



APPENDIX

**Broxtowe  
Borough  
COUNCIL**

# **DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY**

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# **DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY**

## **1. Introduction**

The Council recognises that its employees are its most important asset and it is committed to providing the support and assistance necessary to ensure their health, safety and welfare at work. This policy covers the internal and external support available to employees experiencing, or involved in, domestic abuse. Employees who are suffering from domestic abuse are more likely to work inefficiently, be absent from work and have poor productivity levels. In addition, there is a risk both to the employee, other employees and the business if a violent partner or ex-partner presents at the workplace.

For the purposes of this policy, domestic abuse is any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (including stalking) between adults who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members. It applies equally to men and women and covers physical, psychological, emotional, sexual and financial abuse.

## **2. Aims of the Policy**

The aims of this policy are to:

- support employees experiencing domestic abuse and promote their health, safety and welfare at work
- enable employees experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive, efficient and at work
- offer support to employees who both recognise that they are the perpetrators of domestic abuse and want to seek help to address their behaviour
- aid line managers seeking to help employees who are experiencing domestic abuse
- assist colleagues of employees who are experiencing domestic abuse.

## **3. Advice and Counselling**

It is the Council's intention to deal constructively and sympathetically with cases of domestic abuse. In order to support employees, the Council will:

- The employees' Line Manager or Human Resources is the first point of contact for those experiencing, or perpetrating, domestic abuse. The Council's Chief Communities Officer and the Head of Public Protection are the Lead Specialists.
- The Chief Communities Officer will offer information and guidance and

actively encourage employees to seek appropriate external help and support, including assisting with referrals to appropriate authorities and agencies, such as the police, Refuge, Women's Aid and the National Domestic Violence Helpline

- Managers will endeavour to identify employees with possible domestic abuse issues at an early stage
- The Council will raise general workplace awareness of domestic abuse issues.
- Employees who are members of a Trade Union may also receive appropriate support.

#### **4. Line Manager's Role**

Line managers have an important role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help and support. The Council will provide training for managers in handling sensitive issues such as domestic abuse. The role of the line manager in this regard is to:

- identify employees experiencing difficulties as a result of domestic abuse, for example, employees coming to work with unexplained injuries or who appear distressed or show an uncharacteristic deterioration in work performance or have unexplained periods of time off work
- provide initial help and support, including advice on the options available for the employee, but also recognising the limitations of their role in that they are not professional counsellors
- protect confidentiality as far as possible, unless the employee agrees otherwise
- refer the employee to appropriate internal and external sources of further help and support.
- enable the employee to remain productive, efficient and at work
- recognise that the employee may need time to decide what to do and may try a number of options during the process
- discuss measures to prioritise safety at work and ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all employees is protected.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, however, in some instances, disclosure may need to be made to other members of the management team and/or external authorities or agencies in order that appropriate further help and support can be provided to the employee, but this will be subject to prior discussion with the employee and only with their

express agreement.

## **6. Performance and Attendance**

The Council recognises that those experiencing domestic abuse may have difficulties with their performance because of the domestic abuse and/or may need to be absent from work from time to time. It will assist them in this regard by being sensitive in its approach and/or utilising its leaves of absence policy. See the Council's Leave Policy for further guidance.

## **7. Safety at Work**

The Council will protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees at work, including those employees directly or indirectly affected by domestic abuse. This includes situations where the perpetrator of the abuse is harassing the employee at work, for example, turning up at the Council's business premises unannounced, constantly telephoning, e-mailing or texting the employee during the working day or harassing the employee's work colleagues.

Employees need to disclose to the Council that they are at risk from domestic abuse in order to receive this protection and the Council therefore actively encourages employees to make such disclosure. Other employees should also disclose to the Council if they are being harassed by a work colleague's current or former partner or family member.

### **Helpful Contact Numbers**

#### **Refuge**

0808 2000 247 (24-hour helpline)

Advice on dealing with domestic violence.

[www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)

#### **Rape Crisis**

To find your local services phone: **0808 802 9999** (daily, 12pm to 2.30pm and 7pm to 9.30pm)

[www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)

#### **Victim Support**

**0808 168 9111** (24-hour helpline)

<http://www.victimsupport.org>

#### **Childline**

**0800 1111** for Childline for children (24-hour helpline)

**0808 800 5000** for adults concerned about a child (24-hour helpline)

Children's charity dedicated to ending child abuse and child cruelty.

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)