



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme	
Protective Marking	Official
Publication Scheme Y/N	Yes
Title	MPS Domestic Abuse Employee Policy Statement and Equality Impact Assessment
Version	1.1
Summary	Establishes clear guidelines and accountability for the investigation of domestic abuse: Officers/staff victims or suspected of domestic abuse, rape or other serious sexual offences
(B)OCU or Unit, Directorate	Territorial Policing – Continuous Policing Improvement Command
Author	TP Continuous Policing Improvement Command
Review Date	November 2023
Date Issued	13 th November 2019

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Branch / OCU:	Territorial Policing – Continuous Policing Improvement Command				
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Author:	Viran Wiltshire - TP Continuous Policing Improvement Command				

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.)

- Police officer and police staff supervisors
- Crime Management Units
- Intelligence Units
- Safeguarding Units
- Forensic Services
- Court Police Liaison Officers
- Criminal Justice Units
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- Borough Senior Leadership Teams
- Police officers and staff investigating domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour based abuse and / or forced marriages.

Policy Principles

This applies to all members of staff irrespective of gender, age, sexuality, race, religion, culture or disability. The MPS recognises that every member of staff who is experiencing or has experienced domestic abuse has the right to raise and discuss the issue with their manager, colleagues and/or other departments e.g. staff associations, course trainers. Members of staff can expect support and advice, in the knowledge that the matter will be dealt with in an empathetic, non-judgmental, confidential and effective manner.

The MPS will robustly investigate allegations of domestic abuse and anyone found guilty in subsequent criminal and disciplinary proceedings of such offences may be dismissed from the service.

Although confidentiality cannot be assured for staff who disclose they are a suspect of domestic abuse, disclosures will be treated with respect and only appropriate parties informed in a discreet manner.

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. Therefore, it is likely that this comprehensive definition will influence the future reporting and recording of domestic abuse incidents amongst our employees.

The MPS requires all staff to follow the guidelines set in this policy when investigating cases of domestic abuse whereby officers/staff are victims or suspects of domestic abuse, domestic rape or other serious sexual offences.

When dealing with such incidents, officers and staff must:

- Follow the guidance on dealing with victims and witnesses, including children;
- Ensure the protection and safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children by assessing all persons in line with the Vulnerability Assessment Framework
- Manage any risks to the safety of the victim;
- Where powers/grounds exist, ensure the suspect (s) are arrested;
- Ensure all relevant intelligence, including officer safety issues, are recorded.

Purpose and Benefits

This policy establishes clear guidelines and accountability for the investigation of domestic abuse where staff are victims or suspects of domestic abuse, domestic rape or other serious sexual offences.

MPS has a 'zero tolerance' position on domestic abuse and is committed to ensuring that any employee who is the victim of domestic abuse has the right to raise the issue with their employer in the knowledge that they will receive appropriate support and assistance. This policy also includes a series of actions to be taken where an employee is or may be a suspect of a domestic abuse incident.

By developing an effective domestic abuse policy and working to reduce the risks related to domestic abuse, we aim to create a safer workplace and this will send out a strong message that domestic abuse is unacceptable.

The aims of the policy are to:

- Prevent and detect crimes of domestic abuse and by working in partnership with other agencies;
- Hold suspects of domestic abuse accountable for their actions;
- Ensure the safety of victims and any children experiencing domestic abuse.

Health and Safety Impact Statement

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992), MPS recognises its legal responsibilities in promoting the welfare and safety of all staff. Therefore, this policy applies to staff across all sites as well as agency and contract staff (and elected members).

The aims of this policy are to:

- Prevent and detect these crimes and working in partnership with other agencies;
- Hold suspects of such crimes to account; and,
- Prevent and reduce victimisation and ensure the safety of victims and any children experiencing domestic abuse.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support of Surrey Police who gave us generous access to their policy on domestic abuse and in particular, PC Bridie Anderson, who allowed us to consult with her at length.

We are grateful to Melissa Morbeck CEO of Corporate Alliance for her guidance, encouragement and constructive criticism that has contributed immensely to the evolution of this policy.

Hestia for their provision of an Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor for officers and staff and continued support.

The completion of this policy could not have been possible without the participation and assistance of so many people whose names may not all be enumerated. Their contributions are sincerely appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

Associated Documents and Policies

The following toolkits are associated with this policy.

- Domestic Abuse
- Stalking and Harassment
- Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage.

Other related toolkits:

- General Investigation
- Safeguarding Children
- Child Abuse
- Vulnerability and Protection of Adults at Risk.

