

## POLICY



### Welfare and support of police staff and officers affected by domestic abuse

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Policy No.	194

#### Approved by

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**Note:** By signing the above you are authorising the policy for publication and are accepting responsibility for the policy on behalf of the Chief Constables.

Publication Date	29.04.16 (Interim)
Review Date	28.04.18
APP	✓ 19.10.15.

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## Legal Basis

*(Please list below the relevant legislation which is the legal basis for this policy document). You must update this list with changes in legislation that are relevant to this policy document.*

### **Legislation specific to the subject of this policy document**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Act (title and year)</b>
	<u>Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004</u>
<u>Article 8</u>	Human Rights Act 1998
<u>17(1)(b) &amp; (e)</u>	Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) - Police powers of entry
	<u>Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005</u>
<u>48</u>	The Children Act 1989 - Police powers of entry

### **Other legislation which you must check this document against**

<b>Act (title and year)</b>
<u>Equality Act 2010</u>
<u>Crime and Disorder Act 1998</u>
H&S legislation
<u>Data Protection Act 1998</u>
<u>Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007</u>
<u>Freedom Of Information Act 2000</u>
S.1 Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004-Criminal Breaches of Non-Molestation Orders

## 1. General principles

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and information on the safeguarding and supporting of staff affected by domestic abuse.
- 1.2 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are committed to ensuring this policy complies with relevant legislation and general principles of fairness, and that consultation has been undertaken with all relevant staff groups.
- 1.3 All Norfolk/Suffolk policies are intended to promote equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination and actively promote good relations regardless of a person's gender, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or family status, trade union or staff association or support group activity, disability or age.
- 1.4 This policy is part of the Constabularies' commitment to family friendly working, and seeks to benefit the welfare of individuals; retain valued staff and officers; improve morale and performance; and enhance the reputation of Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies as employers of choice.
- 1.5 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992), the Constabularies recognise their 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).

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies recognise that their officers and staff will be amongst those affected by domestic abuse, for example, as a survivor of domestic abuse, an individual who is currently living with domestic abuse, someone who has been impacted by domestic abuse or an individual who perpetrates domestic abuse.
- 2.2 We are committed to developing a workplace culture in which there is zero tolerance for abuse and which recognises that the responsibility for domestic abuse lies with the perpetrator. The Constabularies are 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.
- 2.3 Developing an effective domestic abuse policy, working to reduce the risks related to domestic abuse, and providing practical and emotional support will create a safer workplace and send a strong message that domestic abuse is unacceptable.
- 2.4 All employees will be fully informed of the existence of this policy, to encourage reporting at all levels.
- 2.5 This policy does not cover the standards of investigation and procedures which are followed in relation to crimes involving domestic abuse. These

can be found in the relevant individual force policy or procedural document entitled 'Domestic Abuse'.

### 3. Definitions

#### 3.1 The term 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 can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

#### 3.2 This could involve some of the following behaviours, though this list is not exhaustive:

**Physical abuse:** assault, punches, kicks, hitting, forced imprisonment, biting, strangulation, burning, dragging, actual bodily harm, grievous bodily harm, using weapons, throwing objects.

**Psychological abuse:** verbal abuse, blaming, mind games, criticisms, accusations, emotional abuse, jealous and obsessive behaviours, humiliation, comparisons, manipulation, complete control of a person's life, threats to kill the person or the children, imposed social isolation, sleep deprivation.

**Sexual abuse:** forcing sex against a persons will, sexual assault, forced prostitution, degradation, humiliation, forced to watch or act in pornography.

**Financial abuse:** preventing a person from getting or keeping a job, taking money, not permitting access to or withholding family income.

**Emotional abuse:** persistently putting a person down, isolating a person from friends and family, name calling, sulking and checking up a person whereabouts and activities.

- 3.3 This definition includes so called Honour Based Abuse (HBA), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group. Please refer to the relevant force operational policy and procedural documentation on Honour Based Abuse for further guidance.

#### **4. Disclosure of abuse**

- 4.1 The Constabularies will respond sympathetically, effectively, and confidentially where possible, to any member of staff who discloses that they are suffering from domestic abuse.
- 4.2 It is acknowledged that additional barriers may exist for staff from minority groups, and individuals will not be pressured into disclosing any personal information they do not feel comfortable sharing. Due regard and confidentiality will be paid to any double disclosure of information.
- 4.3 Officers and staff experiencing domestic abuse may choose to disclose, report to or seek support from a number of sources at work including UNISON or staff association representative, a line manager, or colleague.
- 4.4 All officers and staff have a duty to report if they suspect a colleague is experiencing or perpetrating abuse, and should speak to their line manager about their concerns. In dealing with a disclosure from a colleague, line managers should ensure that the person with concerns is made aware of the existence of this policy.

