

# Domestic Abuse

Factsheet 1 for employers  
August 2020

## Definition

Domestic abuse is the use of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between intimate partners or family members. The abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional. Both women and men can be victims of domestic abuse, and both women and men can be the abusers.

Domestic Abuse takes place at all levels of society regardless of gender, social class, gender, race, religion, sexuality or disability.

## Covid-19

As a result of the Coronavirus lockdown, staff may experience increased levels of Domestic Abuse. Across the country domestic abuse is soaring as victims are trapped with abusive partners during the coronavirus lockdown. Figures, as of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020, in the UK show that there were 12 deaths reported in the last 5 days from domestic abuse. Normally in the UK, 2 women per week are murdered. The National Domestic Abuse Helpline has seen a 25% increase in calls to them. The facts are alarming and Milton Keynes Domestic Abuse Charity are worried about families in the city during these difficult times.

Employers have a duty of care to provide support to employees on the issue of domestic abuse



## 3 key actions for employers

### 1. Acknowledge

Understand the issue and acknowledge your responsibility as an employer to address domestic abuse. Enable colleagues to openly discuss domestic abuse and provide a supportive workplace.

### 2. Respond

Review your policies and procedures, to ensure you are providing a supportive workplace and you can respond to disclosure. Make sure the policies and procedures are implemented correctly.

### 3. Refer

Provide access to organisations who can help employees affected by the issue.

Contact MK Act Helpline: **0344 375 4307**

For advice for male and female perpetrators of domestic abuse looking to stop, or for victims and friends/family looking for information or help for a perpetrator, or frontline workers working with perpetrators, you can contact the Respect Phonenumber 0808 8024040 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) [www.respectphonenumber.org.uk](http://www.respectphonenumber.org.uk)

For more COVID-19 domestic abuse related information and guidance visit the Gov.uk, SafeLives and/or Women's Aid (also with information in different languages) websites.

Employers are encouraged to utilise the published Public Health and Business in the Community toolkit <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-advice-to-help-employers-deal-with-domestic-abuse-and-stigma>



milton keynes council