Notices

The following notices are either cancelled or related to this policy. Previous news directed the reader to sections in the Met Domestic Abuse policy that listed a series of actions for any staff who were either victims or suspects of domestic abuse. These parts of the news are now outdated due to the new Met police Domestic Abuse Employee Policy:

- [“Support available for officers and staff affected by Domestic Abuse.” 5th August 2019.](#)
- [“Affected by Domestic Abuse” 28th June 2019.](#)
- [“Domestic abuse – has this affected you or a colleague?” 4th June 2019. Same as above.](#)
- [“Domestic abuse: the Met is a family and we have a responsibility to look after our family.” 6th December 2017.](#)

Section B: Equality Impact Assessment

Policies are developed and reviewed using a consultative approach involving relevant internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, developers must consider what action needs to be taken to help overcome or minimise any disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic will experience in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Finally, the impact of the policy will be monitored to identify any emerging issues, learning and benefits post-delivery of the policy. The table below summarises the outcomes of these steps:

Research and consultation	
Review of research	<p>Surrey Police Domestic Abuse (DA) Toolkit – 2014 Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse Corporate Alliance and Vodafone Survey data 2017 MPS Survey Data May 2019 Review of College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice website MPS improvement plan to ensure we provide a consistent high quality of service to victims DA, and improve offender management and capture emerging risks. Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)/ Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Service Level Agreement CPS/Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Evidence checklist Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) / Organisational Learning recommendations spreadsheet Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC - The Metropolitan Police Service’s response to tackling Domestic Abuse Victims’ Voice Forum</p>
Internal consultation	<p>MPS Legal services; Safety and Health Risk Management Team; Finance Business Partner; Information Assurance Team; DPS, Met Hate Crime Central Team, Met Stalking Threat Assessment Centre, Victims Voice representative</p>
External Consultation	<p>Hestia; Surrey Police, Corporate Alliance, Galop.</p>
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010)	
Summary of Equality Impact Assessment	<p>This policy toolkit is aimed at our employees, as either victims or as suspects, in domestic abuse cases. It instructs officers and staff to employ the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) and DASH in all cases. DASH risk assessment will be specifically applied to those who are pregnant or mothers. Safeguarding measures will also be applied, if appropriate, for protection and safety of victims of domestic abuse that relates to their disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation and / or economic situation. In all cases, including if the employee is a suspect, officers and staff are instructed not to make assumptions and stereotypes, use correct gender pronouns and request</p>

	<p>the support from staff support associations and occupational health to support the individual and / or the investigation, if and when needed.</p>
Age	<p>The policy instructs officers to apply the VAF and DASH in all cases. Should the victim and suspect have any children, young people or elderly in their care, safeguarding measures will be employed for their wellbeing and protection, if appropriate, including referrals to partnership agencies.</p>
Deaf/ disability	<p>This policy recognises that disability can make one vulnerable to domestic abuse. Should any victims have a disability, officers and staff are instructed to liaise with Disability Staff Association and Occupational Health for any reasonable adjustments and care needs, if the victim agrees and these are appropriate. The VAF will also be applied to capture other vulnerabilities. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristics of the victim/suspect (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>The policy recognises that those wishing to undergo gender reassignment surgery or having transitioned may be victims of domestic abuse. The policy recognises that Trans or non-binary colleagues may not wish to disclose a domestic abuse incident especially if they are in a relationship. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristics of the victim/suspect (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs including avoiding making assumptions or stereotyping, and apply correct gender pronouns.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>It is recognised that pregnancy may be a trigger in domestic abuse and this is reflected within the DASH risk assessment. Officers and staff are instructed to assess a victim's vulnerability and risk levels. The policy advises MPS personnel to remove the victim from the premises if there is a risk to their safety and they are diverted to the Safeguarding Children and the Safeguarding Adult policies to ensure correct appropriate action is taken. Users are directed to OH guidance and policy.</p>
Race	<p>MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristics of the victim/suspect (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.</p>

<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>Officers and staff should be respectful of any cultural or religious beliefs when dealing with the victim and/or the suspect, e.g. having female officers and staff to assist with female victims if available. Some victims of certain religious beliefs may not wish to report domestic abuse to police out of fear that this will bring further 'dishonour' on the family. MPS personnel are specifically instructed do not attempt mediation, reconciliation, counselling or the use of religious arbitration. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristics of the victim/witness/suspect (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and avoid making assumptions or stereotyping. Policy users are directed to the Honour based abuse (HBA) and Forced Marriages (FM) policy, should any of these issues or incidents arise.</p>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>The policy raises awareness and removes any myths relating to gender in domestic abuse. Officers and staff are reminded that men can also be victims of domestic abuse and women can also be suspects of domestic abuse. Policy users are directed to the HBA and FM policy should any of these issues or incidents arise.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>The policy recognises people who identify as either lesbian, gay, bisexual, or Trans (LBGT+) or another sexual / gender minority may not be willing to come forward and report a domestic abuse incident. Domestic abuse does take place within same-sex relationships. Officers are instructed to not disclose the LBGT+ status of the victim or suspect to their colleagues or family members. MPS personnel are instructed to consider the protected characteristics of the victim/suspect (as defined by Equality Act 2010) and treat according to their needs and avoid making assumptions or stereotyping.</p>
<p>Other issues for example: Low income groups, single parents, rough sleepers</p>	<p>This policy recognises that financial abuse is another form of domestic abuse in which the suspect controls the victim's income and finances. The policy raises awareness of the role income and financial abuse can play within domestic abuse cases. In such circumstances, victims will be referred to either partner agencies for support and trade unions, if they are a member.</p>
<p>Monitoring</p>	

**12 month
implementation plan**

This policy will be monitored for 12 months with a series of exercises to ensure compliance and capturing any issues or lessons identified. Some example activities include a Central Domestic Abuse Working Group to monitor compliance; an annual monitoring report which will identify any emerging equality and diversity issues; review of MPS data on the MPS response to domestic abuse.