#### **5 Confidentiality**

- 5.1 Where a domestic abuse related incident or crime has been reported, it is not the decision of the victim or any other reporting party as to the action that should result. It is the role of the police to investigate any domestic abuse related crimes, and all reports of domestic abuse will be risk assessed for appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action.
- 5.2 As far as possible, information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, principally those involved in the investigation, risk management and welfare provision. All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept secure within the Professional Standard Department (PSD). ATHENA investigations can be locked down under the 'secure flag' system.
- 5.3 Improper disclosure of information i.e. breaches of confidentiality by any member of staff will be taken seriously and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 5.4 Officers and staff that disclose they are personally committing domestic abuse related criminal offences are not entitled to confidentiality, and any report will be fully investigated.



## 6 Safeguarding

- 6.1 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies, UNISON representatives, staff associations and specialist partner agencies will work together cooperatively to help staff experiencing domestic abuse. They will respond sympathetically, confidentially where appropriate, and will prioritise employees' safeguarding on being made aware of domestic abuse concerns.
- 6.2 When an employee discloses domestic abuse, a DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Abuse) risk assessment will be completed. If the disclosure is made to a member of staff who has not received the appropriate risk assessment training, the matter should be referred to a DASH trained member of staff within the department. In the absence of a suitably trained staff member the Duty Inspector should be contacted via Contact and Control Room.
- 6.3 The level of risk to the victim and associated persons will be determined, and appropriate risk management and safeguarding referrals will be completed. A secondary assessment will be completed by Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Norfolk, or the Domestic Abuse team in Suffolk, to ensure any risks have been addressed.
- 6.4 Where the identified risk is high, there will be a referral to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). The MARAC will include information sharing, and implementing a risk management plan which provides professional support to all those at risk and reduces the risk of harm.
- 6.5 In cases where both the victim and perpetrator of domestic abuse work in the organisation further appropriate safeguarding action will be considered. It may be necessary to ensure the parties do not come into contact in the workplace until the matter is resolved. Action may also need to be taken to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details, or the location of the victim. This may include a change of duties, or withdrawing the perpetrators access to certain computer programmes or offices.

## 7 Support

- 7.1 Line managers, colleagues and UNISON representatives will not counsel victims, but offer information, workplace support, and signpost to other organisations or other parts of the Constabularies where support may be more appropriately delivered.
- 7.2 When an employee reports the occurrence of a domestic abuse related incident they will be provided with the same level of service as any other member of the public, and will have access to the same level of police support.

7.3 Line managers may consider offering staff and officers experiencing domestic abuse a broad range of support. This may include:-

- Flexibility around leave for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare, and for court appointments. Individuals may be asked to provide proof of appointments.
- Temporary changes to working times and patterns. Permanent changes would need to be requested in line with the Flexible Working FPD.
- Reasonable unplanned absences and temporary poor time keeping will be treated sympathetically.
- Changes to specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role.
- Redeployment or relocation if necessary to prioritise personal safety.
- Measures to ensure a safe working environment, for example changing a telephone number to avoid harassing phone calls.
- Access to counselling/support services.
- Signposting or referral to internal support from Occupational Health, which includes Psychological Wellbeing Service, Fast Track Medical Intervention Scheme, Flint House, and Benevolent Fund.
- Signposting or referral to external support agencies and courses which offer specific help to domestic abuse victims (see [Appendix A](#)).

7.4 Line managers will respect the right of staff to make their own decisions on the course of action they choose to take, unless there is a duty to act based on risk of harm or need for investigation. It is recognised that the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options during this process.

7.5 Police officers or members of staff who are victims of domestic abuse will not be expected to behave or react according to their training, and will be treated foremost as a victim. Extra support may be required in providing statements, attending interviews, being kept updated and attending court.

7.6 It is recognised that developing a life free from abuse is a process and ongoing support will be provided for employees who disclose abuse.

7.7 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies recognise that domestic abuse is an equalities issue and undertake to not discriminate against anyone who has

been subjected to domestic abuse both in terms of current employment or future development.

