



Broxtowe
Borough
COUNCIL

EMPLOYEE DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

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1.0 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 to anyone who experiences physical, psychological, emotional, sexual and financial abuse or coercion. The Council also recognises that domestic abuse can sometimes also occur outside of the persons described above such as from family friends.

2.0 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.

3.0 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 ensure:

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

Officers and Line Managers and where appropriate actively encourage employees to seek external help and support, including assisting with referrals to appropriate authorities and agencies, such as the Police, Refuge, Women's Aid support organisations and the National Domestic Violence Helpline.

- Managers will endeavour to identify employees with possible domestic abuse issues at an early stage and work with Human Resource and Communities Officers to offer the appropriate help and advice.
- The Council will raise general workplace awareness of domestic abuse issues through maintaining White Ribbon accreditation, working closely with Domestic Abuse support agencies and delivering Domestic Abuse and White Ribbon Campaigns.

Employees who are members of a Trade Union may also receive appropriate support.

4.0 Line Manager's Role

Line managers have an important role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help and support and this is especially important since the introduction of home working. 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
 - who appear distressed
 - show an uncharacteristic deterioration in work performance
 - have unexplained periods of time off work
 - who are receiving numerous calls from a partner or ex-partner
 - who are frequently visited at work by a partner or ex-partner
 - who appear unable to have a separate life outside of their relationship with a partner
 - who appears uncharacteristically timid and appeasing in front of partner or ex-partner
- 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 or there is a risk to children or other employees.
- refer the employee to appropriate internal and external sources of further help and support.
- enable the employee to remain at work.
- remain in closer contact and be more vigilant where there are concerns about employees who are working from home.

- Consider if a return to office working is appropriate in instances where the home environment is an unsafe one.
- 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.

5.0 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.

Where it is assessed there is a safeguarding issue for any children due to Domestic Abuse appropriate safeguarding referrals will be made and information shared in line with current legislation (The Children Act 1989).

Where it is assessed that there is a risk to other employee's appropriate information will be shared with external agencies to protect employees.

6.0 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.

7.0 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.

With the introduction of home working the Council needs to give the health, safety and welfare of employee's additional scrutiny.

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.

8.0 Helpful Contact Numbers

Reporting

Incident	Police	101 (999 Emergency)
Child Safeguarding	MASH	0300 50 80 90

Support Services

Broxtowe Sanctuary Scheme	3492
Broxtowe Women Project	01773 719 111
Equation Men's Helpline	0800 995 6999/0115 960 5556
Forced Marriage Unit	020 7008 0151
IDVA Advocacy Service	01909 533 617
Juno Women's Aid	0808 800 0340
LGBTQ+ Gaylopp	0800 999 5428
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327
Midlands Women's Aid Refuge	0300 302 0033
National Women's Aid	0808 200 0247
Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Service	0115 941 0440
Rape Crisis	0808 500 222
Refuge	0808 2000 247
Resources	https://equation.org.uk/resources/
Support for Professionals	https://equation.org.uk/professionals/
Training	https://equation.org.uk/training/
Victim Care (Domestic Abuse)	0808 168 9111/0800 304 7575

9.0 Document History

Date	Summary of Changes
16/11/2023	Coercion has been added to the description of Domestic Abuse
	Lead specialists now include the Senior Communities Officer – Violence and Domestic Abuse
	Working from home has now been considered as a risk factor following the Council's implementation of Agile Working

	Examples of domestic abuse have been expanded
	Confidentiality protection exemptions have been expanded to include the risk to children or other employees
	Additional safeguarding concerns relating to children have been outlined and referenced to current legislation
	Appropriate information will be shared with external agencies to protect employees
	Helpful contact numbers have been refreshed and updated

REFERENCE