

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Executive Summary:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that West Midlands Police (WMP) has a consistent and professional approach to policing incidents of domestic abuse in line with the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice for Domestic Abuse. APP Provisions All officers and staff will understand their responsibilities when dealing with incidents of domestic abuse in order to reduce the risk of harm to victims.

For Domestic Abuse related Stalking and Harassment please see Stalking and Harassment APP

Authorised Professional Practice (APP):

- This policy has been checked against APP. West Midlands Police has adopted the APP PROVISIONS with supplementary information contained herein, which reflects the needs of the communities served by West Midlands Police.

APP Domestic abuse index

Policy Statements:

- Domestic abuse is a serious crime and will be treated as any other serious crime would be.
- The reduction of domestic abuse is a policing priority and is the responsibility of all police officers and staff.
- In partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner, we have identified preventing and detecting domestic abuse as a strategic priority.
- In light of the new definition in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, FCID and PPU will work to an agreed protocol regarding which department will investigate which offences.
- We recognise the impact that domestic abuse has on the lives of victims, children and our communities and that the suffering is often hidden from view.
- We are committed to working in partnership with other agencies to eradicate domestic abuse, to build safer communities and thereby improve the quality of life for victims and their children.
- Early positive intervention is essential to save lives, and the first priority of officers attending domestic abuse incidents is to protect victims and their families, especially children and vulnerable adults.
- When dealing with victims of domestic abuse you must be aware of protected characteristics and you must treat everyone with dignity and respect regardless of background or lifestyle choices.
- The level of intervention will be intelligence based and depend upon the perceived risk of harm.
- You must always consider the arrest of the alleged perpetrator, when determining the level of intervention.
- You must be able to justify a decision not to arrest where that power exists.
- You will take firm and positive action against offenders or take other positive steps to ensure the safety of the victim, children and any other vulnerable persons.

- Criminal investigations into domestic abuse must consider all necessary and proportionate lines of enquiry to both protect the victim and to prevent further incidents.
- Investigations must not solely focus upon the willingness of a victim to engage. It is the decision of the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, not the victim, to arrest and/or charge a suspect.
- You must be aware of the importance of treating breaches of Civil Orders as part of a wider pattern of offending.
- We will work in partnership with external agencies to safeguard those at risk and share information to protect vulnerable adults and children.
- We will respond to all incidents of domestic abuse and investigate these in a professional manner
- We will recognise the risk and respond to this to protect anyone perceived to be at risk of harm.
- We will hold offenders accountable for their actions, where appropriate, through the criminal justice system.
- We will adopt a multi-agency approach in preventing and reducing domestic abuse.
- We are committed to providing a work environment where those being abused feel safe and able to disclose, and those committing abuse are identified and appropriately dealt with to ensure victims and the public are safe.
- Safeguarding those at risk of domestic abuse is everybody's business. We will equip our officers and staff to recognise and respond quickly and effectively to protect those at risk of harm.
- Where an officer or member of police staff is subject to a counter allegation, careful consideration must be given to the requirement to remove that individual from role (either paid or voluntary).
- Any decision to remove an officer/police staff victim from a role, must be communicated to the victim clearly but with care at the earliest opportunity, and reviewed as the counter allegation is investigated.
- Alongside the requirement to refer cases to PSD/LADO for assessment, advice must be sought from Public Protection Safeguarding leads to ensure decision making and communication of decisions is not causing further trauma to victims

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE PUBLIC PROTECTION UNIT (PPU)

- The Detective Chief Superintendent designated as Head of Public Protection will hold overall responsibility for the coordination of the force's response to domestic abuse.
- The West Midlands Police Public Protection Unit (PPU) will:
 - Maintain compliance with any national and regional standards on domestic abuse
 - Develop, review and advise on force policy, ensuring a corporate standard
 - Monitor force performance
 - Provide continuous engagement with communities and partners at a strategic level



- Put mechanisms in place in order for the effective engagement and multi-agency approach in dealing with cases
- Maintain the WMP and CPS protocol on the handling of domestic abuse cases
- Provide a consultancy service to NPU's and other departments to review, assess and disseminate best practice
- Provide a consultancy service to Learning and Development (L&D) and NPU's in identifying and meeting training needs
- Together with the Corporate Communications Department provide public information and representation to the media on domestic abuse issues
- Support NPU's and departments to take proactive steps to change attitudes and increase public awareness of domestic abuse in order to encourage reporting and in the long term reduce incidents or prevent escalation.

Definitions/Acronyms:

Domestic Abuse Act 2021-Definition

Acronyms:

ACE	Adverse Childhood experiences
APVA	Adolescent to Parent Violence and abuse
BSWA	Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid
BCWA	Black Country Women's Aid
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
DA	Domestic Abuse
DABBF	Domestic Abuse Best Practice Framework
DAPNs	Domestic Abuse Protection Notices
DAPOs	Domestic Abuse Protection Orders
DAPPs	Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes
DASH	Domestic Abuse, Harassment and Honour Based Violence
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
DVDS	Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
DVILR	Domestic Violence Indefinite Leave to Remain
DVPNs	Domestic Violence Protection Notices



DVPOs	Domestic Violence Protection Orders
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FM	Forced Marriage
FMU	Forced Marriage Unit
HBA	Honour Based Abuse
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
MATAC	Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordination Meeting
NCDV	National Centre for Domestic Violence
NPU	Neighbourhood Policing Units
VAWDASV	Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WAITS	Women Acting in Today's Society
WMP	West Midlands Police

Procedural Guidance Documents List:

- Types and Characteristics of domestic abuse
- Powers for dealing with domestic abuse and protection for witnesses
- Initial Contact
- First Response
- Review and Allocation
- Investigations

- Safeguarding
- NPU Responsibilities
- Police perpetrated Domestic Abuse (PPDA)
- Services supporting Victims
- Voice of the child

Publication Instructions:

- Internal document only – unsuitable for publication to public
- Redacted version required for publication to public

Policy Ref: PPU/02

Version: 1.0

Date: 12/04/2023

Review Date: 12/04/2024

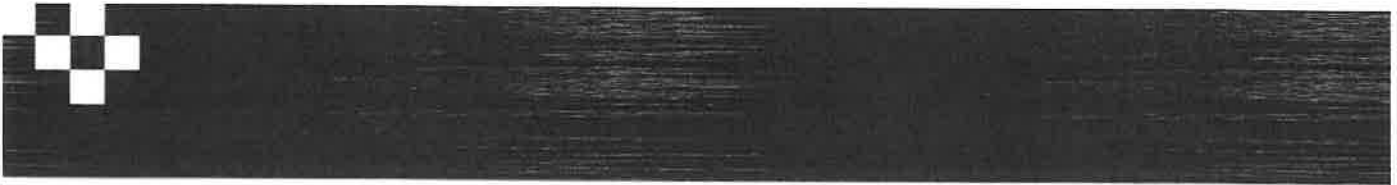
Policy Author: [REDACTED]

Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be made directly with the policy author shown above.

Force Executive Approval:



CHIEF CONSTABLE



Version	Date Reviewed	No change / Minor Changes / Major Changes (detail)	Amended / Agreed by	New review date

Monitoring and Review