## **8 Organisational Planning**

- 8.1 Police officers and specific staff within Human Resources and Occupational Health have been given appropriate training on domestic abuse, signs of abuse and appropriate the lines of referral. This capability also exists within the Police Federation and UNISON.
- 8.2 All employees will be made aware of this policy, through a range of methods.
- 8.3 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary will remind staff of the importance of not divulging personal details of other employees, such as addresses, telephone numbers or shift patterns.

## **9. Perpetrators of domestic abuse**

- 9.1 Domestic abuse perpetrated by officers and staff will not be tolerated under any circumstances nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. The Constabularies recognise that they have a role in encouraging and supporting officers and staff to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds.
- 9.2 Any officer or staff member suspected of being a perpetrator of Domestic Abuse will be dealt with according to Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary's Domestic Abuse Policy Documents. A proportional investigation will be conducted and any disciplinary issues will be referred to Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary's Professional Standards Department (PSD).
- 9.3 Information on external support agencies can be found on Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary's external website, and [Appendix A](#).





## Appendix A – External Support Agencies

### **Norfolk Constabulary website**

Follow the links on Safety Advice and Personal Safety

### **Suffolk Constabulary website**

[www.suffolk.police.uk/](http://www.suffolk.police.uk/)

### **The Harbour Centre**

A sexual assault referral centre which supports victims of rape, attempted rape and sexual assault.  
Call: 0845 456 4810

### **The Ferns**

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)  
Tel: 0300 123 5058  
Email: [contact@theferns-suffolk.org.uk](mailto:contact@theferns-suffolk.org.uk)

**Victim Support (Norfolk)** - If you've been a victim of any crime or have been affected by a crime committed against someone you know, this organisation offers a free range of services.  
Call: 0845 3030900

### **Victim Support (Suffolk)**

Tel: 0845 456 5995

**Leeway** - Leeway is a specialist domestic abuse charity supporting just under 10,000 adults, children and young people every year across Norfolk  
Call: 08452 412171

**Anglia Care Trust – Domestic Abuse Outreach** – Crisis and intensive support, information and advice.  
Tel: 0800 977 5690

**Orwell Support** - This organisation provides housing, support and care services.  
Call: 01473 218818

### **Norfolk County Council**

Call: 0344 800 8020

### **Suffolk County Council**

Customer Services Tel: 0345 606 6067

**National Domestic Violence Helpline** - This freephone 24- hour helpline is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.  
Call: 0808 2000 247

**Women's Aid** - This is a national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. Offers a range of services which give women and children access to professional support whatever their situation.  
Call: 0808 2000 247

**Broken Rainbow** - For support with domestic abuse involving lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.  
Call: 0300 999 5428

**Men's advice line** - Advice and support for men experiencing Domestic abuse.  
Call: 0808 801 0327

**Respect Phonenumber** - If you are concerned about your abusive behaviour or you are a

victim/survivor or professional who is looking for help for an abuser, contact the Respect Phonenumber.

Refuge and Respect have worked together to produce a comprehensive resource designed to help employers and HR professionals respond to officers and staff who are victims or perpetrators of abuse.

Call: 0808 802 4040

**National Stalking Helpline** – This organisation can offer help and assistance for anyone concerned about or looking for advice on harassment or stalking.

Call: 0808 802 0300

**Childline** - This is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of nineteen. You can contact ChildLine about anything - no problem is too big or too small.

Call: 0800 1111

**NHS** - If you are feeling unwell and need a telephone health assessment, please call the NHS service free of charge from any phone.

Call: 111

**Samaritans** - Talk the Samaritans anytime you like, and off the record – about whatever's getting to you.

Call: 08457 90 90 90

**Citizens Advice Bureau**

The Citizens Advice service helps people to resolve their problems. As the UK's largest advice provider we are equipped to deal with any issue, from anyone, spanning debt and employment to consumer and housing plus everything in between. We deliver advice services from over 3,300 community locations in England and Wales, run by 338 individual charities.

**Forced Marriage Unit** - If you are worried you might be forced into marriage or are worried about a friend or relative, contact the Forced Marriage Unit.

Call: 020 7008 0151

**Karma Nirvana** - Karma Nirvana is an organisation which helps people to escape from forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

Call: 0800 599 9247

**Freedom Charity** – Freedom Charity is an organisation which raises awareness and gives help to those who want to escape from forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

Call: 0845 607 0133

Text: "4freedom" 88802

**Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

Call: 020 7008 0151