

Domestic Abuse Policy & Procedure

1. Policy Statement

HPLC is committed to promoting the safety, dignity, and well-being of all residents. Domestic abuse is a serious crime and a violation of human rights. We recognise that domestic abuse can affect anyone and take various forms. This policy sets out our approach to preventing, identifying, and responding to domestic abuse within our sheltered schemes.



2. Definition

In line with the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**, domestic abuse is defined as:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Physical abuse
- Emotional/psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial/economic abuse
- Coercive control
- Digital/online abuse
- Honour-based abuse, including forced marriage and FGM



3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All residents living in the sheltered housing scheme
- Staff, volunteers, and contractors operating within the scheme
- Visitors and third-party agencies

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4. Aims and Objectives

- Provide a safe, supportive environment for all residents
- Respond sensitively and effectively to disclosures of abuse
- Ensure staff are trained to identify signs of abuse and respond appropriately
- Work in partnership with local services (e.g. police, social services, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC))
- Maintain confidentiality while prioritising safety and safeguarding

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Chief Executive / Head of Operations**

- Lead on implementing this policy
- Ensure staff receive relevant domestic abuse training
- Liaise with external agencies

- **Staff:**

- Report concerns to the Head of Operations
- Treat all reports sensitively and without judgment
- Advise the person experiencing the abuse that information imparted by them will need to be shared with the Head of Operations
- Record all incidents securely and accurately



6. Training

All staff who have contact with residents will receive:

- Domestic abuse awareness training
- Safeguarding Adults training



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7. Procedure Checklist

- ☐ **Ensure Immediate Safety:**
 - ☐ Assess whether the individual is in immediate danger.
 - ☐ If necessary, contact emergency services (police, medical assistance).
 - ☐ Advise the individual that you are required to notify the Head of Operations or Chief Executive to ensure safeguarding.
 - ☐ Contact the Head of Operations or Chief Executive **immediately**.
- ☐ **Visit the Individual Who Has Been Abused (Interview Separately):**
 - ☐ **Assess Needs and Risks**
 - ☐ Identify urgent needs: medical care, safe housing, legal assistance.
 - ☐ Evaluate potential risks, including threats from the perpetrator.
 - ☐ Note any injuries or immediate threats for legal purposes.
 - ☐ **Provide Information and Support**
 - ☐ Share details of local domestic abuse services and helplines.
 - ☐ Offer guidance on financial and housing support options.
 - ☐ Where appropriate, refer to adult safeguarding and/or MARAC.
 - ☐ **Develop a Safety Plan**
 - ☐ Help create an emergency escape plan if needed.
 - ☐ Advise on securing important documents (ID, bank details, medical records).
 - ☐ Discuss digital security, such as changing passwords and securing devices.
 - ☐ Document Discussion and Action Plan

8. Useful Contacts

- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247
- Local Authority Safeguarding Team: [Insert details]
- Police (non-emergency): 101 / In emergency: 999
- Respect (for male victims and perpetrators): 0808 802 4040
- Birmingham Domestic Abuse Hub: 0808 8000 028

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Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality must be maintained unless there is a risk of serious harm to the individual or others. Information may be shared with safeguarding partners in accordance with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **Working Together to Safeguard Adults** guidance.

