

	Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme
Protective Marking	Official
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Title	Policy on Investigation of Domestic Abuse
Version	1.0
Summary	This policy outlines MPS standards and responsibilities for the investigation of domestic abuse
(B)OCU or Unit, Directorate	Domestic Abuse Investigation
Author	Domestic Abuse Investigation
Review Date	11/08/2022
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Title:	Policy on the Investigation of Domestic Abuse				
Summary:	This policy outlines MPS standards and responsibilities for the investigation of domestic abuse				
Branch / OCU:	Child Abuse				
Date created:	11/08/2021	Review date:	August 2022	Version:	1.0
Author:	DS Viran Wiltshire				

Application

When? This Policy applies with immediate effect.

Who? All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) or the Commissioner must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) policy and associated procedures.

This Policy applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles: (This list is not intended to be exhaustive.)

- Borough Command Unit (OCU) Commanders
- Public Protection Units
- Police officers and staff investigating domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based abuse and / or forced marriages.
- Homicide and Serious Crime
- Trafficking and Kidnap
- BCU Response Officers & Reactive Investigation Teams
- Community Safety
- Multi Agency Safeguarding
- Offender Management
- Neighbourhood Policing
- Crime Management Services
- Forensic practitioners
- Met Training
- Communications Staff
- Met Intelligence Services

What? This policy is intended to apply to the investigation of Domestic Abuse. For the purposes of the policy, Domestic abuse, or domestic violence, is defined across Government as any incident 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 their gender or sexuality.

It also applies to the application of the legislative requirements and expectations of the police to safeguard and promote the safety of victims and children that are set out in Home Office guidance.

Policy Principles

The MPS requires all officers and staff to follow the guidelines set in this policy, when investigating cases of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based violence and/or forced marriage.

This policy recognises that domestic abuse cuts across all protected characteristics. Domestic abuse is not necessarily a physical act. It can take many forms including coercive control, domestic rape and other serious sexual offences.

Police responsibility is underpinned by two key principles as specified in 'Working Together to Make London Safe':

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part
- Domestic abuse is rarely a one-off incident and is the cumulative and interlinked types of abuse that have a particularly damaging effect on the victim. .

Specific police roles as set out in the guidance are:

- Investigation of alleged offences;
- Inter-agency working and information-sharing
- The use of emergency powers to protect victims and children.

The police have a duty to safeguard the public. When an allegation of domestic abuse comes to police attention, the presumption should always be to investigate. Strategic partnerships and public confidence will be essential to achieving these goals

All MPS personnel will work together with colleagues, adult's social care, children's social care, the Crown and any other relevant person or agency to ensure the safeguarding of victims against all forms of abuse taking:

- Effective action against offenders so they can be held accountable through the justice system
- Effective safeguarding measures to keep the public safe
- Effective measures to share and identify information with in the MPS and with partner agencies to reduce the risk of domestic abuse

Purpose and Benefits

This policy establishes clear guidelines and accountability for the investigation of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based violence and/or forced marriage.

The aims of the policy are to:

- Prevent and detect crimes of domestic abuse and by working in partnership with other agencies;
- Hold perpetrators of domestic abuse accountable for their actions; and stop the abuse
- Ensure the safety of victims and any children experiencing domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based violence and/or forced marriage.

Health and Safety Impact Statement

This policy is to be accompanied by the current Health and Safety Policy in ensuring all employees comply with health and safety policies and procedures, engaging with the Safety and Health Risk Management Team (SHRMT) at an early stage where necessary to comply with the requirements of relevant statutory requirements and codes of practice.

Associated Documents and Policies

Other relevant Toolkits:

- Critical Incidents
- Family Liaison
- Rape and serious Sexual Assault
- Child Abuse
- Forced Marriage
- Honour Based Violence
- Information Sharing
- General Investigation
- Investigative Interviewing
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Records Management
- Victims Code of Practice
- Vulnerability and Protection of adults at Risk

Other relevant documents:

- MPS Exhibits and Property Manual
- HM Government Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings
- College Of Policing Authorised Professional Practice
- National Crime Recording Standards
- CPS Domestic Abuse Best Practice Framework