could this give them unique access to weapons? Describe.</p>			
<p>What are the victim's greatest priorities to address their safety?</p>			
<p>Do you believe that there are reasonable grounds for referring this case to MARAC?</p>			
<p>If yes, have you made a referral?</p>			
<p>Signed</p>		<p>Date</p>	
<p>Do you believe that there are risks facing the children in the family?</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>If yes, please confirm if you have made a referral to safeguard the children?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Date referral made</p>	
<p>Signed</p>		<p>Date</p>	
<p>Name</p>			

<p>Practitioner's Notes</p>	
<p></p>	